

Syllabus Spring 2012

Class Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 900-1015 in Watanabe 113

Instructor: Lonny E. Carlile Course Web Site: <http://laulima.hawaii.edu>

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## ASAN 462 Contested Issues in Contemporary Japan

### **Brief Course Description:**

While there is a widely held image of Japan as being a monolithic, "consensus" society, public discourse in that country is in fact characterized by lively, often heated debates over a wide range of issues. Many can be considered "hot button" issues that reveal deep cultural fissures and dramatic differences of thought and opinion. In light of this, ASAN 462 aims to provide students with an understanding of some of the key issues that are currently being debated in contemporary Japanese society.

In order to give students as direct an exposure to these debates as possible, the readings for the course will incorporate translations of articles, editorials and speeches published in the Japanese press. These will be supplemented by readings from secondary sources and other materials that provide background and context. Class discussion will focus on identifying the following: (1) the points of contention in a debate; (2) the historical, philosophical and social bases for the debate and the stances taken by participants; and (3) how the "debate" is similar or different from counterpart debates in the US and elsewhere.

Class sessions will typically follow one or more of the following three formats. The first is a lecture-style presentation or video covering background information on a topic. The second will be a seminar-style discussion of opinion pieces from the Japanese press. The third will be student oral presentations before the class, either "solo" or as part of a panel. These oral presentations are designed to allow students to fulfill the requirements for gaining credit for an "O" focus course. **Note:** *Attendance during preparatory and presentation sessions associated with a panel is mandatory* and absence will lead to reduction of grade.

### **Texts:**

- Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories* (Routledge, 2007)
- David W. Edgington, *Reconstructing Kobe* (UBC Press, 2010)
- Iclicker (register at <https://laulima.hawaii.edu/iclicker/>)

### **Grading**

- Midterms and Final: 45% (15% each)
- Panel and other class presentations: 45% (25% for content and organization, 20% for oral presentation quality / improvement) –see below
- Attendance and Participation—10% (compiled from iclicker response data)

### **Student Learning Outcomes** sought are as follows:

- An understanding of and an ability to identify and explain the background and key points of contention in two major contested issue areas (specifically, historical memory issues and societal aging) in contemporary Japan.
- An understanding of and an ability to identify, explain and relate to other aspects of Japanese society and culture the historical, philosophical and social foundations and consequences of the two major contested issue areas covered.
- An improved ability to synthesize information and ideas and to more comfortably and clearly present the results of this synthesis orally before a live audience.

