



JPN116 Culture and History in Kyoto

Kyoto on Screen and Beyond

University of California at Davis (8 units, Spring 2022)



COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

This course takes place in Kyoto, Japan as part of the Spring UC Davis Quarter Abroad program.

The 2022 course will focus on both the cinematic and the cultural history of Kyoto. Students will study key historical moments and cultural aspects through film, literature, and field trips. They will familiarize themselves with both the popular representations of cultural icons such as samurai and courtesans but at the same will learn the actual historical conditions that shaped these figures. Weekly readings, films, lectures, and discussions are assigned to provide essential background for the variety of workshops, special events, and field trips specifically designed to provide students with first-hand experience of traditional and modern culture.

Course hours are eight hours per week, but only two of those hours (maximum) will be spent in the classroom. The emphasis will be on hands-on learning, on-site education, and experiential pedagogical approaches to understanding the history and culture of Kyoto and its environs.



COURSE & PEOPLE

Time: 8hrs/ week

Classroom: Seika University TBD

Instructor

Miri Nakamura mirnak@ucdavis.edu

Office hours: TBD & by appt

Office: TBD

Phone: TBD

Sample activities: walking ancient pilgrimage routes, traditional theater viewing, sake brewing, woodblock printing, paper making, tea ceremony, food preparation, Zen meditation, calligraphy, flower arranging, textile dying, organic farming.

Sample field trips: UNESCO world heritage sites, port towns, hot springs, shrines, temples, castles, markets, ninja houses, jazz cafes, art fairs, manga and film museums, botanical gardens, sporting events, kabuki performances, archeological digs, and seasonal festivals.



REQUIRED TEXTS

There are no required texts for purchase for this course. All readings and films will be posted on CANVAS organized under “Modules” for each week. They can also be found under “Files.” Most of the research for your presentation can be done online, and you will have access to the terminals in the Seika University library if you do not own a computer. You will, however, be expected to have access to Google Drive and a presentation software (Powerpoint, Keynote, Google docs) in order to do your collaborative work and in-class presentations.

EXAMPLE READINGS:

Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, “Rashōmon” (1915)
Iwasaki Mineko, *Geisha of Gion* (2003)
Matsuo Bashō, select haiku
Mishima Yukio, *The Golden Pavilion* (1956)
Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji* (ca. 1010)
Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, *In Praise of Shadows* (1933), “Bridge of Dreams” (1959)

EXAMPLE FILMS:

Ichikawa Kon, dir. *Makioka Sisters*, (1983)
Kurosawa Akira, dir. *No Regrets for Our Youth* (1946), *Rashomon* (1950)
Mizoguchi Kenji, dir. *Sisters of the Gion* (1936)
Ochiai Ken, dir. *Uzumasa Limelight* (2014)
Ozu Yasujirō, dir. *Late Spring* (1949)
Suo Masayuki, dir. *Maiko is a Lady* (2014)
Tanaka Mitsutoshi, dir. *Ask This of Rikyū* (2013)

All films will be streamed via CANVAS. Links available under “Modules.” If you have difficulty viewing the films, click the login button at the top right of the window, click the blue “continue” button that appears, then enter your campus Login ID and Kerberos passphrase.



BACKGROUND READINGS (none required)

Clancy, Judith. *Exploring Kyoto: On Foot in the Ancient Capital*. Tokyo: Weatherhill, 2008.

Clancy, Judith. *Kyoto, City of Zen: Visiting the Heritage Sites of Japan's Ancient Capital*. Tokyo: Tuttle Books, 2013.

Dougill, John. *Japan's World Heritage Sites: Unique Culture, Unique Nature*. Tokyo: Tuttle Books, 2013.

Dougill, John. *Kyoto: A Cultural History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Durston, Diane. *Kyoto: Seven Paths to the Heart of the City*. New York: Kodansha USA, 2012.

Keene, Donald. *Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion: The Creation of the Soul of Japan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993.

Levine, Gregory. *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006.

Treib, Marc, and Ron Herman. *A Guide to the Gardens of Kyoto*. New York: Kodansha USA, 2003.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Attendance and Participation (10%)

It is imperative that students be present both physically *and* mentally for classroom time and for field trips. Having read *and* thought about the readings and topics for each class, as well as being attentive during our activities and field trips are keys to success in this course. Absences will naturally lower your grade. If you miss more than 4 hours of activities/class time (worth one week of regular classes), your grade will drop by a notch (e.g. B+ to B).

2) Collaborative Group Work (50%)

Group Presentation 30%

Debrief Presentations 10%

Individual Write-ups 10%

Groups will be staggered so that each will give a presentation roughly every other week and provide a debrief presentation the week following. There will be three projects over the course of the quarter for each group. The assignments will have a basic structure as follows: 1) Choose a theme and destination in consultation with the instructor who will provide detailed parameters for your project, 2) prepare and deliver a presentation that provides background on the chosen topic, 3) go on the field trip you have prepared, 4) provide a debrief presentation to the class about your trip, 5) write up an individual follow-up report. Details will be provided on site. See example list of possible weekly themes can be found at the end of the syllabus.

