GENERAL INFORMATION
Instructor: Dr. Christine Yano
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: STRUCTURES, LIVES, CONTINGENCIES
This course takes a critical, multi-perspectival look at contemporary Japan by examining some of its life-course structures: family and childhood, young to middle adulthood, and late adulthood. We will be looking at the ideal models that govern these periods, as well as some of people’s lived experiences in dealing with these models. In the process, we will attempt to address some of the factors that shape people’s life experiences, including aspects of class, gender, region, nationalism, and globalism in Japan. Rather than a homogeneous picture of "Japanese culture", we will try to formulate a more complex, subtle, and fluid series of snapshots. Our goal is to develop an understanding which encompasses the interplay between models and people’s experiences. As we examine concepts, values, arrangements, structures, and behavior which go into the making of culture, we include their construction, challenges, and transformation over time in Japan. Thus, Japanese culture is not static or homogeneous, but always dynamic and heterogeneous. This holds true not only today amidst globalization, rapid information flows, and changing technology, but historically as well. What we are trying to dispute is the notion that there ever was such a thing as unchanging “Japanese culture.” Instead, the class will assume that people and institutions in Japan have always been in flux, even when they are invoking “tradition” as the mainstay of their culture.

Film will be an important part of our intellectual endeavor. By combining weekly readings and lectures with feature-length films and critical discussion, students will engage with both the structures that shape contemporary Japan, as well as the “anti-structure” of lived lives and historical contingencies. Students will be asked to write a series of short papers based on the films, incorporating lectures and readings.

Writing-Intensive
This course is designated writing-intensive for good reason. My firm belief is that good writing makes for good thinking and vice versa. Disciplining one’s writing is akin to disciplining one’s thinking. Writing will be an integral part of your learning process in several ways: 1) Short papers incorporating readings and films; 2) reading responses; and 3) in-class writing. Common to all three of these is the requirement that your writing be clear, succinct, and grammatical. I expect any piece of writing that has been done on a computer to be spell-checked and proofread. You should approach these three types of writing in different ways. 1) The
papers are the most formal pieces of writing that you will do. We will do peer reviews of each of the three papers and you should write knowing that not only I, but also your peers, will be reading these. Please do make use of the Writing Workshop at Kuy415 (956-7619) where you can sign up for half-hour appointments with writing tutors. In addition, make use of my office hours during which I will be glad to read rough drafts of papers. See below for more details. 2) The reading responses are less formal. I will pose questions on the readings and ask you to respond. In many cases, the questions I pose will be big ones that could be answered by quoting the entire book or chapter. Do not do this. Instead, summarize briefly what the author says. In addition, inject some of your own thought to this. Do keep in mind that this should be a response, not a regurgitation. 3) In-class writing is even less formal. For one thing, it is not done on computer and I don’t expect the kind of “perfection” that instant editing, spell-checkers, grammar-checks easily provide.

The bottom line is that writing will be a self-conscious and fully integrated part of this course. Thus, not only will you learn something about Japan through taking this course, hopefully you will end up writing with greater clarity, thought, and care.

Plagiarism has become a serious problem at U.H. as elsewhere. Part of this has been facilitated by the internet, but plagiarism long precedes computer access to other people’s writing. I take plagiarism seriously. If any writing for this course has been plagiarized (i.e., copied without citation from either another person, online, or a published source), I will contact the deans. The student will get an automatic F (i.e. 0 points) for the paper upon first offense, and an F for the course for a second offense. Plagiarism means cheating yourself and others. Do your own work and learn something.

TEXTBOOKS (available at UH Bookstore and on reserve in Sinclair)
Hendry, Joy 1986 Becoming Japanese
Long, Susan 2005 Final Days

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Grading will be as follows:
- Paper 1 20
- Paper 2 20
- Final exam 20
- Reading responses 30
- In-class 10
  (Attendance, participation)

PAPERS (20 points each; total 40 points)
The papers are short, 3-5 pages, and focus on the films in conjunction with the readings and lectures. You must include some discussion of readings AND lectures in your papers, otherwise points will be taken off. In other words, you might write a brilliant paper on “Shall We Dance” but if you failed to mention anything from readings AND lectures, you will get a B at best. Paper assignments will be handed out a week before the papers are due.

