

**POLITICS IN JAPAN
SUMMER 2005**

Instructor: Dr. Ross E. Burkhart
Office: PAAW 127A, 426-3280, rburkha@boisestate.edu
Office Hours: 8:00-9:30 MTWTh, or by appt.

Course: POLS 328
Class Time: 9:40-11:40 MTWTh
Classroom: MP211

Overview: Konnichiwa! This course is an upper-division Political Science course in the international relations area of emphasis. The prerequisite for the course is either POLS 101 (American National Government) or POLS 231 (International Relations). For political science majors, this course can be used as either international relations area of emphasis credit, or upper division political science credit. For international business majors and Japanese language minors, this course can fulfil an elective requirement. For all other majors and minors, this course can be used as upper division credit toward graduation.

Course Description: We will study Japan's political structure, taking note of its leading status as an East Asian democracy, and examine why it has achieved this status. Our study will take us through post-Tokugawa Japanese history, the writing of the 1947 Constitution, and Japan's policy emphasis on economic growth. We will also take note of Japan's political culture and how it shapes Japan's political structure. Finally, Japan's maturation as a modernized post-World War II OECD country has drawn much attention. Societal strain has resulted from the maturation process. We will consider the challenges that Japanese society has to address in order to preserve its hard-earned high quality of life.

Learning Outcomes: After successfully completing this course, you will have an enhanced ability to do the following in regard to the events, issues, and questions that surround Japanese politics:

- clearly identify, analyze and develop informed opinions about Japanese politics;
- develop and present well-reasoned, grammatically correct, written and spoken positions;
- recognize and understand the nature and importance of diverse cultural perspectives (including your own) as they relate to Japanese and, where applicable, other East Asian cultures;
- reflect on and understand the meaning and importance of an informed, involved membership in a global community comprised of peoples with diverse values and views; and
- understand and use concepts from the study of Japanese politics (such as constitutional reform, democracy, economic development) that may be relevant and applicable in other political contexts (such as foreign policy, political institutions, political culture, international law, international organizations, and international relations).

You will achieve these outcomes through participating in and listening to classroom activities and discussions, as well as completing the examinations and written assignments.

Required Books (available at BSU Bookstore):

Davies, Roger J., and Osamu Ikeno, eds. 2002. The Japanese Mind: Understanding Contemporary Japanese Culture. Rutland, VT: Tuttle Publishing. ("D & I")

Hayes, Louis. 2005. Introduction to Japanese Politics. 4th edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe. ("H")

Nathan, John. 2004. Japan Unbound: A Volatile Nation's Quest for Pride and Purpose. New York: Houghton Mifflin. ("N")

Grade Assessment:

Three exams, each worth 100 points. Exams will be given **June 15th**, **June 27th**, and **July 7th**. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Study guides will be made available to students at least three days prior to the exam dates.

Criteria for evaluating short answers:

- Does the short answer define the term or phrase in question?
- Does the short answer give the significance of the term or phrase in the study of Japanese politics?

Two short reports, each worth 30 points. Reports will be due **June 22nd** and **June 30th**. Each report will be 3-4 typed pages, double-spaced, no smaller than 10 point font, and properly cited with at least three citations. **Late reports will receive a 10% grade deduction for each late day**. Students will write reports on two of the following four topics.

- Choose a current issue that is on the Japanese domestic public agenda. How did the issue come to be on the public agenda? Why is it an important issue for the Japanese? How can the issue be settled?
- Choose a Japanese political leader. What makes this leader be important? Charisma, family fortune, intellect, leadership skills, or some combination? What is this person contributing to Japanese politics?
- Choose an issue that is causing tension between Japan and the U.S. Why do the Japanese perceive the issue to be an important one? What are the different perspectives on the issue? What efforts have Japan and the U.S. made to resolve the issue?
- Choose an issue that is causing tension between Japan and the China. Why do the Japanese perceive the issue to be an important one? What are the different perspectives on the issue? What efforts have Japan and China made to resolve the issue?

In-text citations are meant to show the source of every direct quotation used in the report, as well as when a passage in the report is paraphrased or its substance borrowed. Citations are also needed to make reference to facts that are not “common knowledge.” Finally, citations give proper credit to a conclusion reached or an inference made by someone other than the author of the report. When a source is cited within the report, please put the author’s last name, year of the publication / document and page number, e.g. (Burkhart 1997, 149).

Examples of bibliographic references are as follows.

- Burkhart, Ross E. 1997. “Democracy and Income Distribution: Shape and Direction of the Causal Arrow.” Journal of Politics 59: 148-64.
- CBC News. 2004. “Mad Cow in Canada.” <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/madcow/> (Accessed May 25, 2004.)
- Woods, Shelton. 2004. Japan: An Illustrated History. New York: Hippocrene Books.

Criteria for evaluating the reports:

- Does the report answer the questions posed?
- Does the report provide evidence to support the answers given to the questions posed?
- Is the report written with proper grammar, correct spelling, logical organization, and appropriate sentence structure?

Grade Points Allocation:

Exam 1 = 100 points
Exam 2 = 100 points
Exam 3 = 100 points
Paper 1 = 30 points
Paper 2 = 30 points
Total points in course = 360

Grade Distribution:

A = 324-380 points B = 288-323 C = 252-287 D = 216-251 F = 0-215

Interesting Websites

Asahi Shimbun
www.asahi.com/english
Daily Yomiuri On-Line
www.yomiuri.co.jp/index-e.htm
Japan Echo
www.japanecho.co.jp
Japan Times
www.japantimes.co.jp
Japan Today
www.japantoday.com
Mainichi Shimbun
mdn.mainichi.co.jp

Topics (No class on July 4th):

June 6th – 7th: Japanese History to 1864. Reading: H chs 1-2, D & I chs 1-3

June 8th – 9th: Japanese History to today. Reading: H chs 3-4, D & I chs 4-5

June 13th – 14th: Japan's Political Structure. Reading: H chs 5-7, D & I chs 6-10

June 15th: First exam (first half of class period)

June 15th – 16th: Japan's Economic Miracle. Reading: H ch 9, D & I chs 11-14

June 20th – 21st: Japan's Economic Foreign Policy. Reading: H ch 12, D & I chs 15-20

June 22nd: First paper due by beginning of first class period

June 22st – 23rd: Japan's Culture. Reading: H chs 8 & 11; D & I chs 21-24

June 27th: Second exam (first half of class period)

June 27rd – 28th: Japan's Education Policy. Reading: H ch 10; N ch 1

June 29th – 30th: Japan's Foreign Policy. Reading: H ch 13, N ch 6.

June 30th: Second paper due by beginning of first class period

July 5th – 6th: Japan's Society. Reading: N ch 2-5, 7-8.

July 7th: Reflections on Japan. Readings: N Epilogue.

July 8th Third exam (second half of class period)

SAYONARA!