

Japan and the United States, Past and Present

Spring Term

Class days/times - TBC

Lecture

Number of points - TBC

Instructor: Professor T French, College of International Relations

french@fc.ritsumei.ac.jp

Office Hours / Location: TBC

Course Description

This course seeks to deepen students' understanding of the current and historic political, diplomatic and security relations between Japan and the U.S. The US-Japan relationship is described by many as the most important foreign relationship either country has, and since 1945 relations with the United States have formed the central focus of Japanese foreign policy and security strategy. This course aims to improve students' awareness of the origins and evolution of US-Japan relations and will examine the changing relations between the two countries and the evolution of their relationship from bitter rivalry to today's close partnership. Students of this course will deepen their understanding of the various layers of the US-Japan relationship and will be introduced to the major themes and issues which both underpin and, at times, strain, the 'alliance'. The course will include fieldtrips, guest speakers, and an in-class table top simulation of an international crisis in the region. Works authored by Japanese scholars or created for Japanese students (translated into English) will be used as the primary reading material in order to help students broaden their perspectives on the subject.

Keywords: War, 'alliance', the great powers, diplomacy, occupation, the balance of power, sovereignty, international law, bandwagoning, balancing, free-riding, containment, Cold War, Yoshida doctrine, the influence of identity on IR, Japan's reactive / adaptive diplomacy, trade friction, war memory, public history, nationalism.

Student Learning Outcomes

Primary Aims:

Students will deepen their understanding of the US-Japan relationship and will be introduced to the major themes and issues which both underpin and, at times, strain, the 'alliance'.

Secondary Aims:

Students will further develop their skills of critical analysis by making sense of the issues through the various conceptual frameworks employed in the module. The teaching methods of the module are designed to develop cognitive, writing and presentational skills, in particular:

- Participation in group discussions
- Engaging in structured debates
- Researching topics via the creative use of library and internet sources
- Writing scholarly essays
- Taking part in simulations

Required and Recommended Texts:

Required:

M. Iokibe (ed), The History of US-Japan Relations: From Perry to the Present, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018

M. Sato, F. Gomi, T. Takano (eds), 英文詳説日本史: JAPANESE HISTORY for High School, Yamakawa Shuppansha, 2024

John Dower, Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II, WW Norton, 2000

Recommended:

T. French (ed), The Economic and Business History of Occupied Japan: New Perspectives, Routledge, 2017

T. French, National Police Reserve, The Origin of Japan's Self Defense Forces, Global Oriental, 2014

W. Lafeber, The Clash: U.S.-Japanese Relations Throughout History, WW Norton, 1998

G. McCormack, Client State: Japan in the American Embrace, Verso, 2007

M. Schaller, Altered States: The United States and Japan since the Occupation, Oxford, 1997

E. Takemae, Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy, Continuum, 2002

Note: A reading list will be provided and additional readings will be assigned at the start of the course.

Course Requirements

Assignments

Date	Assignment	Percentage of Grade	Details
Varies	Discussion leadership	15%	Assigned equally, and to each student at least once. Discussion leaders are expected to prepare a short 5 minute intro to the topic and raise two questions for class discussion
All weeks	Participation	25%	Contributions to the class including completing polls, doing readings, active contribution to class discussions, attendance
Last third	Simulation preparation	20%	Production of a set of notes on the policy and capabilities of the actor you are assigned.
Penultimate session	In class final timed paper and exam (Handwritten in 85 minutes)	Section A: 15%	A test of factual knowledge on the content of the course
		Section B: 25%	This is not an open-book exam but limited notes (one two sided piece of A4 paper) may be used and a bibliography (using at least 5 quality sources) will be prepared and submitted by students in advance. To be cited in the APA style.

Weekly Readings/Homework

Amount of reading: approximately 100 pages/week, depending on course materials. Other assignments will be occasionally assigned in addition to or instead of readings.

Field Trips

At least one fieldtrip (to the Kyoto Museum for World Peace – near Kinkakuji) will be conducted. Relevant readings, lectures, pre/post-trip assignments will be assigned.

