

Constructing Japanese Identity: Comparing National Narratives in Japan and the US
University of Washington Honors Program, Seattle
HONORS 384 (VLPA/I&S) 5 credits
Early Fall Start 2017
<http://uwhonorsjapan2017.blogspot.com>

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Course Description

This three-week interdisciplinary course will explore the complex and shifting web of narratives surrounding Japanese national identity from a variety of perspectives, including history, politics, race, gender, age, religion, art, culture, and food. Students will reflect on Japanese and American commonalities and differences relating to identity construction, both historically and currently. Students will attend lectures by faculty and have opportunities to meet current students studying at Waseda University. Students are expected to maintain a research and reflective portfolio and will present their final paper and reflection at the end of the program. Course components include: pre-departure readings and lectures; classroom time at National Youth Center (NYC) and Waseda University; excursions within Tokyo as well as to Hiroshima and Kyoto; readings, assignments, research, blog posts; reflection; individual check-ins with instructors; and free time for exploration.

Course Requirements:

Participation	30%
Blog Post Assignments	20%
Weekly Reflections x3	10%
Group Daily Diary x 1	5%
Final Presentation	15%
Final Paper	20%

Description of Assignments:

Participation (30%)

Participation, broadly speaking, comprises the majority of your evaluation and grade. The boundaries between “in-class” and “out-of-class” time and activities will often be blurred, and many new and different requirements will apply to program participants outside of what would normally be perceived as “class time” and “course assignments.” For the purposes of this

program and student evaluation, participation encompasses the following:

- **Attitude:** Living, traveling and studying intensively with a group requires a positive attitude and energy. You are expected to have an open mind and flexibility with respect to places, people, customs, conditions and ideas that may be new and challenging to you. For many students, this will require both intention and effort. You will benefit in this area by demonstrating a level of consciousness, generosity, sensitivity and general maturity with respect to those around you throughout the program.
- **Timeliness:** Be on time for all classes, meetings, excursions. Demonstrate reliability and clear communication between our instructors, peers, and Japan colleagues.
- **Attendance & Contribution:** Attendance means physical and mental presence: being both present in mind and body, beyond simply showing up. You are expected to demonstrate active listening and inquiry. Students are expected to eat, drink and sleep responsibly so that you can be present and participating in every sense. Participation includes the expectation that all students will contribute to our academic activities through commentary and questions, active teamwork, and contributing knowledge and skills to the overall group effort and experience, both in and out of “class” time.
- **Collaboration:** Students are expected to work collaboratively with fellow students, the program directors and site coordinator, and our partners in Japan, and any other program contributors, whether during a class-related activity, or during other program events and travel. Living and traveling successfully in a group depends on everyone in the group working as a team, and at times putting the needs and preferences of the group and others ahead of your own.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** On this program you will be a visitor and guest in cultures other than your own. You will be living, studying and traveling in places with different political and religious views, different socio-economic dynamics, and historical (and ongoing) controversial relationships with the United States. You will also be at times traveling among a large and conspicuous group of North Americans. For these and other reasons, being a responsible, conscious and sensitive traveler and guest is critical. We will talk more as a group about what this means, and how it will factor into your overall participation grade.

Any absences should be excused beforehand. You are expected to complete appropriate readings prior to the class and assignments on the assigned date. Please be courteous to instructors, our partners, guest speakers, and peers. You must be on time to class and all excursions. This component of the class is explicitly stated in the UW code of conduct.

Blog Post Assignments (20%)

You will be required to complete all the readings and assignments by the due dates noted on the syllabus. You will bring notes for the readings for consultation in class discussion. You may have other occasional writing assignments that we will assign as we go based on your readings, guest speaker lectures, program tours, excursions, and observations/experiences.

Weekly Reflections (x3) (10%)

These reflections will be an opportunity for you to focus on your learning experience both within and beyond the context of the subject of the course and your individual projects, meaning a mix of the academic and cross-cultural. Your reflection may additionally be mixed with accounts of

daily life and personal commentary. The reflections should document your experiences, impressions, and reflections that relate to your academic and cross-cultural experiences abroad.

You are expected to include at least 3 entries, of approximately one standard written page. These will be due at the end of the day Sunday (anytime Sunday) per syllabus, posted to your blog. You may keep these reflections private to the general audience if you wish. We will ask you to buy a journal during the first few days in Japan . You will use this journal for your observations and reflections. You may use your journal to draft your writing/blog assignments that you will refine and post to your blog.

Group Daily Diary (5%)

You will take turns posting a blog with visuals narrating two day's activities on the main blog for the class. You decide on the length of your post and the method of presenting. Think of your Daily Diary assignment as a reflective travel-log that, collectively, will tell the story of the program.

You may use a vlog style (video diary), a combination of writing and photos with music, or whatever you think fits your style and prospective. We are suggesting a minimum text posting of 350 words; however, if you choose to narrate your two days via video and audio, the 350-word minimum would not necessarily apply.

