

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Understanding Modern Japan

Course Number and Section

JAPANESE

3952F 550

Instructor Name(s): Christopher White

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

The internet and social media have cultivated an appealing image of Japan and its culture that has spurred on a tourism boom. Capitalizing on a 'weak yen'(Japan's currency), tourists from all over the world flock to Japan with preconceived notions about the Japanese and their country. However, how accurate are these notions? This course will examine various subjects related to modern Japan that have been highlighted throughout online discourse. Japan's overtourism dilemma, immigration debate, demographic decline, strict work culture, gender discrepancies, and its famous 'hikikomori'(social withdrawals) are some of the topics that will be examined throughout this semester. This purpose of this course is to develop proper research methods and media literacy in order to get a better understanding of Japan's culture and its people.

Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate

- knowledge and understanding of the main parameters of Japan Studies and East Asian Studies;
- their ability and skills in discussing and analyzing topics related to Japan;
- critical reading and thinking skills on the subject matter;
- their ability to use modern research methods;
- their ability to evaluate the relevance and importance of different ideas.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

N/A

Course Materials will be posted on Brightspace.

Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Short Paper 1	10/01/2026	10%

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Short Paper 2	10/27/2026	10%
Short Paper 3	11/26/2026	10%
Final Paper	12/01/2026	30%
Presentation		20%
Class Participation		20%

Friday, August 14, 2026

Huron Brief Course Outline 2026/27

In-course Costs \$000.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
 - Or include the weblink of the textbook’s publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.