

# ISS200 Intro. to Japanese Traditions and Culture

3rd and 4th quarters, Sophomore

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<b>Instructor</b>	Walter Tsushima
<b>Style of Class</b>	Seminar
<b>Number of Credits</b>	2
<b>Day and Period</b>	Thursday, period 3

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## Course Description

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This course is designed to introduce Japanese traditions and culture from varied perspectives that cut across fields of literature, aesthetics, religion, history, anthropology and beyond. Various aspects of Japanese traditions and culture will be explored through readings, lectures, critical discussion sessions, demonstrations and video media. This course will provide students' an opportunity to develop qualitative research skills by which students interpret and rediscover Japanese traditions and culture through their own day-to day experience.

## Course Objectives

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Students will:

1. Examine Japan's distinctive cultural and historical features in relatable contexts;
2. Study the historical evolution of the basic structure of Japanese society;
3. Analyze complex ideas and thoughts that are based on Japanese traditions and culture;
4. Carry out individual research on aspects of Japanese traditions and culture and present their findings.

## Prerequisites

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None

## Class Materials

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Materials will be distributed every week.

## Course Methods

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The course is set up as a workshop-style class, and active participation in class is required. Each week the instructor will facilitate the introduction of a new topic, where students will be asked to participate in in-class discussions. Students will also keep a learning journal and work in small groups to present their views on the course content.

## Evaluation/Assessment

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Attendance and participation are strongly encouraged and taken into account when evaluating. Students will be asked to be consistent about homework and study, and to keep a learning journal to freewrite on their thoughts and learning achievements between classes. The learning journal will be evaluated by the instructor at the end of each quarter. In the last class of each quarter students will be asked to work in groups and give a presentation related to one of the topics discussed in class.

## Grading

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25%	Group Presentation
25%	Homework and quizzes
25%	Learning journal
25%	Attendance and in-class participation

## Course Schedule

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- Week 1:** Course Introduction
- Week 2:** A Closer Look at Japanese Traditions Part 1
- Week 3:** A Closer Look at Japanese Traditions Part 2
- Week 4:** Japanese Food Culture Origins and History
- Week 5:** Gijutsu - Japanese Traditional Craftsmanship
- Week 6:** Shukyo - Shinto and Zen Buddhism
- Week 7:** Yokai - Mythical Monsters and Spirits in Japanese Folklore
- Week 8:** Group Presentations
- Week 9:** Muromachi Period Introduction
- Week 10:** Bushido - The Way of the Samurai
- Week 11:** Budo - Japanese Martial Arts
- Week 12:** Nanban Trade and the Westernization of Japan
- Week 13:** Edo Period Introduction
- Week 14:** Matsuri - Japanese Traditional Festivals
- Week 15:** Dento Geino - Japanese Traditional Performing Arts
- Week 16:** Group Presentations

### **Preparation and Follow-up**

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- Preparation: Read the relevant portions of the reference materials (about one hour)
- Follow-up: Review the content of the lecture and note any points you are not sure of (about one hour)