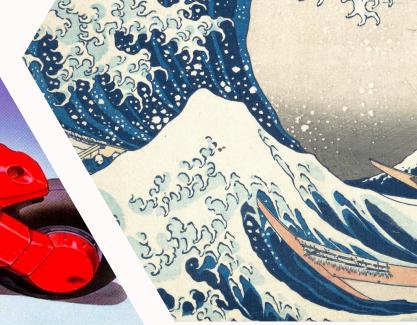


Vee Kennedy developed this course design as part of Dr. Kara Taczak's ENC 5390: Special Topics in Rhetoric/Composition Studies Course. This course design describes a special topics upper level course in Writing and Rhetoric. Inspiration was taken from past course designs in recent issues of Composition Studies, including Omar Yacoub's *Multilingual Academic Writing: Transfer from a Bridge Course* from Khirsten L. Scott's *Whose World is This? Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture*. Specific advice was also provided from Drs. Joel Bergholtz, Jeremy Carnes and Garret Arban, all of whom are current instructors of ENC 4416 at UCF. Additional scaffolding also came from Dr. Anastasia Salter's ENC 6216: Comics as ImageText, DIG 6436: Critical Making, and ENG 6819: Critical Making for Humanist Scholarship.

RHETORIC IN JAPANESE MEDIA



Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Proposed Course Description

This course traces the multimodal use of rhetoric in Japanese media, focusing on anime, film and video games through their rhetorical genre conventions. Both western and global rhetorical theory are used for analysis. No prior instruction in Japanese language, culture, or media studies is necessary.



Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Theoretical Rationale

We as instructors often have enough cultural capital to guide students through rhetorical analysis even if we are not familiar with the media artifacts ourselves. This, however, becomes ever more challenging when the media artifact in question is adapted from a different cultural context through translation and localization, as is often the case when American college students analyze Japanese video games, manga, or anime. While there's nothing wrong with first approaching a rhetorical analysis of Japanese media with tools like Grant-Davie's *Rhetorical Situations and their Constituents* and Laura Bolin Carroll's *Backpacks vs. Briefcases: Steps toward Rhetorical Analysis*, these frameworks may not do enough on their own to help students contextualize global media. This creates a marked missed opportunity for students to engage with rhetorical concepts in analysis of global media and is particularly concerning when it comes to anime, manga, and Japanese video games, all of which have their own complex fields of study within Japanese Media and Game Studies.

The global reach of Japanese media cannot be understated. *Pokémon*, for just one example, is one of the highest grossing media franchises of all time, with the video games alone having sold more than 489 million units, with official translations into nine languages; in terms of overall video game sales, it is third in sales behind only the Mario franchise and Tetris, which are each more than a decade older than the first *Pokémon* release (Pokemon. Mario is, of course, also Japanese. The 2024 Association for Japanese Animation Annual Industry Report indicated that for the second time since recording began, the 2023 industry market share showed a larger proportion of viewership coming from overseas sources than Japanese ones, meaning that a majority of anime being consumed worldwide is happening outside of Japan, and often in translation (NHK News).

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Japan has both a history of complicated scholarly conversation investigating the western rhetorical tradition and a flourishing domestic rhetorical canon of its own. Despite this, rhetorical analysis has thus far been an underutilized research method in the area of Japanese Media and Game Studies both in Japan and abroad. In 1990, Roichi Okabe provided a genealogy of translated rhetorical scholarship through the Meiji Period (1868-1912); in that same text, he illustrated a summation of Japanese scholars' response to and discourse about the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of a rhetorical situation, including occasion, speaker, audience, invention, disposition, style, memory, and delivery, with many of the aforementioned having subtle differences and developments in the Japanese canon over time. This work was later followed up by rhetoricians Massimiliano Tomasi and Junya Morooka. Seldom, however, do we see this work situated in context to rhetorical analysis of Japanese media.

Culturally situating the rhetorical tradition of Japan, however, requires more than examining Japanese Rhetoric in conjunction with the western canon. Preconceived notions about Japan itself must be interrogated. It is often thought that Japan doesn't have the same racial and ethnic tensions that we face in a diverse country like the United States. The perception of Japan as an ethnically and linguistically homogeneous society is and has always been false. Authors John Lie, Anne-elise Lewallen, and Michael Weiner have written on this topic at length. In addition to the majority ethnic Japanese, modern Japan is home to at least two indigenous groups, the Ainu and the Ryukyu, only one of which has been formally recognized by the state (Weiner; Lewallen; Lie). There are also a number of additional ethnic and/or racial minorities within Japan, including stateless Zainichi Koreans, hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors), and burakumin. These groups face considerable marginalization in Japanese society and are often rendered invisible through erasure.

