Overview: This course is an introduction to the people, institutions, problems, and achievements of contemporary Japan. In the first few weeks we will consider several perspectives for thinking about Japanese society (historical, cultural, structural, and comparative). After that, we will focus on selected social problems in Japan. Prerequisite: Students must have completed SOC 100 or a 200-level SOC course with a “C” grade or better.

Requirements: Attendance is required, as is informed participation in class activities. Students are expected to come to class on time, do the assigned readings, and discuss the readings orally and in writing. Here are some standard operating procedures: (1) The professor will call on students in class; (2) there will be occasional pop quizzes about the readings, and there will be some in-class and take-home writing assignments as well; (3) each student will be asked to do an oral presentation in class; (4) in addition to the written texts, students will be required to watch some videos.

Readings: There are two required books. Other required readings will be made available in class, on Laulima, or on the Web.


Newspaper Requirement: To keep informed about current events in Japan, you should read at least one newspaper with significant coverage of the country. Many people like *Los Angeles Times* or *New York Times*. English-language resources in Japan include *The Japan Times* (www.japantimes.co.jp), the *Asahi Shimbun* (a somewhat progressive paper, similar to the *New York Times*, available at www.asahi.com/ajw), and Japan’s most popular newspaper, the right-leaning *Yomiuri Shimbun*, which publishes the *Daily Yomiuri* http://the-japan-news.com. There is also the *Mainichi Shimbun’s* English edition, at https://mainichi.jp/english/. In addition, you could set up a Google News page that flags articles on Japanese society. However you do it, you are expected to keep current on Japanese news. If a major story breaks, I reserve the right to add current events questions to quizzes and exams.

Japan Focus Journal: For a good collection of freely available scholarly articles about Japan and the Asia-Pacific region, including many about current events and social problems, see www.japantimes.org.
Grades: Grades are based on how many points you earn: 90-100 points is an A, 80-89 a B, 70-79 a C, 60-69 a D, and 59 or fewer is an F. There will be two exams, each worth 30 points (the exam formats will be explained in class). Your in-class presentation is worth 20 points (this, too, will be explained in class). Attendance, participation, quizzes, and other assignments will be worth 20 points. Thus, in total there will be 30 + 30 + 20 + 20 = 100 points possible.

Student Learning Objectives: Students will: (1) increase their understanding of social institutions and social problems in Japan, and they will (2) improve their understanding of what is distinctive, ordinary, problematic, and praiseworthy about Japan and the United States. More broadly, students will: (3) develop the ability to think clearly and independently about Japanese society.

Plagiarism: Our definition of plagiarism comes from the UH Manoa Student Conduct Code: “Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or ‘drylabbing,’ which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms.” It is each student's responsibility to learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it. Ignorance of the rules or saying “I forgot” or “I made a mistake” are not valid excuses. NOTE: Plagiarism, or cheating of any other kind, will result in an F for the course.

Students with Disabilities: Anyone who feels that he or she needs an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. NOTE: please do so during the first week of the semester. I am willing to work with you and with the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) in order to ensure reasonable accommodations to your situation. KOKUA’s telephone is 808-956-7511 and 808-956-7612. The KOKUA office is Room 013 of the Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services.
COURSE SCHEDULE for SOCIOLOGY 357 for FALL 2019

Week 1 – How Does History Matter?


5. Video: “Japan Under American Occupation” (2002, 50 mins, Sinclair DVD 8426), or watch at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuPYzWnT1aA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuPYzWnT1aA)

Week 2 – The Pacific War: Terrible and Useful?


8. Video on American Views of Japan during the Pacific War - Sinclair Video 5233, “Know Your Enemy – Japan” (1945), 59 minutes, by the U.S. War Department, directed by Frank Capra, also available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBIfnPyK4rw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBIfnPyK4rw)

9. Video on America in Comparative Perspective – Sinclair DVD 14199, “Where to Invade Next?” (directed by Michael Moore, 2015, 120 minutes), also available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mrX-OYFXKU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mrX-OYFXKU) (with German subtitles)


Week 4 – Japan: Demography + International Relations


16. Hirata & Warschauer (2014), ch.4, “Getting Along with the Neighbors” (pp.126-163)

17. Pew Research Center, “How Asians View Each Other” (July 14, 2014), at http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/14/chapter-4-how-asians-view-each-other/

Week 5 – Japan: 3/11 + Education


Week 6 – Open (TBA) & Week 7 – Review & Exam 1 (30 points), details TBA…
Week 8 – Mental Illness & Suicide


Week 9 – Violence against Women


Week 10 – Criminal Justice


31. Paul Murphy, “Late in Life: Japan’s Elderly Behind Bars” (Japan Focus, October 1, 2016, pp.1-17), at https://apjjf.org/2016/19/Murphy.html

32. Video, “Sore demo Boku wa Yatte Inai” [“I Just Didn’t Do It”], directed by Suo Masayuki (2007, 144 minutes), at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jsHQpAP0vM. Note: this film is based on Koizumi Tomoki’s nonfiction book Kanojo wa Uso o Tsuite Iru (Bungei Shunju, 2006)

Week 11 – Organized Crime


Week 12 – Capital Punishment


Week 13 – Miscarriages of Justice


Week 14 – Animals & Society


43. Video: “The Cove” (Sinclair DVD 9987, Lion’s Gate, 2009, 96 minutes), on dolphin hunting in Taiji, Wakayama Prefecture


Week 15 – The American Military in Okinawa & Hawaii


Week 16 – Review & Exam 2 (30 points), details TBA…