**Intercultural Seminar**

**JAPN 4500/6500**

Instructor: Masato Kikuchi

Office: Swann 315

Office hours: T/Th @@-@@

**Description**

In the world of increasing globalization in business, economics, politics, international relations, education, media, etc., it is imperative for our graduates (ALIS/IAML/GEML/IP) to be equipped with linguistic and cultural knowledge to function as a global citizen who can distinguish themselves by demonstrating intercultural communication competence across languages and culture. In order to reach that goal, this course provides students with opportunities to critically examine and analyze challenges that cultural collisions may produce through discussion, debate, team-based brainstorming, etc. The concept of *Sustainable Development,* defined as activity that balances the need for growth against the need to protect the quality of life in natural, social and cultural environments, serves as a critical lens in fostering students’ cultural sensitivity, which is the core of global citizenship: “Am I sensitive enough to recognize intercultural communication issues and does my solution to the problem have enough room for development and yet is sustainable?” Concurrent with class activities, students will also individually engage in his/her own research/project to complete and present to the class at the end of the course. This course is designed to reintegrate students who have fulfilled the minimum IP requirement of a 26-week overseas experience with those practicing the discipline at Georgia Tech. This course is **required** for IP students as well as ALIS/GEML/IAML majors.

**Prerequisites**

4500 students: At least 6 hrs. at 3000-4000 level or instructor permission plus at least 12 credit hours of study/work abroad experience.  
  
6500 students: Graduate Standing

**Course Goals and Learning objectives**

At the completion of the course, students will:

1. understand major concepts and theories on culture, which are useful in interpreting cultural variances at a profound level rather than at a mere behavioral level
2. recognize and understand advanced aspects of Japanese culture and patterns of behavior, which are intertwined deeply with its history, society, religion (philosophy)
3. relate their understanding of Japanese culture through discussion of their own living and work/study experience (as designed under International Plan), as well as other guest speakers’ similar experiences
4. interpret and analyze actual cases emerging from the collision of Japanese culture with others by using general concepts and theories
5. apply a cultural lens of *Sustainable Development* to come up with culture-specific problem solving (tentative) through simulation and games
6. operate professionally with persons of different cultures and in multicultural work environments
7. apply theoretical and applied knowledge that they learned in this class to their own research projects

**Major Components and Assessment Measures**

This course consists of the following three major blocks of learning modules:

1. Culture as concept
2. Culture as context
3. Culture in research

The following provides rationale for each block, as well as sample activities and assessment measures.

1. **Culture as concept**

The primary purpose of this component is to introduce students to major culture studies, theories and concepts. Students will see how theoreticians built on previous studies, added their own insight, and advanced intercultural understanding. For instance, students will learn the work of Edward T. Hall, the founder of intercultural communication, who synthesized insights from cultural anthropology, linguistics, ethology, and Freudian psychoanalytic theory into this highly interdisciplinary field. We will see how Geert Hofstede applied Hall’s concepts of “low/high context”, “proxemics/chronomics (space/time organization)” in his typology of corporate culture, and how Richard Lewis integrated Hall’s and Hofstede’s into his own analyses of culture. Following this theoretical development, we will gain tools to analyze culture, frames of reference to reflect on our challenging experience abroad, and insight in bringing the best out of such cultural collision. We will also be introduced to cultural concepts and notions specific to Japanese through the exploration of anthropological and sociological analyses. Since language is closely intertwined with culture (i.e., linguistic relativism vis-à-vis universalism), Japanese communication styles and linguistic structures are also analyzed in depth.

Some representative activities in this component include:

* + presentation and critiquing of selected reading materials;
  + examination of concepts and theories through books and films, and interviews (both corporate and individual);
  + self-reflection of living/study/work abroad experience

The assessment of this component utilizes the following:

* + written analyses and critiques of reading materials;
  + one presentation on Japanese cultural concepts and organization of a debate;
  + analysis of living/study/work abroad experience based on synthesis and integration of acquired cultural knowledge followed by a presentation of the result;

1. **Culture as context**

This component is devoted to the actual application of cultural knowledge, analytical skills and insight gained and sharpened through the first section, **culture as concept**. The running theme in this component is sustainability, which has many outlets, be it sociocultural, economic, political and environmental. The notion of sustainability will be examined through cross-national, as well as in-country contexts, both synchronic and diachronic time frames. Student-initiated research is expected to find cases where conflicts were resolved in a nonzero-sum manner, as well as cases where conflicts led to disaster. Concluding this section would be a simulation game where students themselves are the sole players and will need to apply all their knowledge, skills, and cultural sensitivity to resolve conflicts (e.g., an American advisor/businessperson/employee who experiences conflicting cultural forces in Japan).

