



School of Global Studies and Collaboration Aoyama Gakuin University

Course Descriptions for Japan Studies Courses

Fall 2016 ~ Spring 2017

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Japan Studies Courses

GSC's Japan Studies Program offers unique opportunities for international students to be immersed in the multi-facets of Japan. The students acquire in-depth knowledge on culture, economy, business, policy, history and geography from accomplished scholars, professionals experienced in policy, renowned artists and entrepreneurs. The program is also designed for Japanese students to acquire the knowledge and skills to introduce their country to overseas in their future careers. Some of the coursework involves excursions or hands-on experiences. This program consists of 16 courses (32 credits) taught in English, starting from the fall semester of 2015.

(Courses are subject to change.)

Title	Description	Semester
Topics in Japanese Geography I	Google Earth has changed the educational methods behind geography. It is a very useful visualization tool but only for the cyber world, not the real world. Recognizing this limitation, Google launched the Ingress system for mobile phones in 2012. Ingress can create opportunities for outdoor activities in the city. This course explains the state of Ingress in Japan for geospatial education and tourism.	Fall
Topics in Japanese Geography II	Safecast is a global project working to empower people through data, primarily by mapping radiation levels and building a sensor network, enabling people to contribute to the data collected and freely using it. After the March 2011 earthquake in northeastern Japan and resulting nuclear situation, it became clear that people wanted more data than was available. Safecast has been building a radiation sensor network comprised of static and mobile sensors around Japan – both near the exclusion zone and elsewhere in the country. This course explores Japan's recent situation concerning radiation and how to make common cause with global citizens.	Fall
Topics in Japanese Geography III	Ingress is an augmented-reality large-scale multiplayer online role-playing game dependent on GPS/GNSS, created by Niantic Labs, a startup within Google. Meanwhile, JAXA of Japan is to complete a new positioning satellite system, the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS), in 2018. This will cover Japan, Southeast Asia and Oceania. QZSS games dependent on GPS/GNSS will soon spread through geospatial innovations. This course shares Google's strategy, technology, next-generation GPS/GNSS and state-of-the-art Geospatial gaming community in Japan.	Spring

Title	Description	Semester
Topics in Japanese Geography IV	After the March 2011 earthquake in northeastern Japan, Japanese civic hackers launched various applications for disaster prevention and mitigation. In particular, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) launched a Global Disaster Risk Management “Hackathon” with geospatial information managed by The World Bank. These results have been shared with developing countries via the international community. In addition, geospatial data and spatial thinking methods can help create innovative applications. This course explores disaster prevention and mitigation in communities by using spatial thinking methods in cooperation with The World Bank.	Spring
Topics in Japanese History I	From bullet trains to robotics, Japan boasts some of the world’s most advanced technology. At the same time, recent events such as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster have revealed problems in Japan's science community. How did Japan get to where it is today? This course examines the history of science and technology in Japan, mainly in the modern era.	Fall
Topics in Japanese History II	The world today has been shaped by war, and Japan is no exception. This course surveys film, literature and visual representations including paintings and news media in order to understand the impact of war on 20th-century Japan. Students will also visit Tokyo museums and examine various wartime narratives.	Fall
Topics in Japanese History III	This course examines mainly popular representations of the past in film, literature and manga. Examples include books by historical-fiction author Shiba Ryūtarō and movies like “Pride” (Puraido: Unmei no Toki; 1998) and “The Eternal Zero” (Eien no Zero; 2013). It also investigates representations of war and trauma. In addition to the historical context regarding the relations between history and literature in Japan, as well as the politics of memory inherent in any historical representation, the course considers changing views within the field of history about representing the past.	Spring

