GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor      Dr. Christine Yano
Class meetings  TuTh 9-10:15am, Arch101A
Office          Saunders 316
Phone           956-4447
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Office hours    TuTh 10:30-11:30am or by appt

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes popular culture in Japan as a means for discussing contemporary topical issues such as gender relations, nationalism, emotion, sexuality, and consumer culture. This is not a survey course of different forms of popular culture in Japan. Rather, through manga, anime, karaoke, pop music, food, and other forms of everyday life, we will explore the issues around which Japan shapes itself and is shaped. Our goal is to rethink Japan, as a modern nation-state, as a site of harmony and conflict, as a site of global and local popular culture flows. A particular focus of the course will be the simultaneous processes of globalization and nationalism, as played out in popular culture. In the 21st century, Japan is both source and recipient of global products, processes, ideas, and people. The course will be organized around films and readings, following characterizations of consumer culture in Japan, whose market cleavages do not follow ethnic or class lines so much as age-graded segments.

This course is designated as writing intensive; therefore, you can expect to use writing in a number of ways. We will approach writing in three ways: 1) writing as thinking on paper; 2) writing as communicating; and 3) writing as crafted product. First, we will consider writing as a means by which one may give birth to and clarify one’s thoughts. I will give you opportunities to think through writing, in effect, communicating with oneself. Second, we will consider writing as a means of communicating with others. To this end, in particular kinds of writing, I will emphasize clarity of expression, which will include not only the mechanics of writing, but also the organization of it. These first and second aspects of writing are not unrelated. Thinking well and writing well go hand in hand. Third, we will consider writing as a process of interaction between you, your peers, and myself. We will craft your writing through peer-reviewed and teacher-critiqued drafts, hopefully resulting in a better product.

I will be using the course website created through MyUHPortal in various ways. I will post handouts, lecture notes, announcements, etc, so please do check regularly. If the email that is listed on MyUHPortal is not the one you prefer to use, please let me know and I will add your secondary email to the list. I regularly use the email available through MyUHPortal to communicate with class, including announcements, reminders, and deadlines.
BOOKS: these are required and available at the bookstore
- Condry, Ian 2006 *Hip-hop Japan; Rap and the Paths of Cultural Globalization.*
- Yano, Christine 2002 *Tears of Longing; Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Grading:

- Reading responses 30%
- Paper #1 20%
- Paper #2 20%
- Final exam 20%
- In-class 10%

(Attendance, video sheets, class participation, etc.)

READING RESPONSES (in conjunction with discussion)
This is the section of the course that gives you practice in writing as thinking. These written responses ask you to reflect upon questions related to readings. I will pose questions on the assigned readings. You are asked to address these questions. These notes are primarily for yourself to help you think through the readings, but I will collect these notes toward the end of each unit and before that unit’s paper is due. See calendar below for due dates. There is no page requirement for these reading responses, but I expect your writing to be thoughtful and complete, without being excessively lengthy. You will be graded generously.

PAPERS: approximately 4-5 pages
Papers will attempt to integrate films that we watch, with readings and lectures. The paper topic will be handed out at the beginning of the unit, so that your notes on lectures and readings can address the topic most directly. In your papers I expect you to use lectures and readings extensively to comment on the film. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade. Therefore, if you write a wonderful paper on *Tampopo* but never mention readings or lectures, the highest grade you can receive is a B.

Please note that each paper has TWO due dates. The first one is for a first draft and will be submitted to in-class peer review. On the first draft due date, please bring in two copies of your paper.

Also note that I will comment on any first drafts that are handed in electronically 24 hours before the first draft due date. This means Mon or Wed at 9am prior to the first due date. I will comment and hand back to you in class. I encourage all of you to take advantage of this opportunity.

[TECHNICAL NOTE: All writing should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, 1”-margins all around, pages numbered and stapled. This is standard academic format. Any papers turned in which do not meet this standard will be graded down.]

FINAL EXAMINATION: Thursday, May 15, 9:45-11:45am
The final examination will be closed book, on the date given above. It will cover all the material of the course. I will hand out the exam questions on the last day of class, and you will have the opportunity to discuss them. On the day of the exam, however, you will not be allowed to bring in any notes or books.

CALENDAR

UNIT I: 1/15 - 1/17  INTRODUCTION; GENERAL THEMES OF COURSE
Reading: Allison, Ch1

1/09  INTRODUCTION OF ISSUES
   - WHAT IS POPULAR CULTURE AND WHY IS IT WORTH STUDYING?
   - CONSUMER CULTURE
   - GLOBALIZATION
   - NATIONALISM
   - GENDER/SEXUALITY

1/11  20th CENTURY JAPAN AND POPULAR CULTURE

UNIT II: 1/22 - 2/19  CHILDHOOD, ADOLESCENCE
Readings: Allison, Ch 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, Epilogue
Discussion of readings 2/01; written exercise due 2/06
* Paper #1, 1st draft due 2/13 (bring two copies)
   Final draft due 2/15

1/22  HELLO KITTY
   Reading: Allison, Ch3, 5

1/24  MCDONALD’S, DISNEYLAND
   Reading: Allison, Ch6, 7

1/29  MANGA/ANIME
   Reading: Allison, Ch8

1/31  CELL PHONE
   Reading: Allison, Epilogue

2/05  DISCUSSION OF READINGS

2/07  FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO; Written exercise on readings due

2/12  FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO & discussion

2/14  PAPER #1: 1ST DRAFT PEER REVIEW

2/19  PAPER #1: FINAL DRAFT DUE

UNIT III: 2/21-3/20  ADOLESCENCE/ ADULTHOOD
Readings: Condry, Ch 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Conclusion
Discussion of readings 03/06; Written exercises due 03/11
Paper #2: 1st draft 03/18, final draft 03/20

2/21  VIDEO: OTAKU NO VIDEO
   Reading: Condry, Ch 1-2

2/26  OTAKU
Reading: Condry, Ch3-4

2/28 KITSCH: CHRISTMAS IN JAPAN; ANNE OF GREEN GABLE
Reading: Condry, Ch5-6

3/04 BOSOZOKU
Reading: Condry, Ch7, Conclusion

3/06 DISCUSSION OF READINGS

3/11 FILM: TAMPOPO; WRITTEN EXERCISES DUE

3/13 FILM: TAMPOPO

3/18 PAPER #2: 1ST DRAFT PEER REVIEW

3/20 PAPER #2: FINAL DRAFT DUE

SPRING BREAK 3/23-3/30

UNIT IV: 4/1- LATE ADULTHOOD
Readings:
   Yano, Prologue, Ch. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Epilogue
Discussion of readings 4/17; Written exercises due 4/22;

4/01 BUTTERFLIES IN DRAG: GENDERED KATA
Reading: Yano, Prologue, Ch. 1

4/03 TAKARAZUKA
Reading: Yano, Ch. 3, 4

4/08 VIDEO: DREAM GIRLS (Wong AVC #11682)
Reading: Yano, Ch 5, 6

4/10 NATIONALISM: NHK
Reading: Yano, Ch. 7

4/15 NOSTALGIA: ENKA
Reading: Yano, Epilogue

4/17 DISCUSSION OF READINGS

4/22 FILM: ZATOICHI; WRITTEN EXERCISES DUE

4/24 FILM: ZATOICHI

4/29 Discussion of film

UNIT V: 4/28-5/03 WRAP-UP

5/01 Global Japan

5/06 HAND OUT FINAL EXAM

FINAL EXAMINATION: Thurs. 5/15 9:45-11:45am (closed book)