3) Midterm Exam (10%)

The midterm exam will include questions that ask you to identify and explain the importance of various items (works of art or literature, historical people or sites, geographical places, terms, genres, etc.). The exam will include matching, identification, and commentary sections. Details will be announced a week before the exam.

4) Film Analysis Paper (4-5 pages, double-spaced 20%)

You will be asked to analyze a film of your choice, based on prompts handed out by the instructor during the last two weeks of class. You will be graded on how closely you analyze the film. Specific criteria and sample paper will be provided.

5) Final Exam (10%)

The exam will focus on the latter half of the course but will be comprehensive. The final exam will include questions that ask you to identify and explain the importance of various items (works of art or literature, historical people or sites, geographical places, terms, genres, etc.). The exam will include matching, identification, and commentary sections.



GRADING All the points will be calculated and recorded via CANVAS. Grades are non-negotiable.

A+ 100-97.5	A 97.5-92.5	A- 92.5-89.5	B+ 89.5-86.5	B 86.5-82.5	B- 82.5-79.5	C+ 79.5-76.5
C 76.5-72.5	C- 72.5-69.5	D+ 69.5-66.5	D 66.5-62.5	D- 62.5-59.5	F 59.5-0	



EXAMPLE GROUP PROJECT TOPICS

Origins of Kyoto at Kibune and Kurama: Temple, Shrine, and Hot Spring Etiquette

On the Road with Samurai Swordsman Miyamoto Musashi

Centers of Knowledge in the Classical World: Mt. Hiei and Enryakuji Temple

Anime and Manga: Workshop at the International Manga Museum

Modern Diversions: The Hanshin Tigers and Japanese Baseball

From Old to New: Tennōji and Abe no Harukas
Nishijin Textile Center: Traditional Weaving and Dyeing in Kyoto
Uji: City of Tea, City of *Genji*
On the Road with Haiku Master Matsuo Bashō
Experiences with Tea: Farms and the Tea Ceremony
Zen Contemplations: Meditation Lessons at a Buddhist Temple
Classical Court Culture: A Visit to the Imperial Palace Grounds
The Ancient Capital at Nara: The Great Buddha and Kasuga Shrine
The Siege of Osaka Castle, 1615
Upper Education: Public and Private Universities in Kyoto
Games and Electronics in Den Den Town
Brave New World: Shinsekai and Spa World
Arashiyama: UNESCO sites and the Bamboo Grove
On the Shores of Lake Biwa: Hikone Castle, Ishiyama Temple, and Legends of Miidera
Miyako Messe: Traditional Arts and Crafts Workshops
Flea Markets and Festivals: Kitano Shrine and Tōji Temple
Philosopher's Path: The Silver Pavilion and Its History
Yoshimitsu's Vision: The Golden Pavilion and Its History
Thirty-Three Bays and A Thousand Arms: Sanjūsangendō
Café Culture: Cats, Maids, Jazz, Manga
How to Make a Rock Garden: Ryōanji and Ninnaji
Seclusion at Ohara: *Tales of the Heike*
Ninjas in Kyoto: The Dōjō and the Labyrinth
A Night Walk through the Old Pleasure Quarters
Osaka World Expo 1970: The Future in the Past
The Heian Capital: Historical Sites Related to *The Tale of Genji*
Kiyomizu-yaki: Ceramics and Kilns in Kyoto
The Making of the Japanese Film Industry: Tōei Studios
Nijō Castle and the Building of the Tokugawa Shogunate
Stately Grandeur: The Aoi Festival
Train Like You Mean It: The Kyoto Railway Museum

Pop Culture: Nintendo and the Pokemon Center
Fushimi: Gekkeikan and Sake Brewing Techniques
Animal Encounters: Zoos and Aquariums in Osaka and Kyoto
Kabuki Theater: The Kyoto Minami-za
In and Around Kobe: Kitano-chō, Chinatown, and Mt. Rokkō
Kyoto Handicraft Center: How to Make a Woodblock Print
Kimono Fashion and Traditional Clothing
Masterpieces at the Kyoto National Museum: What is a National Treasure?
Kuromon and Nishiki: The Evolution of the Urban Market
Kyoto through the Eyes of an Otaku: Geeky Locations of Kyoto
Microbreweries: The Emerging Artisanal Beer Culture in Kyoto
History of Jazz in Japan: Interviewing Kyoto Jazz Cafes
Anime in Kyoto: Kyoto Animation Studio
Subculture Kyoto: Underground Youth Events in Japan