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Contemporary Japanese Media of all forms cannot be fully evaluated without being situated in this complicated context. Analyzing contemporary Japanese media without this context is akin to discussing mainstream media from the United States without context of the same social issues. It leads to both reinforcing erasure of marginalized groups and reductive lack of meaningful media criticism and consumer engagement on the part of student scholars.

There are, of course, no shortage of rhetors and scholars in Writing Studies who are active in the field of Game Studies and Anime Studies, encouraging their students to participate in this work as well. CCCC's maintains a special interest group on games called the Council for Play and Game Studies and an Asian/Asian American Caucus. Cynthia Selfe and James Paul Gee have directly discussed how games connect to literacy. Bogost's *Persuasive Games* details how the procedural rhetorics of games impact users and the arguments that games make about how the world works. Bogost's work in particular has inspired a number of Writing Studies teachers to teach about games. Richard Colby at the University of Colorado includes assessment in his First-Year Writing Courses that asks "students [to] analyze and produce their own persuasive games," and Mikayala Davis has produced work on using video games in the online writing classroom. On the anime front, Christopher Bolton has published a volume on Interpreting Anime using various forms of textual and media analysis. Thomas Lamarre's *The Anime Machine: A Media Theory of Animation* won both the Most Outstanding Publication in the Field of Japanese Studies awarded by the European Association of Japanese Studies and an honorable mention for the Katherine Singer Kovacs prize from the Modern Language Association.

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Institutional and Programmatic Context

This course was designed as an upper-level topics course within The Department of Writing and Rhetoric at the University of Central Florida. The Department of Writing and Rhetoric includes both a BA and MA program, as well as minor programs and certificates. The University of Central Florida services a diverse population of students with an undergraduate enrollment of over 69,000. Upper-level courses from the Department that offer similar content include The ENC 3382 Rhetoric of Comics, ENC 4416: Writing in Digital Environments, ENC 4434: Visual and Material Rhetoric, and ENC 4378: Writing in Global and Transnational Contexts.

Additional context for this course comes from the relative lack of Japanese Studies programming within the Florida College and University Systems. The only college in Florida to contain a full-service Japanese Studies program is Florida International University, approximately three hours south of Orlando. The Department of Modern Languages and Literature does, however, provide two years of Japanese language through the intermediate level to UCF students. While there is considerable interest in Japanese media on campus, including a flourishing Japanese Culture Group and Japanese Conversation Club, there is a relative lack of Japan-related content and coursework available at the upper division. Students at UCF may elect an undergraduate Asian Studies minor, which includes elective offerings such as ART 3824: Anime and Manga and ASH4442: Modern Japan, however, neither of these options address any of the above content through a lens of rhetorical study. In addition, while there are several video game-related courses at the University of Central Florida, few if any at the undergraduate level target a digital humanist-perspective in terms of cultural and global rhetorics.

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Course Objectives

- Gain in-depth writing and rhetorical knowledge relevant to effective and ethical communication in the 21st century
- Practice ethical use of GenAI tools in multiple writing contexts
- Apply rhetorical genre theory to a wide variety of contemporary Japanese media
- Broaden understanding of global rhetorics in the context of Japan

Learning Objectives

- Acquire a working knowledge of the differences between the eastern and western rhetorical traditions
- Practice ethical use of GenAI tools in multiple writing contexts
- Describe the genre conventions of anime, Japanese video games, and Japanese film

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Proposed Reading & Viewing List

- Selections from Bawarshi & Rieff's *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* (2010), Bogost's *Rhetoric in Video Games and Persuasive Games* (2007), Miller's *Genre as Social Action* (1984), Gee's *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* (2003), Bolton's *Interpreting Anime* (2009), Lamarre's *The Anime Ecology: A Genealogy of Television, Animation, and Game Media* (2018), Suan's *Anime's Identity* (2021), Hutchinson's *Japanese Culture through Video Games* (2019), Nye's *Soft Power* (1990), Okabe's *The Impact of Western Rhetoric on the East: The Case of Japan* (1990), and Tomasi's *Rhetoric in Modern Japan: Western Influences on the Development of Narrative and Oratorical Style* (2004)
- Excerpts from: Astro Boy (1963), Barefoot Gen (1983), Grave of the Fireflies (1988), Godzilla Minus One (2023), Pluto (2023) and more

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Proposed Major Assignments & Deliverables

- Weekly Reading/Viewing Responses (Formative)
- Game Traversal
- Rhetorical Analysis Project (Summative)

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

Marketing Ideas

- Modern Languages Department (Asian Studies Minor)
- Japanese Conversation Club
- Anime Club
- Japanese Courses at UCF (Vee Knows the Faculty)
- Nicholson Students in GAIM

Topics: Rhetoric in Japanese Media

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