Some activities include:

* + students' research and in-depth analyses of cross-cultural conflicts which lead to in-class presentation and debate;
  + discussion and analysis of case studies involving US and Japan media in comparative perspective;
  + analysis of a film which depicts an acculturation process of an American individual during the most tumultuous period of Japan, involving political, social, economic issues;
  + guest speaker lecture and discussion.

The assessment of this component utilizes the following:

* + one oral presentation of a conflict and the subsequent organization of debate;
  + one written report of a case study;
  + role play in a student-created simulation game depicting conflicts during intercultural communication followed by a discussion on how to resolve the conflicts and whether proposed resolutions are sustainable.
  + active participation in the guest speaker’s lecture and discussion.

1. **Culture in research**

This is an out-of-class, individual component, consisting of an oral presentation and written research paper in Japanese that integrates expertise in the student’s major field and country knowledge as well as evidence of cultural context understanding and sound research methodology. Students may choose a theme or a topic related to their major field, place it in the cultural context of Japan, and analyze it through a cultural lens. Students may collect data through personal interviews, survey questions in local Japanese companies, and library research at JETRO, Japanese Consulate, US-Japan Society, etc. Below are some examples of topics:

* US-Japan relations: A contrastive analysis of US and Japanese media perspectives
* Translation in cross-cultural communication: Consequences and alternatives
* American interns in Japan: Problems and resolutions
* A historical analysis of US-Japan trade friction: From conflict to cooperation
* Emergence of popular culture in Japan: Cultural sustainability vs. cultural creativity
* Cross-cultural communication in Japanese companies in Georgia

The assessment of this component is done in the following areas:

Written thesis

* Content (methodology, data, analysis, organization)
* Accuracy of language use

Presentation

* Presentation mechanics (engaging manner, provocative discussion questions)
* Delivery in Japanese

**Assessment**

The students’ grades are based on:

Class participation 20%

* Lecture and discussion
* Guest speaker and discussion
* Analyses of case studies and discussion
* Film and discussion

Exams (knowledge-based) 30%

Individual presentations in Japanese 10%

* Living/study/work experience
* Analysis of a case study

Homework 15%

Final research project 25%

Class Participation

Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to participate in class activities. Your class participation is evaluated on a 10-point in each class period:

10 = high degree of both active participation and preparedness

9 = moderate degree of active participation and high degree of preparedness

8 = moderate degree of both active participation and preparedness

7 = low degree of active participation and preparation

5 = present but barely effective or often shows signs of inattention (See Grading Policies for examples.)

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0 = absent

Participation grades will be posted every two weeks. Your overall average is used to calculate the class participation part of the grade (e.g., If your average score is 8.5, your participation grade is 20% x 8.5/10 = 17%). If students engage in activities which indicate their **inattention or non-participation** in the classroom activities (e.g. falling asleep, text-messaging, doing homework, reading irrelevant materials, etc.), they will receive **a score of 7 or below for the class period**. Students **are not allowed to use their computers, cellphones** in class unless directed otherwise. Failure to comply with this will result in lowering their participation and performance grades. Students **are allowed to miss a class** without penalty up to **two** times. At the same time, the GT’ rules and regulations (<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/> ) will be honored, which allow the absences due to the participations in approved Institute activities and governs other attendance issues, such as absences due to funerals, participation in particular religious observation, jury duty, etc.

Daily participation grades can be accessed through T-square’s Gradebook weekly.

Homework

Each homework is posted on the Assignments in T-square and a total of 100 points are assigned to short essays, fill-in-the-blanks and multiple-choice questions, etc. Students are instructed to submit their completed assignment to the Assignment tool. The graded assignments will be returned through the Assignment tool by the next class.

