

SOC300 Human Environment for Children

1st and 2nd quarters, Junior

Instructor	AWAHARA TOMOKO
Style of Class	Lecture, Seminar
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	To be advised

Course Description

This course involves understanding problems related to children in contemporary society from the standpoint of human environment and studying leading cases from both within and beyond Japan, as well as practical activities such as workshops to think about approaches to resolving both hard and soft facets of those problems. Employing interdisciplinary viewpoints to expand their perspective on the human environment as related to children, students develop an understanding of the kinds of impacts environmental changes can have on children. They also acquire methods of communicating and expressing their own opinions to others, through tasks involving identifying and examining local characteristics and problems in human environments for children in Fukui.

Course Objectives

Students will:

- (1) read the trends of the times and form their own views on the human environment for children,
- (2) understand the current conditions and problems in the present-day human environment as related to children,
- (3) gain a grasp of the characteristics of the human environment for children in Fukui Prefecture,
- (4) study a diversity of human environments through actual cases from both within and beyond Japan,
- (5) acquire an interest in their own ideal human environment, and explore them in an interdisciplinary manner, and
- (6) form their own opinions and be able to communicate them to others as well as to listen to others' opinions.

Prerequisites

None

Class Materials

Reference books

Hart, Roger, *Kodomo no sankaku* (Children's Participation), Hobunsha, October 2010

Ozawa Kimiko et al., *Yutaka na juseikatsu o kangaeru - Jyukyogaku* (Housing Studies: Thinking about an Abundant Residential Life), Shokokusha, March 2002

Koito Akiko and Murosaki Ikuko, *Kodomo ga sodatsu seikatsu kukan o tsukuru* (Creating Living Spaces where Children Grow), Kamogawa Shuppan, August 2009

Lady Allen of Hurtwood, *Toshi no asobiba* (Planning for Play), Kajima Publishing, September 2009

Architectural Institute of Japan (ed.), *Seikatsu kukan no taiken wakubukku* (Experiential Workbook of Living Spaces), March 2010

Japan Child and Family Research Institute, Imperial Gift Foundation Boshi-Aiiku-Kai (ed.), *Nihon kodomo shiryō nenkan* (Japan Children's Materials Yearbook), KTC Chuo Shuppan

Course Method

Lectures (using handouts, slides, etc.) form the core of this course, with seminars and guest lectures also used as necessary. Students are assigned mini-projects (or mini-exercises) for each lecture, and must submit mini-reports (responses and reflections; approximately one A4 page). Small-group discussions and creative activities are also held, and students are expected to participate actively.

Evaluation/Assessment

Grades will be awarded based on a comprehensive evaluation of mini-reports for each lecture and degree of participation in lectures and seminars, as well as mid-term and final reports, etc.

Grading

Mid-term/final reports: 40%

Attitude in seminars (discussions, etc.), outputs from creative activities: 25%

Mini-reports: 25%

Degree of participation in class: 10%

Course Schedule

Week 1: Orientation and individual goal-setting for the course

We explain the aims and methods of the course, and check students' motivations for taking it, content they want to study, and scope of interests. Students think about and present their objectives for learning over the 15 Classes.

Week 2: What is human environment?

Develop an understanding of what human environment is from the perspectives of architecture and home economics; at the same time, consider the ideal types of environment for children. Students will undertake group work as necessary, enhancing their learning through presentations on their own outlooks on the human environment.

Week 3: Reading social currents

Gain a grasp of the historical background to changes in the human environment, and consider what kind of human environment should be developed today, from both hard and soft perspectives. Audiovisual materials related to Class content may be used.

Week 4: Changing lifestyles

Study how the lifestyles of Japanese people have changed from the Meiji era through to the Heisei era. Understand the advantages and disadvantages of lifestyles in each era, and think about what they mean.

Week 5: One's own childhood (Seminar: Reflecting on the human environment during one's own time as a child)

Recalling your own childhood, write about your housing, family, interpersonal relationships, facilities, playgrounds, etc., and discuss the features of each student's recollection in groups. *Mini-seminar:
Create an image map

Week 6: Child environments today: Current conditions and problems

Learn about the human environments in which children live today from the perspective of child environmental studies, and understand the current conditions and problems therein. Think about and develop your own theories regarding the key points in human environment for children of different age groups, from infants to youths.

Week 7: Children's living spaces 1 (family and residence)

Family and residence are at the center of our way of living. Learn about transformations in layout of residence resulting from family and lifestyle changes, and value outlooks regarding owning a residence.

Week 8: Children's living spaces 2 (facilities and community)

Learn about both hard and soft aspects of the facilities that children experiences in the course of their growth and their activities in the community, and think about ideals for facilities and roles for adults.

Week 9: Children and community

Be introduced to a variety of domestic and international initiatives regarding the community activities that include children and the involvement of children in community development, and expand your perspective on the involvement of children.

Week 10: Community problems as seen through the characteristics of children's play

Play is an important issue in the lives of children. Understand community problems through the current conditions and characteristics of today's children's play.

Week 11: Happiness of children (interpreting the human environment of Fukui, the happy prefecture)

Identify the characteristics of the human environment in Fukui, which achieved fame by ranking highest in a nationwide survey of happiness levels; understand the background to this result, policies, and character of the people of Fukui.

Week 12: Children across the world (Northern Europe as a case study)

Expand your perspective on human environment through an introduction to international trends in children's way of living and human environment. Explore the positive and negative features of Japan and Fukui.

Week 13: On-ground knowledge (either 1 or 2 below)

- (1) Field trip (depending on Class size, conduct site visits incorporating students' ideas)
- (2) Guest lecture (a person or representative of organization active in Fukui)

Week 14: Ideals and realities (Seminar: Select a topic for group discussion)

Engage in discussion in groups on selected topical issues: Current conditions, problems, strategies for tackling them, etc.

Week 15: Summing up (Seminar: What you can do)

Reflect on what you have learned in lectures/seminars thus far; consider and present your ideas about what approaches you, today, could take to addressing issues related to children and human environments at the present and/or in the future.

Preparation and Follow-up

- Preparation: Read the reference books and/or materials distributed and prepare to write about your opinions and questions in mini-reports at the start of class.
- Follow-up: Re-read the materials distributed in light of the class content and clarify/summarize how your own ideas have changed from before to after class.

Remarks

Lecture/seminar content may be altered as necessary taking into account feedback from students.