

**Course Description:** Gender and Identity in Japanese History and Culture

**Instructor:** Caitlin Casiello

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**Brief Course Description:**

This course provides a survey of Japanese history and culture through the lens of gender as a special topic. Taking as given the feminist theoretical proposition that gender roles are partly determined by time and place, we look at a number of moments in Japanese history to explore how gender was constructed, how it was expressed, and how it transformed in each instance. Topics discussed include classical literary culture and gendered writing practices, the potential of a “third gender” in medieval literature and other forms of gender variance, sex work in Edo, gendered performance in Kabuki, masculinity and samurai culture, feminist analysis of the clan system, modern literature and women writers, and contemporary debates on gender, family, and sex.

**Course Objectives:**

1. Learn about the history of Japan and gain broad familiarity with different modes of literary and cultural production throughout Japanese history.
2. Conduct research on Japanese history and culture using sources effectively.
3. Analyze gender as a category of human experience shaped by different cultural and historical norms in Japanese history.