Japan in the modern era underwent perhaps the most striking transformation of any country in the modern world. Narrowly escaping colonization, Japan transformed into one of the most important imperial and economic powers in the world. Modern Japan is also doubly fascinating for a comparative take on the great themes of modern global history: the social upheavals and transformations of capitalism and democracy, the rise and fate of modern imperialism, the experience of total war, and the spread of a mass consumer culture. This course examines the invention of new traditions and the construction of a new national identity, the rise and fall of empire, the devastation of World War II, and the astonishing postwar economic growth and puzzling stagnation in contemporary times. This course explores how people in Japan have dealt with the dilemmas of modernity that challenge us all.

**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

*Active and thoughtful* participation is crucial to the success of this course, especially in the section meetings.

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Historiography: 20%
- Midterm Exam: 10%
- Term Paper: 30%
- Final Exam: 20%

**Writing Assignments:** There are two types of writing assignments: one short historiography and one term paper.

**Historiography:** This is a 5-10 page essay, either chosen in consultation with the course head, or taken from a list of possible topics handed out in advance. **Due March 7.**

**Term Paper:** This paper addresses a topic of your own choosing, in consultation with the course head. The paper should draw on relevant secondary works and consult primary documents, most likely in English (whether translated or originally in English). The paper should be roughly 3500 to 5000 words, excluding bibliography. **Due April 30.**

**Exams:** There will be one mid-term examination (**Feb. 24**) and a final examination, both of which cover all assigned readings and lectures to date.
REQUIRED READING

Available for purchase at Amazon.com
Akira Iriye, ed., Pearl Harbor and the Coming of the Pacific War: A Brief History with Documents and Essays (Bedford, 1999).
Shōtarō Ishinomori, Japan Inc. (University of California Press, 1988).
Junichiro Tanizaki, Naomi (Vintage, 2001).

PLAGIARISM
Plagiarism is a serious offense against intellectual community and will not be tolerated. You are advised to review the college's definitions of and policies regarding plagiarism and cheating, which are available online and in print. See, for example: http://www.bu.edu/cas/undergraduate/conductcode.html.

ATTENDANCE
Attendance at every class meeting is expected. It is your responsibility to contact the professor in advance if you will be unable to attend class, and to get notes, handouts, instructions, etc. from the sessions you have missed.

SCHEDULE
Weekly readings are to be completed prior to Wednesday’s class meeting so that discussions can be informed and productive.

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1: CRISIS IN THE TOKUGAWA SYSTEM

JAN. 15: INTRODUCTION; THE TOKUGAWA SYSTEM
JAN. 17: CRISIS IN THE TOKUGAWA SYSTEM

Gordon, A Modern History of Japan, Ch. 1-3, pp. 11-46. [Henceforth MHJ]

Primary Sources:
Selections from Aizawa, New Theses 1, 4, 6, 7.

WEEK 2: RESTORATION OR REVOLUTION?

JAN. 20: NO CLASS—MLK JR. DAY
JAN. 22: THE MEIJI RESTORATION
JAN. 24: DISMANTLING THE OLD ORDER
Primary Sources:
“Memorial on the Proposal to Return the Registers,” SJT II, 674-76.
“Imperial Rescript on the Abolition of the Han,” SJT II, 676.

WEEK 3: CIVILIZATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

JAN. 27: FUKUZAWA AN THE JAPANESE ENLIGHTENMENT
JAN. 29: PARTICIPATION AND PROTEST
JAN. 31: CLASS DISCUSSION

MHJ, Ch. 6, pp. 76-92.
Ivan Morris, The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan, Ch. 9.

Primary Sources:

WEEK 4: CONSTRUCTING THE MEIJI STATE

FEB. 3: BUILDING THE NATION-State
FEB. 5: WOMEN IN THE NEW JAPAN
FEB. 7: CLASS DISCUSSION

MHJ, Ch. 6, pp. 93-112.
Carol Gluck, Japan’s Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period (Princeton, 1985), Ch. 4, 73-101.

Primary Sources:
“The Meiji Constitution, 1889.”
**WEEK 5: RICH NATION, STRONG ARMY**

*FEB. 10: NO CLASS—OUT OF TOWN*
*FEB. 12: THE BEGINNINGS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH*
*FEB. 14: CONSTRUCTING EMPIRE*

*MHI, Ch. 8, pp. 113-137.*

[Available on JSTOR]

**Primary Sources:**
Fukuzawa Yukichi, “Goodbye Asia” (1885).

**WEEK 6: STATE AND SOCIETY IN JAPAN’S IMPERIAL DEMOCRACY**

*FEB. 17: BURGEONING DEMOCRACY AT HOME, EMPIRE ABROAD*
*FEB. 19: THE STATE IN EVERYDAY LIFE*
*FEB. 21: CLASS DISCUSSION AND MIDTERM REVIEW*

*MHI, Ch. 10, 139-180.*
Andrew Gordon, *Labor and Imperial Democracy in Prewar Japan* (Berkeley, 1992), 144-203. (Skim as necessary).