Be descriptive in your posts and, when possible, remember to tie in your reflections of Tokyo (and Kyoto and Hiroshima) with the program's themes and what you are learning on the ground. Each blog post is due by the end of the NEXT day assigned, i.e. if your assigned days are Aug 28-29, you would post no later than the end of the day Aug 30 (by midnight is fine).

We have given each of you permission to post to the program blog (we have used your UW email): <http://uwhonorsjapan2017.blogspot.com/>

Final Presentations (15%)

Final presentations will be at NYC and you will present your reflections and research interests and what you have learned so far (from lectures, excursions, readings, independent research, community map assignment, etc.). During this 10 minute presentation, with additional time allocated for discussion during the afternoon, you will create a space for open dialogue with the audience (a combination of faculty, staff, and students from Waseda University, community members, and contributors to the program, as well as new friends you may wish to invite).

Final Paper (20%)

The final write up will be an integration of the learning components of the program and a segue from your presentation. The paper length requirement is double-spaced, 7-10 pages, 11 pt. font, Times New Roman, posted to your blog. You must cite sources, MLA (or APA) standard citation. Due date: 9/26 (but you are encouraged to turn in earlier if possible).

PRE-DEPARTURE MATERIALS

The goal of these initial readings and reflections is to encourage you to think about the themes of the course and to prepare you for arrival in Japan.

June: What is Nationalism? National Narratives and Japan

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Benedict Anderson, <i>Imagined Communities</i> (1983) [excerpt].● Yoshio Sugimoto, “Nation and Nationalism in Contemporary Japan,” <i>Sage Handbook of Nations and Nationalism</i> (2006), pp. 473-487.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Short reflection (300-500 words) due by July 7● Prompt and guidelines are posted to the course website● Scheduled current event assignment (per schedule)

July: Japan in Historical Context

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● John Dower, <i>Embracing Defeat</i> (1999), pp. 19-30.● Anne Allison, <i>Prekarious Japan</i> (2013), pp. 21-42.● Lecture: Kristi Govella, “Japanese National Identity in Historical Context”
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Short reflection (300-500 words) due by August 7● Prompt and guidelines posted to the course website● Scheduled current event assignment (per schedule)

August: Political and Cultural Nationalism

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Jeff Kingston, <i>Japan’s Quiet Transformation: Social Change and Civil Society in the Twenty-First Century</i> (2004), pp. 225-256.● Watch <i>Spirited Away</i> (2001)● Andrew Yang, “The Two Japans of ‘Spirited Away’,” <i>International Journal of Comic Art</i> (2010): 435-452.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Optional: Attend on August 6 at 6 p.m. (Seattle, Greenlake) “<u>From Hiroshima to Hope</u>”● Short reflection (300-500 words) due by August 25 on your research interests and what you have learned so far about this topic. What resources have you gathered. What more would you like to learn/think about in Japan?● Scheduled current event assignment (per schedule)

Before you arrive in Japan:

Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Review orientation packet (on blog)● Review all posts and review student blogs, i.e. get to know your colleagues on the program.● Pack light! Weather in Japan will be hot and humid with some rain.
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IN-COUNTRY MATERIALS

These in-country materials and assignments are intended to give you context for the activities and excursions in which you will engage throughout the three-week program. Readings should be done in advance of the date listed so that you can get the most out of these experiences.

Sunday, 8/27: Arrival

Monday, 8/28: Narratives of Monuments and Memorials

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Welcome and orientation● Visit Yasukuni Shrine● Welcome dinner● Scavenger hunt
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Daiki Shibuichi, "The Yasukuni Shrine Dispute and the Politics of Identity in Japan: Why All the Fuss?" <i>Asian Survey</i> (2005), pp. 197-205 only.● Mindy Kotler, "Sorry, Japan: Yasukuni is Not Arlington," <i>The National Interest</i> (2014). [an American critique]● Review: Jeff Kingston, <i>Japan's Quiet Transformation: Social Change and Civil Society in the Twenty-First Century</i> (2004), pp. 225-256.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Blog post due

Tuesday, 8/29: Observing & Understanding Dynamics of Identity

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Tour by Waseda GLP Students● Welcome by Professor Kazu Yokota (International Business) and Professor Ariko Ota, (Associate Director, Global Leadership Fellows Program; Professor of Sociology)● Lecture: Ariko Ota (Waseda University): Contemporary Japanese Society: Regional diversities in Japan and analysis of urban space in Tokyo● Lunch with Waseda GLP students and professors● Mapping the city/mapping identity exercise
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Being a Careful Observer</i> (Tisdell and Merriam)● Sugimoto Yoshio, <i>Introduction to Japanese Society</i> (2014), 64-76.

Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post: Mapping assignment
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Wednesday, 8/30: Historical Narratives (Edo)

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit Edo Tokyo Museum ● Group discussion: Mapping assignment
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jordan Sand, “Monumentalizing the Everyday: The Edo-Tokyo Museum,” <i>Critical Asian Studies</i> (2001), pp. 351-359 only.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research proposal updates/check-ins during class today ● Blog post: In preparation for check-ins, review your August 25 assignment and post any changes/updates to your research topic/question.