The format of papers is as follows:
1" margins, all around
10- or 12-point font (i.e., what I have used in this syllabus)
double-spaced
pages numbered
no title page for this length of a paper
no folders or binders (this is a short paper)
stapled

These are standard university requirements and should be followed not only in this course but in others as well.

In addition, PLEASE UNDERLINE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT in your introduction, as well as its restatement in your concluding paragraph. The thesis statement should answer the question: what is the point you are trying to make in this paper?

Some notes on paper writing:
* Get used to sentences that begin, “In this paper, I argue that . . . “
* You should cite the texts (Hendry 1986:12) as well as lecture (Yano class notes 9/5/07).
* Each paper should have an INTRODUCTION in which you draw the reader into the subject of your paper and include your thesis statement. It should also have a CONCLUSION which may restate your thesis and possibly end on a provocative note. The INTRODUCTION and CONCLUSION should act as bookends to the body of your paper.
* Each paragraph of the body of your paper should have an organizing point to make and further your general argument/thesis. Every paragraph should have no fewer than 3 sentence, preferably 4-5. 1) intro, 2) bit, 3) bit, 4) bit, 5) conclusion.
* Since each paper specifies the text and refers only to lecture notes for this class, you don’t need a bibliography.
* Remember that writing an academic paper IS DIFFERENT in language use from having a conversation with a friend. One of the best ways of acquiring this difference in your own writing is to READ. Besides the books assigned for this course, I suggest picking up a copy of The New Yorker and reading it as an example of good writing.
* Do not use slang or colloquial expressions. Use “children”, not “kids”.
* I take the paper length seriously. Three to five pages does not mean 2-1/2 pages nor 5-1/2. The length is assigned for a purpose. I will read 5 pages and no more. I will take anything less than 3 full pages as blank space.

Each paper has two due dates: 1st draft and final draft.
* Note: for the 1st draft papers, please bring in 2 copies of your paper. We will conduct a peer review in class.
* When you hand in your final papers, please include your 1st drafts, your peer reviews, and your final drafts.

In addition, if anyone wants me to look over and comment on your 1st draft papers, I will give you opportunities to do so IF you hand in your paper to me the day BEFORE 1st drafts are due. You may submit these electronically up to 6pm on that day. I will give you comments within 24
hours (keep in mind that the extent of my comments depends in part on how many students take advantage of this opportunity).

Late papers are highly discouraged. I will deduct 1 point per day past due. This holds true for 1st and final drafts.

N.B. If you do not take part in the peer review (i.e. 1st draft paper), then 1 point is deducted from your paper grade. If you hand in your final draft paper 1 day late, then 1 point is deducted. If you hand in your final draft paper 2 days late, then 2 points are deducted. Etc. Do the math!

READING RESPONSES - 10 points each (total 30 points)

For every reading assignment, I will ask you questions. Toward the end of each unit, the reading responses will be due (9/13, 10/23, 11/20). I do not have a prescribed page length for these responses, but you may consider them fairly informal writing - albeit with complete sentences. I expect not only a response to my questions, BUT ALSO SOME COMMENTARY BY YOU ON THE READING. They should be typed, single-spaced, pages numbered, 1” margins.

You will be graded on the quality of your thinking. Please do not paraphrase the book.

Note that each reading response due date is preceded by a DISCUSSION on the reading during the previous class session. Please complete the reading, bring in notes, and come prepared for the discussion. Attendance will be taken and participation duly noted.

FINAL EXAM, Tuesday, 12/11, 12n-2pm (20 points)

The final exam will be a closed-book essay exam. One of the questions will be on the Long book (Final Days) and film The Funeral. The other two questions will be from material covering the entire semester. The final exam will be handed out on the last day of class, 12/6.