Title	Description	Semester
Topics in Japanese History IV	This course offers a broad survey of Japanese history from the Jōmon to the modern era. It pays particular attention to the modern era from the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the end of World War II. The course examines the development of Japan in the broader context of world history. Thus, it looks at the cultures of trade and interaction and the mutual perceptions between Japan and its neighbors, China and Korea. Similarly, it investigates Japanese relations with European nations from 1600 and eventually the U.S. from 1853 onward. Some of the questions the course seeks to answer include: What have the patterns of interaction been like between Japan and its Asian neighbors throughout history? What unique local factors contributed to the early development of technology and industry in Japan? What factors contributed to shaping a sense of Japanese nationalism or nationhood? What factors have shaped Japanese religious, political and popular thought over the centuries?	Spring
Topics in Japanese Culture I	This course will introduce Japanese culture focusing on the close relationship between its people and its climate. The four seasons are clearly defined in Japan, and has a strong influence over its people's way of life; a way of life that constitutes Japan's "culture." It is no exaggeration to say that the sense of oneness with nature characterizes the Japanese ethos, aesthetics and behavior. Every season, various rituals and cultural events are held throughout the country. These will be introduced, with an interpretation from a linguist's perspective.	Fall
Topics in Japanese Culture II	This course introduces Japan's World Heritage sites, both cultural and natural, listed by UNESCO. It explains how the Japanese appreciate what nature brings to their lives. It is designed to provide students with information about the history, culture, religious beliefs, architecture, cuisine and nature related to Japan's World Heritage Sites, ranging from Mount Fuji, Himeji Castle, Itsukushima Shrine, Nikko, Kyoto etc..	Fall

Title	Description	Semester
Topics in Japanese Culture III	<p>In this course, students will not only learn in detail about Japanese traditional arts such as flower arrangement, calligraphy, tea ceremony, Noh, Kyogen, and Kabuki, but also acquire the ability to introduce Japanese culture overseas. Guest speakers who are internationally active will lecture and demonstrate their art when possible.</p> <p>The course also introduces Japanese cuisine “Washoku”, and demonstrates how Japanese food culture reflects the appreciation of the four seasons. Included is a look at Japanese sweets, highlighting how the Japanese appreciate the beauty of the changing of the seasons.</p> <p>The course allows students to deepen their understanding of the geographical and historical background of Japanese culture, as well as how the Japanese appreciate and express beauty in their art representations.</p>	Spring
Topics in Japanese Culture IV	<p>The course introduces Japanese contemporary cultural features such as anime, fashion, music, robot theater and origami. It will also enable students to acquire skills to introduce Japanese contemporary culture globally. Guest speakers will demonstrate the “cool Japan” initiative and how Japanese contemporary art promotes cultural exchanges. Included in the course is a hands-on experience of origami. The course allows students to appreciate Japanese “hearts and minds” as reflected in contemporary culture.</p>	Spring
Topics in Japanese Economy, Business and Policy I	<p>This course primarily examines the activities of famous Japanese entrepreneurs, including the founders of Sony and Honda. The course also examines some structures and systems in the Japanese economy and industrial policy of Japanese government from studies of their activities. Through the course, students will be able to understand the essence of the Japanese economy.</p>	Fall
Topics in Japanese Economy, Business and Policy II	<p>This course examines several topics concerning Japan’s education system and related issues. It also makes a comparative review of issues in Japan and developing countries. Topics include Japan’s education system, issues and the central administrative and budgetary system. The course also covers curricula, school management, efforts aimed at global human resource development, trends in international education cooperation, issues in developing countries and the World Bank’s initiatives to provide education assistance to developing countries. The course will also involve presentations and group discussions to promote communication among students.</p>	Fall

Title	Description	Semester
Topics in Japanese Economy, Business and Policy III	The course examines the economic policymaking process in Japan, based on the perspective of national economic competitiveness. Japan swiftly achieved economic development in Asia but faced various problems as well. This course examines how Japan dealt with these problems, considering the relationship between the economy and politics. Issues such as energy policy, trade liberalization, regulatory reform and international standardization are discussed.	Spring
Topics in Japanese Economy, Business and Policy IV	Over the past 60 years, Japan has provided Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries in order to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community. ODA is one of the most important diplomatic tools for the Japanese government. Assistance for self-help efforts is its philosophy on the basis of Japan's experience of reconstruction after World War II. On the other hand, the environment surrounding ODA is changing significantly with the rapid change of the political and security environment surrounding Japan. This course introduces the philosophy, transitions and features of Japan's ODA, focusing on some successful projects in Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America. Students will also have opportunities to study project formulation and post evaluation of ODA's projects through workshops.	Spring