

# ***SOC 357: Sociology of Japan***

June 3, 2013 – August 10, 2013, 3 Credits (online)

Course Instructor: Robin O'Day, Ph.D.

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*Please be advised that this syllabus may be revised (including the details of the course and required readings). The finalized syllabus will be distributed on the first day of class. Please refrain from purchasing the required texts until after the first day of class.*

## **1. General Course Description (From the Catalogue)**

“SOC 357 Sociology of Japan (3): Persistence and change in economy, policy, religion, education, family, and other institutions of modern Japan.”

## **2. Detailed Course Description**

During the course students will be presented with social scientific material that will enable them to deepen their understanding of contemporary Japanese culture and society. This course poses a basic question: how do we understand other peoples in other societies with different cultures from our own? In order to help answer this question about Japan, we will study scholarly works that use the basic paradigms of social scientific research. Through this method we will examine how cultural constructions and social relations structure everyday life in Japan.

The course will survey a number of important dimensions necessary for coming to a greater appreciation of contemporary Japan. The first half of the course will cover topics that include families, neighborhoods, communities, education, minorities, and religion. In the second half of the course we will examine issues that include working practices, gender, leisure, consumption, politics and popular culture. The course is broadly designed to provide an overview of some of the major areas of social scientific research on Japan from the end of the Second World War to the present. By the end of the course, students should have a working knowledge of the various ways sociology has been applied to deepen our understanding of contemporary Japanese culture and society.

## **3. Required Texts:**

- a. Hendry, J. (2012). Understanding Japanese Society. London & New York: Routledge Curzon.

- b. Goodman, R., Y. Imoto, and T. Toivenen, (eds.), (2012) A Sociology of Japanese Youth: from Returnees to NEETs. London and New York: Routledge.
- c. Additional readings will be posted on Laulima (See Course Schedule).

**4. Writing Intensive Requirements:**

This course fulfills the University of Hawaii’s writing intensive focus requirements. The criteria are as follows:

- a. The class uses writing to promote the learning of class materials.
- b. The class provides interaction between the instructor and students while students do assigned writing.
- c. Written assignments contribute significantly to each student’s class grade.
- d. The class requires students to do a substantial amount of writing – a minimum of 4,000 words, or about 16 pages.
- e. To allow for meaningful professor – student interaction on each student’s writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.

**5. Course Format**

This an online course offered through “Laulima: The Learning and Collaborative Server for the University of Hawaii Community. Since this is an online course, students are expected to have access to reliable computer equipment in order to participate in the course. Moreover, students are responsible to meet all scheduled deadlines and to regularly check the Laulima site for course updates. It is imperative that students understand that an online course requires students to manage their own time effectively in order to succeed in the course.

*\*Please speak, e-mail or call the instructor if you anticipate having (or are having) difficulty meeting the course expectations. It is best to address challenges and problems early before they become insurmountable.*

**6. Requirements & Grading**

Anticipated Grading Criteria	% of total grade
Weekly Reading Responses	10%
Weekly Peer Comments	10%
Paper Proposal	10%
Paper Draft	10%
Final Paper	30%
<u>Final Exam:</u>	<u>30%</u>
Total	100%

**WEEKLY READING RESPONSES:** These responses will give you practice writing and thinking about the course material. These written responses will ask you to reflect upon and respond to the readings. Each week the instructor will post a series of questions on the Laulima site based on that week's readings. Students will choose and respond to ONE question. The point of the assignment is for you to engage with the readings. Rather than a simple summary, you are expected to critically engage with the material. I am looking for evidence of your own personal thoughts and reflections on the question you choose to write about. The responses should be 250 words in length. I expect your writing to be thoughtful and complete without being excessively lengthy. You are expected to post your finished response papers on the Laulima site by Thursday evening (no later than 11:59 pm) (see calendar below). The response papers will help you think through the readings, operate as material to help you prepare for the final examination, and serve as the basis for dialogue with your classmates. If you are unable to submit your papers by the deadline, I will accept late submissions, but they will be assessed a penalty. Since these papers will serve as "public comments" they serve as an opportunity for a dialogue with your classmates. (250 words each)

