

ENVS/JPN/EAS275

Nature and Culture in Japan.



Instructor: C A Crowley

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30-12:45

Office: Modern Languages 209

Place: Callaway C101

E-mail: ccrowle@emory.edu

Office hours: By appointment.

Tel. and text: (678) 632-1715

Course website: Canvas

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the rich history of the interaction between the human and the natural world in Japan. From haiku poetry to the whaling controversy, the austere spirituality of Zen gardens to the ongoing tragedy of the Tohoku 3.11 Disasters, the relationship between Japanese society, nature, and culture is fascinating and complex, and continues to have great impact on the world as a whole. Assignments for the course are drawn from key texts of Japanese cultural and scientific history, including maps, poetry, religious scriptures, visual materials, films and current magazine and newspaper articles.

GOALS OF THE COURSE:

By the end of the semester, students will acquire:

1. Knowledge of a broad range of issues related to the cultural constructions of nature in Japan
2. A sense of the complexity and richness of Japanese culture as it has developed through history
3. Practice in reading, thinking about discussing academic texts critically
4. Experience in presenting views about artistic, political, and sometimes controversial materials
5. Greater awareness of human interactions with the environment

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Midterm and Final exams: 20 percent each

Digital Archive Project: 15 percent

Quizzes: 20 percent

Journal: 15 percent

Participation: 10 percent

Exams: 10 objective questions, two or three essays. Note dates; EXAMS WILL NOT BE RESCHEDULED.

Digital Archive Project: Create a three-minute digital story using materials from the Japan Disaster Digital Archive.

Quizzes: 6 in-class reading checks; you may drop one grade.

Journal: 2 entries per week, each entry about 250 words + optional images (more details on a separate handout). At least one entry per week should reference the current Virtual Field Trip. Your journal may be paper or digital.

Participation: Read all assignments and actively engage in class discussion.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All readings are available through Online Reserve or as handouts. Please print and bring to class. Electronic devices are not allowed in this class. Bring a notebook in which to keep class notes, readings and handouts.

Virtual Field Trips are accessible through Canvas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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	TOPIC AND READINGS	ASSIGNMENT DUE
1	<u>SETTING OUR SITES/SIGHTS</u>	
1/10	Introduction to the Class	
1/12	<u>Topic:</u> Basics of Japanese culture and geography; thinking about the environment. <u>Reading:</u> Saito, "The Japanese Appreciation of Nature" and handouts	<u>Virtual Field Trip 1:</u> Looking at the Landscape
1/17	<u>Topic:</u> Basics, continued. <u>Reading:</u> Watanabe, "The Conception of Nature in Japanese Culture."	

2	<u>THEORETICAL ISSUES: EUROPEAN FRAMEWORKS</u>	
1/19	<u>Topic:</u> Historical thinking about nature, culture, self, and place in Europe & North America <u>Readings:</u> White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis"	<u>Virtual Field Trip 2:</u> Natural History Museums
1/24	<u>Topic:</u> Historical thinking about nature, culture, self, and place, cont'd. <u>Reading:</u> Kuhn, "Chapter 1, excerpt;" Gardner, "Religious and Moral Approaches: Changing Values, Beliefs, and Worldviews" //QUIZ 1//	

3	<u>THEORETICAL ISSUES: JAPANESE FRAMEWORKS</u>	
1/26	<u>Topic:</u> Historical thinking about nature in Japan <u>Reading:</u> Kagawa-Fox, "Environmental Ethics from the Japanese Perspective;" Asquith and Kalland, "Japanese Perceptions of Nature"	<u>Virtual Field Trip 3:</u> Cultural History Museums
1/31	<u>Topic:</u> Review and Reflection. In-class writing assignment. <u>Reading:</u> No new reading assignment	

4	<u>THE SCIENCES IN JAPAN</u>	
2/02	<u>Topic:</u> Ways of organizing knowlege about the world in the premodern period <u>Reading:</u> Sugimoto and Swain, "Science in Japan's first cultural transformation / Chapter 1, part 1" FILM SCREENING IN CLASS	<u>Virtual Field Trip 4:</u> Continental Astronomy (In-class film, not online)
2/07	<u>Topic:</u> Ways of organizing knowlege about the world in the premodern period (cont'd.) <u>Reading:</u> Sugimoto and Swain, "Science in Japan's first cultural transformation / Chapter 1, part 2" //QUIZ 2//	

5	<u>NATURE AND RELIGION</u>	
2/09	<u>Topic:</u> Indigenous Beliefs <u>Reading:</u> Tsunoda and DeBary, "Early Shintô;" Hori, "Mountains and their importance for the idea of the other world in Japanese folk religion"	<u>Virtual Field Trip 5:</u> Shrines

2/14 Topic: Continental Philosophies
Reading: Tsunoda and DeBary, "Kaibara Ekken"

2/16 Topic: Buddhism 1
Reading: Kaza and Kraft, "The noble hare;" Tu-Shun, Myôe, Dôgen, "The nature of nature: the jewel net of Indra, Letter to the Island, Mountains and Waters Sutra."
//QUIZ 3//

Virtual Field Trip 6:
Temples

2/21 Topic: Buddhism 2
Reading: LaFleur, "Enlightenment for plants and trees;" Snyder, "Blue Mountains Ceaselessly Walking"

2/23 Topic: Buddhism 3
Reading: No new reading. Review, reflection.

2/28 MIDTERM
Reading: No new reading

6 THE CULTURE OF NATURE: MA, WA, AND FUDO

3/02 Topic: Medieval Aesthetics
Reading: Kenkô, "Essays in Idleness;" Pilgrim, "Intervals (Ma) in Space and Time"

Virtual Field Trip 6:
Gardens and Structures

3/07 Spring Break

3/09 Spring Break

3/14 Topic: Early Modern Sustainability

Reading: Brown, Excerpts from Just Enough; Japan for Sustainability, "Sustainability in Edo"

3/16 Topic: The National Landscape
McRae, James. "Triple-Negation: Watsuji Tetsurō on the Sustainability of Ecosystems, Economies, and International Peace."

Virtual Field Trip 7:
Islands of Controversy

3/21 Reading: No new reading. Review, reflection.
//QUIZ 4//

7 THE CULTURE OF DISASTER

3/23 Topic: Industrial Pollution
Reading: Ui

Virtual Field Trip 8:
Minamata (!! READ WARNING !!)

3/28 Topic: Fantasy about the nuclear bomb
Evening Class: Watch film Gojira (Godzilla) DVD 8339

3/30 Topic: Anxiety about the nuclear bomb
Evening Class: Watch film: Chichi to kuraseba (The Face of Jizo)

Virtual Field Trip 9:
Hiroshima and Nagasaki

4/04 Topic: Discussion of films. No new reading.
//QUIZ 5//

4/06 Topic: 3.11
View film in class: "Pray for Japan" (NOTE: This film contains scenes of profound trauma that might be upsetting. Please let instructor know if you require a different assignment.)

Virtual Field Trip 10:
Film: "The Cove"

- 4/11 Topic: 3.11
 In class discussion: Japan Disaster Digital Archive
 Plan project
- 4/13 Topic: 3.11
 View film in class: "Inside Japan's Nuclear Meltdown"
 (NOTE: This film contains scenes of profound trauma
 that might be upsetting. Please let instructor know
 if you require a different assignment.)
- 4/18 Topic: 3.11
 Discussion and review.
 //QUIZ 6//
- 4/20 Topic: Conclusion
 Presentations of digital storytelling projects
- 5/1 FINAL EXAM 8:00 A.M - 10:30 A.M