To reiterate -

Points deducted for:
- late papers (1 point per day; this includes first drafts, reading responses, final drafts)
- lack of attendance (particularly noted during discussion days)

Grading will be done on a strict numerical basis. It should be fairly easy for you to keep track of the points. The only quantity unknown to you will be the class participation (10 points), based on attendance and discussion. Otherwise, it is a straightforward total for the semester, 90-100 A, 80-89 B, 70-79 C, 60-69 D, below 60 F.

Extra credit opportunities: maximum 3 points

Throughout the semester, I will announce extra credit opportunities, typically in the form of lectures or events. Attend, write up a summary and REACTION as much as possible in terms of what we have discussed in class, and receive 1 point. Any extra credit papers must be turned in no later than ONE WEEK after the event. Here are some opportunities:

Sat, Aug 25, 5-9pm, Jikoen Hongwanji Norman Kaneshiro
IDENTITY - LOOCCHOO NU KWA: CHILDREN OF LOOCCHOO
Workshop on Okinawan music, dance, and identity
presented by a group that has recently returned from Okinawa. ($5 donation at the door.)

Wed., Sept 5, 3pm, Moore 319
Dr. Koji Taira (Prof. Emeritus, University of Illinois) - On Okinawan Identity

Mon, Sept. 10, 3pm, Moore 319
Dr. Glenda Roberts (Waseda University) TBA

Wed., Sept. 20, 3pm, Moore 319
Dr. Muriel Jolivet (Sophia University) - On the Shikoku pilgrimage which she recently completed

CALENDAR

Introduction
08/21 Themes of the course

Childhood: Pressures and Processes of Molding
08/23 Changing family in Japan
   Reading: Hendry, Introduction, 1-9
08/28 Video: “Farm Song”
   Reading: Hendry Ch1, 10-46
08/30 Socialization within the family
   Reading: Hendry Ch2, 47-70
09/04 Mother as a central figure
   Reading: Hendry Ch3, 71-95
09/06 Socialization within institutional settings
   Video: partial of “Preschool in Three Cultures”
   Reading: Hendry Ch6, 153-177
09/11 Discussion of Hendry
09/13 Middle and high school
*Reading response #1 (Hendry) due
09/18 FILM #1: TBA
09/20 FILM #1: TBA
09/25 *PAPER #1 DUE (1st draft)
09/27 *PAPER #1 DUE (final draft)

Adulthood: Workplace, Leisure, Gender Relations
10/02 Marriage markets
   Reading: Ogasawara, Introduction, 1-16
10/04 Marital relations
   Reading: Ogasawara, Ch. 1, 17-43
10/09 Differential job markets
   Reading: Ogasawara, Ch. 3, 70-97
10/11 Work-related social relations
   Reading: Ogasawara, Ch. 4, 98-113
10/16 Masculinity: salaryman model
   Reading: Ogasawara, Ch. 5, 114-138
10/18 Discussion of Ogasawara
   Reading: Ogasawara, Conclusion, 155-168
10/23 *Reading Response #2 (Ogasawara) due; lecture TBA
10/25 FILM #2: DENSHA NO OТОKO
11/30 FILM #2: DENSHA NO OТОKO
11/01 *PAPER #2 DUE (1st draft)
11/06 *PAPER #2 DUE (final draft)

Late adulthood: Mind and Body issues
11/08 Approaches to aging
   Reading: Long, Ch. 1, 4, 5 (pp. 1-13, 52-72, 73-109)
11/13 Gendered experiences of aging
   Reading: Long, Ch. 7, 8 (pp. 150-204)
11/15 Discussion of reading
11/20 *Reading response #3 (Long) due;
   Video: Aging in Japan; When Traditional Mechanisms Fail (1990, NHK, Wong AVC #4967)
11/27 FILM #3: THE FUNERAL
11/29 FILM #3: THE FUNERAL
12/04 Discussion of film
12/06 Hand out final exam; wrap-up

Final exam
12/11 12N-2PM