**WEEKLY PEER COMMENTS:** Each week you will be required to respond to ONE of the other student's reading responses for that week. Your comment must be at least a paragraph long (i.e. a minimum of three sentences). Moreover, your response must demonstrate intellectual engagement (i.e. show evidence of thoughtfulness). Comments can be critical, but they must not be disrespectful. The instructor will monitor and comment on the discussions as needed. (50-100 words each)

**PAPER PROPOSAL:** This course requires you to submit an independent research paper on a relevant social issue in contemporary Japan. You are free to select your own topic. Your paper topic could emerge out of something we cover in the course that you would like to research further. Conversely, your paper topic could be based on something that you are curious about in contemporary Japan. Either approach is completely appropriate, however you must get the instructor's approval for your paper topic no later than the end of week four. The instructor will review your proposal, give you comments, and suggest directions for developing your paper. Your paper proposal should be approximately 1 page (250 words). You are also required to provide a list of at least 3 academic references you plan to use.

**PAPER DRAFT:** A draft of your paper is due by the end of week seven. The instructor will review your paper, give you comments, and return the paper to you for further revision. The paper should be between 8 and 10 pages (2000-2500 words).

**FINAL PAPER:** Students will re-submit their papers by the end of week ten. The papers will be assessed in light of the instructor's comments and level of revision. The paper should be between 8 to 10 pages (2000-2500 words).

**FINAL EXAM:** The format of the final exam will include a series of short answer questions and a choice of essay questions. You are responsible for all of the course material (i.e. from Week 1 up to and including Week 10). The questions will draw from the lectures and the readings. You will have two hours for the final exam.

**7. Plagiarism Policy (from UH Calendar):**

“Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student's language and style; paraphrasing a passage so closely that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; and "dry-labbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data from other students without the express consent of the instructor, utilizing experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms, and fabricating data to fit the expected results.”

**8. Kokua for Students with Disabilities:**

If you need accommodations because of the impact of a disability please contact me privately. I am happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodation in the course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.

**9. Final grades will be calculated on the percentage of points earned:**

97 -100%	A+	82-84	B	69-71	C-
93-96	A	79-81	B-	65-68	D+
89-92	A-	75-78	C+	62-64	D
85-88	B+	72-74	C	59-61	D-
				0-58	F

**10. Course Schedule (Subject to Change)**

**Week 1: Introduction**

Hendry: “Introduction” (1-4)
Hendry: Chapter 1: “Sources of Japanese Identity: historical and mythological foundation of Japan.” (5-22)
Goodman et al: 1. “Making Sense of Youth Problems,” <i>Tuukka Toivonen and Yuki Imoto</i> (1-29)

Smith, R. J. (1991). "The Moving Target: Japanese Culture Reconsidered" *Comparative Civilizations Review* 23: 1-18.

\*Reaction Paper #1 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)

\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)

## **Week 2: The House, Family System and Classification**

Hendry: Chapter 2: "The House and Family System" (23-40)

Hendry Chapter 3: "Socialization and Classification" (41-56)

Benedict, R. (1946). "Taking One's Proper Station." *In The Chrysanthemum and the Sword; Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. Pp. 43-75.

Goodman et al: Chapter 5. "The 'Discovery' and 'Rediscovery' of Child Abuse" (*jidō gyakutai*) in Japan, *Roger Goodman* (98-121)

\*Reaction Paper #2 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)

\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)

## **Week 3: Community and Neighborhood**

Hendry: Chapter 4: "Community and Neighborhood" (57-73)

Bestor, T. C. (1989). "Miyamoto-chō: A Portrait" *In Neighborhood Tokyo*, Stanford University Press. Pp. 12-45.

