

JLT200 Outline of Japanese History

1st and 2nd quarters, Sophomore

Instructor	HASEGAWA YASUKO
Style of Class	Lecture
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	Tuesday, period 5

Course Description

The history of Japan, from ancient times up to the present day, has been predicated on the cornerstone of social “progress.” Even so, we might wonder whether it is actually the case that the history of humankind has followed such a unilinear course of development. While considering those things that social “progress” has eliminated, and the various problems that this has brought about, we will think about the historical pathways chosen from among various possibilities from the viewpoints of the people who lived at the time. In addition, by understanding the historical stages and features of each era, from the Yamato kingship until the constitutional system of the Meiji period, we will ascertain the consequent historical positioning and challenges engendered for contemporary society.

Course Objectives

To consider through existing historical materials the idea that historical narratives, including textbooks, are hypothetical in nature, and that accordingly, various images of history are possible depending on one’s view of history.

Prerequisites

None in particular.

Class Materials

Nihon no rekishi [The History of Japan], vols. 1–13, Shōgakkan.

Nihon no rekishi [The History of Japan], vols. 00–18, Kōdansha.

Nihon no jidai-shi [The History of Japan], vols. 1–17, Yoshikawa Kōbunkan.

Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi [The Iwanami History of Japan], vols. 1–16, Iwanami Shoten.

Course Method

Based around lectures delivered by the instructor.

Evaluation/Assessment

Reaction Paper (RP)

Students will provide a written response to a challenge focused on checking their understanding of course content, to be distributed after each class.

Final Exam

During the exam period, students will sit an essay-based exam relating to historical events and their explanation of historical terms.

Grading

30% Reaction Paper (RP)

70% Final Exam

Course Schedule

Week 1: Japanese History in the Context of Historiography

Week 2: Establishment of the Yamato Kingship: The Birth of “Japan”

Week 3: Formation of the Ritsuryō State: Ideals and Illusions

- Week 4: Development of the “Dynastic State”: The Rise of Powerful Families (*kenmon*) and the Samurai**
- Week 5: The Development of the “System of Estates and Governmental Lands” (*shōen kōryō-sei*): Redevelopment and the Formation of Private Lands**
- Week 6: The Birth of the Samurai Regime: Evolution of the Kamakura Shogunate**
- Week 7: Shogunal Law and “Benevolent Governance” (*tokusei*): The Formation of “Enemies of the State” (*akutō*)**
- Week 8: The Road to Civil War between the Southern and Northern Dynasties: The Search for Peace**
- Week 9: The Development of the Muromachi Shogunate: A Tentative Peace**
- Week 10: The Formation of Autonomous Villages (*sōson*): The World of Self-Reliance (*jiriki*)**
- Week 11: Characteristics of the Sengoku Period: The Origins of the Nation-State**
- Week 12: The Establishment of Early Modern Society: The Realization of Peace**
- Week 13: Peace in the Early Modern Period: Views of “Life”**
- Week 14: Early Modern Reforms: Disaster Recovery and Social Policy**
- Week 15: Formation of the Modern State: The Consequences of Civilization**

Preparation and Follow-up

Preparation: Before each class, students should read through the class summaries posted on the Fukui University Student Portal website and look up any unclear historical concepts or terms using reference texts, chronological tables, or other materials.

Follow-up: After each class, students should review the content of the lecture on the basis of the distributed materials, and compose a written response (Reaction Paper) to the challenge distributed after the class.