CIEE Tokyo, Japan

Course title: Modernizing Ancient Japan
Course code: HIST 3001 TOJA
Programs offering course: Summer Japanese Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Summer 2020

Course Description

In this course, students will have the opportunity to critically review the development and processes observed in regard to Japan’s role in the contemporary world setting. We will discuss Japan’s progression from a medieval hierarchy to a world class participant in the international stage among the fraternity of nations. Students will have the opportunity to review Japan’s role in the world’s stage during turbulent war and post war times to the modern day.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Develop a critical understanding of Japan’s progression through the ages and its standing on the world stage today.
- Develop a critical understanding of the historical milestones in respect to Japanese history
- Evaluate Japan’s role in the modern world
- Acquire skills to evaluate and situate historical events as a researcher
- Develop collaboration and communication skills for students through group projects and oral presentations

Course Prerequisites

Successful completion of an introductory level history course – preferably Japanese or Asian history – or equivalent knowledge through self-study.

Methods of Instruction
The course will be taught using lectures, seminars, case study discussions, group presentations, and field trips to local sites of historical interest. Classroom activities will involve group work and critical discussion groups, considering and debating on key transformative issues Japan faced to arrive at its current standing on the world stage.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Essays 20%
2. Class Presentation 10%
3. Final paper 20%
4. Final exam 30%
5. Participation 20%
   TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Essays

Students will be required to submit two 375-word essays and at least two blog entries of 375 words.

Class Presentation

Students will be expected to collaborate and organize a 15-minute long class presentation on a topic of their choice, subject to instructor approval. Students must use both in-class and out-of-class scholarly materials and field research.

Final paper

Students must write a Final Paper on a topic of their choice, subject to instructor approval. The paper must be at least 2,000 words and use both in-class and out-of-class scholarly materials.

Final exam

Closed books exam covering topics covered throughout the class.
Participation

Students are expected to actively participate in class. This includes preparing in advance, engaging in discussions, and being attentive and responsive.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and unexcused absences may result in a lower grade for any affected CIEE course. Unexcused absences from 10 to 20% of the course will result in a reduction of your final grade. Unexcused absence from 20% or more of the course may result in failure of the course. Points may also be deducted for tardiness. Please see the CIEE Academic Manual for more information on CIEE’s attendance policies.

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, and local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class 1.1 Course Introduction

Historical overview of the beginnings of Japan’s social organization.


Week 2

Class 2.1 Isolated Japan


Class 2.2 Isolated Japan (2)
Due: Essay 1 of 4

Class 2.3 The West knocks on Japan’s door


Class 2.4 Field trip to a history museum or historical site

Week 3
Class 3.1 The Samurai class’s transition in the Meiji Period


Class 3.2 The Russo-Japanese War

Due: Essay 2 of 4

Class 3.3 Transitioning from the Meiji to the Taisho Era

Week 4
Class 4.1 Japan during the First World War


Class 4.2 Japan’s Expansion into Asia


Due: Essay 3 of 4

Class 4.3 Japan in the Second World War, 1941 - 1945
Week 5
Class 5.1 Post-war Japan and the Allied Occupation


Due: Essay 4 of 4

Class 5.2 Rise and fall of Japan’s post-war economy

Class 5.3 Field trip to history museum or historical site

Due: Final Paper

Week 6
Class 6.1 Japan in the 21st Century

Class 6.2 Due: Presentations

Class 6.3 Final Exam

Course Materials
Readings


