

Japanese Anime Feature Films

Japan 360

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Office Hours: Mondays, 10:30-11:20 AM (via Zoom) or by appointment

Course introduction and outline:

In 2021, the Japanese animation (*anime*) global market was valued at 24.5 billion USD and is projected to reach a value of 47.14 billion USD by 2028. Thanks to directors like (academy-award winning) Miyazaki Hayao (*My Neighbor Totoro*, *Spirited Away*), Satoshi Kon (*Paprika*, *Millennium Actress*), and more recent efforts from filmmakers like Hosoda Mamoru (*Wolf Children*, *Summer Wars*, *The Girl Who Leapt Through Time*) and Shinkai Makoto (*Your Name*, *Five Centimeters Per Second*), *anime* films have gained a worldwide audience in the twenty-first century. Today, *anime* is a varied and thriving field, with programs aimed at all ages and genders.

This course will examine the history and development of *anime*, from its beginnings in the twentieth century to its ubiquity in the twenty-first. More specifically, this course will dive into the studio system of Japan, where film studios like Ghibli and Madhouse manufacture feature-length films meant to be released theatrically, resulting in a peculiarity of the last thirty years: the *anime* feature film. Compared to the heyday of midcentury live-action monster and special effects films like *Godzilla* (1954) or the experimental avant-garde works of Oshima Nagisa and the Japanese "New Wave" in the 1960s, anime feature films have proven themselves to be economic powerhouses both domestically and abroad. Currently, of the twenty highest grossing Japanese films worldwide, seventeen are anime, with a mere three live-action films.

Thus, this course will examine the development and popularity of the anime feature film alongside its cultural origins. We will watch films, learn about methods of production, and talk about the connections we can uncover between art and society as we work our way from Miyazaki all the way through to Shinkai.

Grading and Assessments:

The bulk of the workload in this course will involve your viewing and writing about the films outside of class and our discussing the films and related articles critically in class. Students will be expected to come prepared to discuss the assigned films and readings for that day, both in small groups and in a larger classroom setting. The online discussion board (via canvas) is an optional, additional medium for participation. Primarily, students will be assessed via weekly response journals of between one (dense) paragraph to one page, double spaced, which are due Fridays by midnight. In addition, there will be one midterm assessment and one final paper (or project) where students will be able to analyze films of their choosing. Requirements for the weekly response journals, midterm assessment, and final paper will be posted via canvas.

Grade breakdown is as follows:

- Discussion and participation (15%)
- Weekly Response Journals (40%)
- Midterm Assessment (20%)
- Final Paper/Project (25%)

Lecture Outline and Reading Assignments:

UNIT 1: Studio Ghibli & Introduction to Anime films

Week 1- Introduction: Film and anime in modern Japan.

- **Wednesday, January 4:** No need to prepare anything before class!

No response journal due week 1, but please submit your **Student information sheet**
by Friday, January 6

Week 2: *My Neighbor Totoro*

- **Monday, January 9:** Lecture & discussion of *My Neighbor Totoro*
- **Wednesday, January 11:** Discussion of week 2 articles and clip analysis.

Response journal 1 due Friday 1/13

Week 3: *Kiki's Delivery Service*

- **Monday, January 16:** NO CLASS: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **Wednesday, January 18:** Discussion of *Kiki's Delivery Service*, week 3 articles, and clip analysis.

Response journal 2 due Friday 1/20

Week 4: *Spirited Away*

- **Monday, January 23:** Lecture & discussion of *Spirited Away*
- **Wednesday, January 25:** Discussion of week 4 articles and clip analysis.

Response journal 3 due Friday 1/27

UNIT 2: Atomic and Postapocalyptic

Week 5: *Barefoot Gen*

- **Monday, January 30:** Lecture & discussion of *Barefoot Gen*
- **Wednesday, February 1:** Discussion of week 5 articles and clip analysis.

Response journal 4 due Friday 2/3

MIDTERM ASSESSMENT DUE FRIDAY 2/3

Week 6: *Grave of the Fireflies*

- **Monday, February 6:** Lecture & discussion of *Grave of the Fireflies*
- **Wednesday, February 8:** Discussion of week 6 articles and clip analysis.

Response journal 5 due Friday 2/10

Week 7: *Akira*

- **Monday, February 13:** Lecture & discussion of *Akira*
- **Wednesday, February 15:** Discussion of week 7 articles and clip analysis.

Response journal 6 due Friday 2/17

UNIT 3: Studio Madhouse & beyond

Week 8: *Paprika* (Millennium Actress?)

- **Monday, February 20:** NO CLASS: Presidents' Day
- **Wednesday, February 22:** Discussion of *Paprika*, week 8 articles, and clip analysis.

Response journal 7 due Friday 2/24

Week 9: *Summer Wars* & *Wolf Children*

- **Monday, February 27:** Lecture & discussion of *Summer Wars*
- **Wednesday, March 1:** Discussion of *Wolf Children*, clip analysis of both films.

Response journal 8 due Friday 3/3

Week 10: *Your Name*

- **Monday, March 6:** Lecture & discussion of *Your Name* & week 9 articles
- **Wednesday, March 8:** TBD: Screening of *Inu-Oh?*

Response journal 9 and final project proposal due Friday 3/10.

FINAL PAPERS/PROJECTS DUE MARCH 16th @ 11:59 P.M.

Religious Accommodations

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/) (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/>). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/) (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/>).

Disability Resources for Students

Your experience in this class is important to me. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please activate your accommodations via myDRS so we can discuss how they will be implemented in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), contact DRS directly to set up an Access Plan. DRS facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations. Contact DRS at disability.uw.edu.

Face Coverings in the Classroom

The health and safety of the University of Washington community are the institution's priorities. Please review and adhere to the [UW COVID Face Covering Policy \[pdf\]](#).

Absences

To protect student privacy and the integrity of the academic experience, students will not be required to provide a medical excuse note to justify an absence from class due to illness. If you feel unwell enough to attend class, please do not expose yourself to further danger at a doctor's office just to obtain a note. A student absent from any graded class activity or examination due to illness must request, in writing, to take a rescheduled examination or perform work judged by the instructor to be the equivalent. 3

Academic Integrity

The University takes academic integrity very seriously. Behaving with integrity is part of our responsibility to our shared learning community. If you're uncertain about if something is academic misconduct, ask me. I am willing to discuss questions you might have.

Acts of academic misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- Cheating (working collaboratively on quizzes/exams and discussion submissions, sharing answers and previewing quizzes/exams)
- Plagiarism (representing the work of others as your own without giving appropriate credit to the original author(s))
- Unauthorized collaboration (working with each other on assignments)

Concerns about these or other behaviors prohibited by the Student Conduct Code will be referred for investigation and adjudication by (include information for specific campus office).

Students found to have engaged in academic misconduct may receive a zero on the assignment (or other possible outcome).

Safety

Call SafeCampus at 206-685-7233 anytime – no matter where you work or study – to anonymously discuss safety and well-being concerns for yourself or others. SafeCampus's team of caring professionals will provide individualized support, while discussing short- and long-term solutions and connecting you with additional resources when requested.