\*Reaction Paper #3 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)

\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)

## **Week 4: Education**

Hendry: Chapter 5: "The Education System" (74-90)

Allison, A. (1991). "Japanese Mothers and *Obentos*: the lunch-box as ideological state apparatus." *Anthropological Quarterly* 64: 195-208.

Frost, P. (1991). "Examination Hell." *In Windows on Japanese Education*. E. R. Beauchamp (ed.), Greenwood Press: 291-305.

Goodman et al: Chapter 4. "*Taibatsu*: From Educational Solution to Social Problem to Marginalized Non-Issue," *Aaron Miller* (81-97)

\*Reaction Paper #4 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)

\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)

\*Your paper topic must be submitted to the instructor for approval by Sunday (11:59 pm)

## Week 5: Ethnic Minorities

Hendry, Chapter 6: "Status, Hierarchy and Ethnic Diversity" (91-114)

Siddle, R. (1997). "Ainu: Japan's indigenous people." *In Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity*. Weiner, M. (ed.), London, Routledge.

Goodman et al: Chapter 2. From Pitiful to Privileged? The Fifty Year Story of the Changing Perception and Status of Japan's Returnee Children (*kikokushijo*), Roger Goodman (30-53)

*\*Reaction Paper #5 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

## Week 6: Religion and Ritual

Hendry: Chapters 7: Religious Influences (115-133)

Hendry Chapter 8: Ritual and the Life Cycle (134-151)

Reader, I. (1991). "Turning to the Gods in Times of Trouble: The Place, Time and Structure of Japanese Religion" *In Religion in Contemporary Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. Pp. 1-22.

*\*Reaction Paper #6 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

## Week 7: Work

Hendry, Chapter 9: "Opportunities for Working Life" (152-168)

Rohlen, T. (1974). "The Office Group" *In For Harmony and Strength: Japanese White-Collar Organization in Anthropological Perspective*. Berkeley, University of California Press. Pp. 93-120.

*\*Reaction Paper #7 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*First draft paper of your research paper is due by Sunday evening (11:59 pm)*

## Week 8: Work Continued (beyond the *salaryman* model: gender and race)

Creighton, M. R. (1996). "Marriage, Motherhood, and Career Management in a Japanese "Counter Culture." *In Re-Imaging Japanese Women*. A. Imamura (ed.), Berkeley, University of California Press: 192-220.

Roth, J. H. (2002). "On the Line at Yasumi Motors" *In Brokered Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Migrants in Japan*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Pp. 37-63.

Goodman et al: Chapter 7. "NEETs: The Strategy within the Category," *Tuukka Toivonen* (139-158)

Goodman et al: Chapter 6. "Hikikomori: How Private Isolation Caught the Public Eye," Sachiko Horiguchi (122-138)

*\*Reaction Paper #8 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

### **Week 9: Leisure and Consumption**

Hendry, Chapter 10: "Arts, Entertainment and Leisure" (169-187)

Miller, L. (2004). "Youth fashion and changing beautification practices" *In Japan's Changing Generations: Are Young People Creating a New Society?* Mathews, G. and B. White (eds.). New York: Routledge Curzon. Pp. 83-98.

Goodman et al: Chapter 3. "Narratives and Statistics: How Compensated Dating (*enjo kōsai*) Was Sold," Sharon Kinsella (54-80)

*\*Reaction Paper #9 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

### **Week 10: Politics, Social Control and Resistance**

Hendry: Chapter 11: "Government and the Craft of Politics" (188-206)

Hendry: Chapter 12: "The Legal System and Social Control" (207-222)

Hendry: Conclusion (223-226)

Goodman et al: Chapter 8: Shifting Landscapes: The Social Context of Youth Problems in an Ageing Nation," Roger Goodman (159-173)

*\*Reaction Paper #10 Due by Thursday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Response to Reaction Papers Due by Sunday Evening (11:59 pm)*

*\*Final Exam*

*\*Final draft of your research paper is due.*