Presentations

For each presentation, 4500 students can present primarily in Japanese but are allowed to use some English (up to 20%); 6500 students are expected to present entirely in Japanese. Each presentation is evaluated on the following criteria totaling 100 points:

1. Submission of the first script (5); Submission of the final script (10)
2. Proportion of Japanese to English: Was it satisfactory? (15)
3. Topic: Was the content appropriate for the topic/purpose of the presentation? (10)
4. Organization: Was the presentation well organized (clearly stated thesis, sufficient supporting materials)? (15)
5. Time limit: Was the speech within the time limitation? (10)
6. Language accuracy: Did the speech contain grammatical structures and appropriate vocabulary? (15)
7. Delivery: Was the speech clear (e.g., pronunciation, fluency, intonation, etc)? (10)
8. Visual aids and glossary: Was the visual aid helpful? Was the glossary for special vocabulary, if any, helpful? (10)

Exams

At the completion of each theme, an exam will be given, testing comprehension of the content materials and mastery of new grammar and vocabulary.

Individual Research Project

Students are expected to follow a common research paper organization such as *Background Study, Hypotheses/Research Questions, Methodology, Results,* and *Discussion*. 4500 students can elect to mix Japanese and English (up to 20%) in compiling the research paper of 8 to 10 pages. 6500 students must write the research paper of 10 to 15 pages entirely in Japanese. Your research project paper is evaluated on the following criteria totaling 100 points:

1. Submission of the first draft (5); Submission of the final draft (10)
2. Proportion of Japanese to English: Was it satisfactory? (15)
3. Topic: Was the content appropriate for the topic/purpose of the research? (10)
4. Organization: Was the research well organized (Did it follow a standard research outline, have clearly stated thesis, sufficient supporting materials, etc.)? (30)
5. Citation: Were the sources well documented? (10)
6. Language accuracy: Did the paper contain grammatical structures and appropriate vocabulary? (20)

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 0-59%

All final grades will be accessible through T-square.

## Course expectations and guidelines

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code> / or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Students with disabilities

Reasonable accommodations are provided to self-identified students with disabilities who meet the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the program of study. Consideration may be given to the substitution or modification of certain course requirements as long as such changes do not detract from the quality of the educational experience and the changes remain within the accreditation criteria for the degree program. Such substitutions or modifications must be approved by the school chair, department head, or college dean, and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and/or the Graduate Committee. For further information, please go to <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu>

Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

Late assignments receive no credit. Make-up quizzes and exams can be given with 20% penalties. If you know you will surely miss quizzes or examples, please make an arrangement with the instructor to take a quiz/an exam in advance to avoid the penalty.