## Class Schedule / Assignments

Week	Readings	Student Presentations
<b>Jan. 10/12</b>	Philip A. Seaton, <i>Japan's Contested War Memories</i> , 1-9, 37-64 ("Introduction" "Historical Consciousness in Contemporary Japan" "The 'Long Postwar'")	
<b>Jan. 17/19</b>	Seaton, 10-18, 65-106 ("Historical Consciousness in Contemporary Japan" "Addressing the Past" "The War as a Current Affairs Issue")	
<b>Jan. 24/26</b>	Seaton, 18-28, 107-150 ("August Commemorations" "History and Ideology")	Introduce and editorialize on an article of interest from <i>Asia-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus</i> (Home/Issues/History & Historical Events ) <a href="http://www.japanfocus.org/home">http://www.japanfocus.org/home</a>
<b>Jan. 31 / Feb. 2</b>	Seaton, 28-36, 151-204 ("Historical Consciousness in Contemporary Japan" "War Stories" "Regional Memories" "War and Family")	
<b>Feb. 7/9</b>	Seaton, 205-225 (Epilogue, Appendix)	
<b>Feb. 14/16</b>	<b>Tu:</b> Group Presentation Prep Session <b>Th:</b> Midterm	
<b>Feb. 21/23</b>	<b>Panel Presentations</b> (Historical Memory)	<b>Tu:</b> Yasukuni Shrine and Museum Group <b>Th:</b> Hiroshima Memorial Group
<b>Feb. 28 / Mar. 1</b>		<b>Tu:</b> Textbooks Group <b>Th:</b> Otokotachi no Yamato group
<b>Mar. 6/8</b>	Edgington, <i>Reconstructing Kobe</i> , xi-34 (Preface "Introduction" "Earthquakes and Urban Renewal")	3/11-- What happened? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Earthquake</li> <li>● Tsunami</li> <li>● Fukushima</li> </ul>
<b>Mar. 13/15</b>	Edgington, 35-104 ("Kobe and the Hanshin Earthquake" "The Planning and Reconstruction Response")	3/11-- What are people thinking? Commentary summations and editorial interpretation of material from: Asahi Japan Watch 3/11 web site ( <a href="http://ajw.asahi.com/category/0311disaster/">http://ajw.asahi.com/category/0311disaster/</a> ) and/or Japan Echo Web ( <a href="http://www.japanechoweb.jp/">http://www.japanechoweb.jp/</a> )
<b>Mar. 20/22</b>	Edgington, 105-177 ("Protest, Participation and the Phoenix Plan" "Neighborhood Case Studies")	
<b>Mar. 27/29</b>	<b>Spring Break: No class</b>	
<b>Apr. 3/5</b>	Edgington, 179-232 ("Symbolic Projects and the Local Economy" "Conclusion")	
<b>Apr. 10/12</b>	<b>Tu:</b> Group Presentation Prep Session <b>Th:</b> Midterm	
<b>Apr. 17/19</b>	<b>Panel Presentations</b> : 3/11—What is to be done?	<b>Tu:</b> The Pre-Existing Situation <b>Th:</b> Characteristics of the Disaster
<b>Apr. 24/26</b>		<b>Tu:</b> Recovery Efforts <b>Th:</b> Public Attitudes
<b>May 1</b>	<b>Wrap Up</b>	
<b>May 8</b>	<b>Final (730-930)</b>	

## Panel Presentations

- You will be assigned to one of four panels, each of which will be assigned as a group to a topic relating to the issue area being cover.
- During the Prep session, each panel will meet as a group and decide among how it will organize a series of presentations (10 minutes per person) that explores the topic in an interesting and inclusive way.
- Individuals, in coordination with other members of their panel, will then prepare their respective presentations.
- Each panel will be assigned a class period during the Roundtable Presentation periods to make their respective presentations. Q&A sessions will follow.
- Each student will turn in a 2-3 page written summary of the main points of his or her presentation. Alternatively, if the content is comparable, the student may turn in a Powerpoint slideshow in lieu of a written summary.
- More details on a specific roundtable exercise will be provided closer to its scheduled start.

## Individual Presentations

- Over the course of the semester, each student will give at least one 5-minute presentation before the class during one of the regular class sessions.
- For the section of the course covering war memories, this will involve student reviews of a Japanese movie selected from a list the instructor will provide. For the aging society section, this will involve an “editorial commentary” on a reading or other relevant subject relating to the topic.
- Students may suggest alternative presentation topics.
- Details will be provided separately. Sign-up is on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Note: Peer assessments will be conducted for all student oral presentations using the Iclickers system..

### Topics for Session 1

- Yasukuni Shrine / Museum
  - <http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/>
  - <http://www.yasukuni.jp/~yusyukan/>
- *Otokotachi no Yamato* film
  - <http://uhmanoa.lib.hawaii.edu:7008/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=915&recCount=25&recPointer=1&bibId=3084474>
- Hiroshima Museum
  - [http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/top\\_e.html](http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/top_e.html)
- Textbooks: New History versus tri-national
  - *A History to Open the Future*
  - [http://www.tsukurukai.com/05\\_rekisi\\_text/rekishi\\_English/English.pdf](http://www.tsukurukai.com/05_rekisi_text/rekishi_English/English.pdf)

### Topics for Session 2 (modified version of Edgington’s Figures 2.2 and 8.6)

- The Pre-Existing Situation in the Disaster Area
- Characteristics of the Disaster
- Efforts by the Government and Non-State Organizations to Facilitate Recovery
- Public Attitudes Toward the Government and Recovery Effort