Thursday, 8/31: Arts & Culture

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lecture: Matthew Sussman (Japan-US Fulbright Commission) ● Group discussion: US-Japan peace through understanding ● Japanese tea ceremony (Yanesen Culture Center)
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Fulbright Reading: Peace Through Understanding</u> ● Theodore Bestor and Victoria Bestor, “Cuisine and Identity in Contemporary Japan,” <i>Education about Asia</i> (2011), pp. 13-18.
Assignments	None

Friday, 9/1: Narratives of Migrant Identities and Mixed ‘Race’ Identities

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Watch Hafu documentary ● Group discussion: Construction of race and gender in Japan and national identities ● Visit Yokohama <u>Overseas Migration Museum</u>
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● David Green, “As Its Population Ages, Japan Quietly Turns to Immigration,” <i>Migration Information Source</i> (March 28, 2017). ● Stephen Murphy-Shigematsu, <i>When Half is Whole</i>, 1-80.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post due

Sunday, 9/3

Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read ahead for Hiroshima and Kyoto
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Reflection #1 due

Monday, 9/4: Excursion to Hiroshima and Miyajima

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Travel by shinkansen to Hiroshima using JR Rail Pass ● Visit Miyajima
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skim: “<u>Itsukushima Shrine: The Floating Shrine on the Sea</u>,” <i>Miyajima Official Tourism Website</i>
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post due

Tuesday, 9/5: Narratives of Peace and Victimhood

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum ● Group lunch and reflection at Orizuru Tower ● Travel to Kyoto
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● James Orr, <i>The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan</i> (2001), pp. 1-13. ● Clifton Parker, “<u>Japan’s Shift in the Nuclear Debate Explained</u>,” Stanford Center for International Security and Cooperation
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post: Reading reflections and expectations for Peace Museum visit

Wednesday, 9/6: Narratives of History (Kyoto)

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit Kinkakuji ● Visit Ryoanji ● Traditional yudofu lunch at Ryoanji
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ad Blankestijn, “The Temple of the Golden Pavilion by Mishima Yukio [Book Review],” <i>Japan Navigator</i>
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post: Reflections after Peace Museum visit

Thursday, 9/7: Narratives of History (Kyoto) / Return to Tokyo

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit Nijo Castle ● Travel to Tokyo or depart to travel on your own via JR Rail Pass
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paul Waley and Nicolas Fieve, “Kyoto and Edo-Tokyo: Urban Histories in Parallels and Tangents,” in Waley and Fieve (Eds.), <i>Japanese Capitals in Historical Perspective: Place, Power and Memory in Kyoto, Edo and Tokyo</i> (2003), pp. 2-14, 23-26, 30-34 only [sections on Kyoto].
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post due

Friday, 9/8:

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free travel time via JR Rail Pass
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare to share your thoughts and experiences with everyone on Monday

Sunday, 9/10

Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Reflection #2
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Monday, 9/11: Narratives of the Future

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Excursion debrief session: Present for 3-5 minutes about your travel ● Lunch with Dr. Ivan Botev and Toyo University colleagues ● Lecture: Dr. Ivan Botev (Toyo University): Race and Ethnic Relations in Contemporary Japan
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hiroshi Ono and Hiromi Ono, “Race and Ethnic Relations in Contemporary Japan,” <i>The International Handbook of the Demography of Race and Ethnicity</i> (2015), pp. 219-235. ● Optional: Jane Yamashiro, <i>Redefining Japaneseness: Japanese Americans in the Ancestral Homeland</i> (2017), pp. 64-97.
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post due ● Research update on your blog

Tuesday, 9/12: Art Walk and Religious Narratives

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit art museum (TBD) ● Lecture: Professor Emeritus Paul Watt (Waseda University): Japanese Religion, the State, and the Formation of Japan’s Core Values
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Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>A Short Introduction to Japanese Religions</i> ● <i>The Imperial Rescript on Education</i> (1890)
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work on your presentation

Wednesday, 9/13: Disaster and Identity Post-3/11

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lecture: Flavia Fulco (Sophia University): Practices of Cultural Memory After 3/11 ● Group discussion: Disaster and identity post-3/11 ● Visit D47 Museum: Living in the Future-Off Grid Life
Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tom Gill, Brigitte Steger, and David Slater, “<u>The 3.11 Disasters</u>,” in Gill et. al (eds). <i>Japan Copes with Calamity</i> (2015), pp. 3-23. ● Watch: “<u>Activist Art Challenges a Post-Disaster Japan</u>,” <i>Frontline</i> (2012). ● Watch: <u>The Atomic Generation</u>, <i>Frontline</i> (July 2011)
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blog post due

Thursday, 9/14: Preparation for Final Presentations

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lecture: Kristi Govella (University of Hawaii): Contemporary Japanese Security Policy and National Identity ● Group discussion: Drawing it all together ● Bunraku performance
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work on your presentation

Friday, 9/15: Final Presentations

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final presentations ● Celebration dinner
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Sunday, 9/17: Last Night at NYC

Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weekly Reflection #3
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Tuesday, 9/26: Final paper due at midnight