**Primary Sources:**

**WEEK 7: THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND AMERICA’S NEW ORDER IN ASIA**

*FEB. 24: MIDTERM EXAM*
*FEB. 26: THE FIRST WORLD WAR, WILSON, AND A NEW ORDER IN ASIA?*
*FEB. 28: NO CLASS—OUT OF TOWN*

Sadao Asada, “From Washington to London: The Imperial Japanese Navy and the Politics of Naval Limitation, 1921-1930,” in Erik Goldstein and John Maurer,

Primary Sources:
Konoe Fumimaro, “Against a Pacifism Centered on England and America.”

**WEEK 8: MODERN TENSIONS**

*MAR. 3: THE BEGINNINGS OF A US-JAPAN ESTRANGEMENT*

*MAR. 5: WOMEN IN CULTURE AND SOCIETY; TENSIONS IN MODERN LIFE*

*MAR. 7: CLASS DISCUSSION—WEEK 7 AND 8 MATERIAL*

Assignment: Historiography paper due by March 7.


Primary Sources:

**WEEK 9: NO CLASS MEETINGS: SPRING BREAK!!**

**WEEK 10: CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND EMPIRE**

*MAR. 17: THE GREAT DEPRESSION*

*MAR. 19: MOBILIZATION, FASCISM: TOWARD GLOBAL WAR*

*MAR. 21: CLASS DISCUSSION*

*MHJ, Ch. 11, pp. 181-201.*

Louise Young, *Japan’s Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (UC Press, 1999), 55-114.

Primary Sources:
“The Imperial Rule Assistance Association.” *SJT II*, 997-98.

**WEEK 11: JAPAN AT WAR**
MAR. 24: JAPAN AT WAR—THE NEW ORDER AT HOME AND ABROAD
MAR. 26: CLASS ACTIVITY: PEARL HARBOR CONFERENCE
MAR. 28: TOKYO, HIROSHIMA, NAGASAKI, AND THE POLITICS OF SURRENDER

Akira Iriye, ed., Pearl Harbor and the Coming of the Pacific War: A Brief History with Documents and Essays (Bedford, 1999), 14-108, 125-146.
Cook, Japan At War: An Oral History, 203-257.

WEEK 12: AMERICA’S JAPAN

MAR. 31: THE OCCUPIERS
APR. 2: THE OCCUPIED
APR. 4: CLASS DISCUSSION

MHI, Ch. 13, pp. 224-241.

Primary Sources:
“Potsdam Declaration,” SJT II, 1022-23.
“Imperial Rescript on Surrender.” SJT II, 1016-17.
“Ôe Kenzaburô, “Growing up during the Occupation.” SJT II, 1074-77.

WEEK 13: COLD WAR REALIGNMENTS AND THE CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL RESURGENCE

APR. 7: YOSHIDA SHIGERU, ECONOMIC RECOVERY, AND THE POSTWAR SYSTEM
APR. 9: UNEQUAL TREATIES AGAIN?
APR. 11: CLASS DISCUSSION

Chalmers Johnson, MITI and the Japanese Miracle, Ch. 5-6, pp. 157-241.
John W. Dower, “The Useful War,” Daedalus, Vol. 119, No. 3 (Summer 1990), 49-70. [Available on JSTOR]

Primary Sources:

WEEK 14: POSTWAR ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

APR. 14: THE MIRACULOUS MIDDLE CLASS
APR. 16: WORKING MEN AND WOMEN: THE CORPORATE-CENTERED SOCIETY
APR. 18: CLASS DISCUSSION

Kathleen S. Uno, “The Death of ‘Good Wife and Wise Mother’?” *Postwar Japan as History*, 293-324.
Thomas P. Rohlen, *Japan’s High Schools* (1983), Ch. 3-4, 77-141.

Primary Sources:
“Environmental Activism in Postwar Japan: Minamata Disease.” *SJT II*, 1105-06.

WEEK 15: A NEW GLOBAL POWER?

APR. 21: CITIZENS MOVEMENTS AND THE STATE
APR. 23: THE END OF CATCH-UP
APR. 25: CLASS DISCUSSION

*MHI*, Ch. 16, pp. 289-307.
James W. White “The Dynamics of Political Opposition,” *Postwar Japan as History*, 424-448.

Primary Sources:

WEEK 16: THE LOST DECADES, 3.11, AND BEYOND

APR. 28: THE LOST DECADES
APR. 30: 3.11, THE TRIPLE CRISSES, AND ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

Assignment: Term paper due by April 30.

*MHI*, Ch. 17, pp. 308-334.

Primary Sources:
Ishizaka Sei, “A Just War (Tadashii sensō).” *SJT II*, 1295-98.