**Schedule:**

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|  | In class | Homework (before coming to class) & Quizzes & Tests |
| Week 1 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Orientation (PRICA)  Discussion: intercultural experience  In-class Exercise: Paradigm Shift Exercise, Illusion Exercise | Be prepared to discuss below in class in Japanese:   * Your experience in Japan which surprised you * A conflict with your Japanese friend over something you would think trivial * Films/newspaper articles which you think would depict cultural clashes (e.g., Avatar) |
| Class  Period 2 | Cultural concepts & theories (Hall)  Exercise: What is communication (I-54)  Space talks | Read: Hall (Silent Language: Introduction and chapter pp. 20-33)  HW: Hall Assignment #1  Write: My challenging intercultural experience ( 1 page) |
| Week 2 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Cultural concepts & theories (Hall)  Exercise: Context (I-67) | Read: Hall (Beyond Culture chapters 1 & 6) Write: My challenging intercultural experience |
| Class  Period 2 | HC-LC Factors in Advertising Media | HW: Hall Assignment #2  Read: Elizabeth Wu¨rtz |
| Week 3 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Cultural concepts & theories (Hofstede)  Exercise: Individualism vs. collectivism(I-182) | Read & HW: Hofstede (Chapter 7) |
| Class  Period 2 | Cultural concepts & theories (Hofstede)  Presentation: Hofstede’s index (I-197) | HW: Website Worksheet |
| Week 4 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Presentation: Hofstede’s index--Continued  Cultural concepts & theories (Elizabeth Wu¨rtz) Web-design (McDonald) in various cultures | Read: Elizabeth Wu¨rtz |
| Class  Period 2 | Cultural concepts & theories (Elizabeth Wu¨rtz) Web-design (McDonald) in various cultures | Read: Elizabeth Wu¨rtz  HW research: Find web-designs /CMs of a global corporation, which you think would represent a cultural contrast |
| Week 5 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Cultural concepts & theories (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, Chapters 3)  Exercise: categorization/stereotyping (IC 13-14) | Read & HW: T&H (Chapter 3) |
| Class  Period 2 | Cultural concepts & theories (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, chapter 11)  Exercise: *Kachi shikoo* (IC 109) | Read & HW: T&H (Chapter 11) |
| Week 6 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Cultural concepts & theories (Lewis)  Exercise: Joke (I-208) | Read: Lewis (Chapters 1, 3)  Reflection: Cultural jokes you want to share with the class |
| Class  Period 2 | Cultural concepts & theories (+ Application)  Exercise: Common sense (I-277) | Read: Lewis (Chapter 5) |
| Week 7 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Project X | Watch the uploaded video  Write an essay reflecting on the story ( 1 page) |
| Class  Period 2 | Ibunka case study pp. 106-108 (Yatsushiro) /  What would you say in Japanese in this context (Work Sheet)?  Students select topics for their presentations on 3/2 | Exam I |
| Week 8 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Japanese culture and language (Hinds) | Read & HW: Hinds |
| Class  Period 2 | Japanese cultural concepts & theories (students’ presentations) from Davies and Ikeno | Presentation of the selected topics |
| Week 9 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Presentation continued  Film (The Last Samurai) & Reflection |  |
| Class  Period 2 | Film (The Last Samurai) & Reflection--continued | Read: *Bushido* from Davies and Ikeno PDF file and review “The Last Samurai” worksheet |
| Week 10 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Film (The Last Samurai) & Reflection--continued |  |
| Class  Period 2 | Japanese corporate cultural concepts & theories | Read: Yoshimura and Anderson (Chapter 2)  <http://www.nhk.or.jp/gendai/kiroku/detail02_3532_all.html> |
| Week 11 | | |
|  | Recess |  |
| Week 12 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Japanese corporate cultural concepts & theories--continued | HW: Yoshimura and Anderson (Chapter 2) |
| Class  Period 2 | United Nations: UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development  Sustainable development in context Inside Japan (historical perspective)  -- rapid economic growth period in the 60’s and its consequence on the environment vs. current eco-friendly economic growth;  -- government medical policy on leprosy in the 50’s vs. current policy on HIV/AIDS;  -- language standardization movement in the 60’s vs. current endangered dialect project  -- demographic change (low birth rate of 1.29; increase of ‘parasite singles’) | Read: Jizoku kanōsei  <http://www.businessinsider.com/university-miami-net-zero-water-system-college-dorms-2015-5> |
| Week 13 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Traditional values on modern Japanese society (Kumagai) | Read & HW: Kumagai |
| Class  Period 2 | Film: Women’s issues and low birth rates | Video & HW: Drama *Kekkon Shinai* |
| Week 14 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Media in U.S.-Japan Relations: A Look at Stereotypes (Media: fiction or facts?) | Read: Krauss and Pharr (Chapter 8) |
| Class  Period 2 | Media in comparison  <http://www.american.edu/soc/international-media/japan-crisis-panel.cfm>  <http://news.blogs.cnn.com/2011/03/12/japan-earthquake-live-blog-death-toll-rises-amid-widespread-destruction/> |  |
| Week 15 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Final project discussion and  Preparation for the Reading Test | Exam II (covers up to week 13)  Be prepared to talk briefly about your ideas about the final project |
| Class  Period 2 | Case study I (Cultures collide) Short presentation reporting on case studies  - US Ads Increasingly Attach Japanese and Their Culture  - The Seattle Mariners Baseball Team and Nintendo  - Politician’s Remarks and Letters to the Editor  - Japan-Bashing, America-Bashing, and Political Cartoons  From “Japan bashing” to “Japan passing”  <http://www6.nhk.or.jp/special/detail/index.html?aid=20080128> | Short presentation reporting on a case study of your choice |
| Week 16 | | |
| Class  Period 1 | Case study II (Cultures collide) – Popular culture (anime/hip-hop/films) | Read: Condry (Introduction) |
| Class  Period 2 | Reading period --- No class | First draft of individual research project is due. |
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|  |  | Final draft of individual research project is due during final exam period |