Class Schedule

Tuesday, January 12	First day of classes
Tuesday, January 19	Deadline for course registration
Thursday, February 11	National Holiday 建国記念日 (no classes)
Fri – Sat, February 5 – 6	KCJS Spring trip
Tuesday, February 23	Emperor's Birthday 天皇誕生日 (no classes)
Monday, March 1	Spring break begins
Monday, March 8	Classes resume

Monday, March 22

National holiday 春分の日 (no classes)

Friday, April 16

Last Day of classes

Sessions:

1. America Encounters Japan, 1836–94
2. The Emergence of Japan on the Global Stage, 1895–1908
3. The Great War and Shifting Relations, 1909–19
4. The 1920s: The Washington Treaty System and the Immigration Issue
5. The 1930s: Japan's War with China and American Non-Recognition
6. Field Trip – Kyoto Museum for World Peace
7. War In East Asia 1931-45
8. The Occupation of Japan: 1945 – 1952
9. Regaining Autonomy? From San Francisco to the ANPO Protests
10. The 1960 ANPO Crisis
11. The Self Defense Forces and the US-Japan Alliance
12. Japan and the Cold War in Asia
13. The 1960s: Japan's Economic Rise and the Maturing of the Partnership
14. The 1970s: Stresses on the Relationship
15. S.O.F.A - So good? US Bases in Japan
16. The 1980s: The Decade of Neoliberalism
17. Trade Friction- from Textiles to the TPP
18. The Nakasone - Reagan Era - Late Cold War
19. The 1990s: From a Drifting Relationship to a Redefinition of the Alliance
20. The Gulf War to the Iraq War: An End to Checkbook Diplomacy?
21. US–Japan Leadership in the Post–9/11 World
22. US-Japan Relations 2010 - Present - the 'Ostrich Policy', Ospreys and 'Operation Tomodachi'
23. Simulation (2 classes)
24. Simulation
25. Interpretations – the 4 (and more) Japans
26. Final Evaluation

Course Policies

Classroom Policies:

Attendance and Lateness:

1. Class attendance is mandatory. You are required to have an attendance record of at least 80% in order to pass this class.
2. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class – it is your responsibility to make your presence known to the instructor so that they can record your attendance correctly
3. Since discussion is an essential part of this course please come to class prepared and on time.
4. If you are more than 10 minutes late you will be marked absent

5. NO make-up classes will be given due to student absences
6. Let the instructor know if you have an emergency / illness and will not be able to come to class.
7. Content Warnings: Many of the works discussed will feature violence and difficult scenes; I will endeavour to warn students about these verbally in lectures or before media are shown or consumed by the class. These warnings are given so that all students may be able to fully participate in the course. Let me know if you think my warnings are insufficient.

Devices:

1. Laptops, tablets and phones are not allowed in class for taking notes or for any other purpose. Take notes by hand.
2. Cell phones must be turned off in class. It is inappropriate and disrespectful to go outside to make calls or to send or read text/SNS/email messages during class

Participation:

1. Course readings for each week are assigned in advance and come to class having read them and be prepared to discuss them
2. Actively participate in group discussions
3. No sleeping in class
4. Please do not speak whilst the instructor or your classmates are addressing the class – to do so is disrespectful
5. Respectfully listen to and try to absorb the viewpoints of others – you may still disagree but you will hopefully further understand their points of view. All students should be respectful of each others' experiences and perspectives. Failing to do so will result in intervention by the instructor.

Academic Integrity and AI:

As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. Collaborative scholarship requires the study of other scholars' work, the free discussion of such work, and the explicit acknowledgement of those ideas in any work that inform our own. This exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited.

In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.

Any breach of this intellectual responsibility is a breach of faith with the rest of our academic community. It undermines our shared intellectual culture, and it cannot be tolerated.

The use of ChatGPT or any other AI tools for course assignments (with the exception of artificial neural networks like DeepL for machine translations, duly cited) is tantamount to plagiarism. Any cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to Columbia Undergraduate Global Engagement and the academic advisor at your home institution and are subject to the code of academic

conduct there. In such cases, your final grade will be determined by your home institution and not by KCJS.

Disability Policy:

If you are a student with a disability and have a Disability Services-certified 'Accommodation Letter' from your home institution, please send me this letter before the first day of class to confirm your accommodation needs. If you believe that you might have a disability that requires accommodation and do not have an accommodations letter, you should contact the Center for Undergraduate Global Engagement at Columbia University (uge@columbia.edu).

Reporting Sexual Violence Policy:

If you have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking or sexual exploitation on campus or between members of the community, the university provides resources, both confidential and nonconfidential, to help. Faculty (including myself), staff, and other people in supervisory roles (including RAs) are mandatory reporters, which means we must report all allegations of the above-listed crimes to Columbia University's Title IX office; the Title IX office will then reach out to offer options for how to proceed. If I believe you are about to make an allegation, I will stop you to confirm that you are aware I cannot keep the conversation confidential.

Note: This syllabus will be subject to changes and/or revisions.