

POLITICS IN JAPAN
GOV 321M (#39137)/ ANS 321M (#31072)

TTH: 8:00-9:30 am, PAR 203

University of Texas at Austin

Fall 2009

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Office Hours: T: 1:00-2:15, TH: 11:15-12:30, or by appointment

Course Description:

Japan's modern political history has been punctuated by three "critical junctures" that changed—or promised to change—the face of Japan: the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which sparked a period of rapid political modernization and industrialization; the period of democratization during the Allied Occupation of Japan (1945-52); and the post-1993 era of near economic stagnation and sluggish political-economic reform. Using the first two "critical junctures" as reference points, this course examines the structure and resilience of the institutions and power alignments of the postwar era. What is distinctive about those institutions and alignments? Why is Japan having so much trouble reforming them today? How can we explain the changes that *have* been introduced after the last decade or so?

In addressing these themes, we will explore a wide range of topics including the political legacies of the prewar political system, the impact of the Occupation on the development of postwar political institutions, the structure and functions of the changing electoral and political party systems, interest group politics, citizen protest and the development of civil society, the media in politics, the government-business relationship and the significance of industrial policy during the postwar rapid economic growth period, the policy-making process, the sources and consequences of political corruption, and ongoing efforts to reform the contemporary political economy. These topics will be discussed from a comparative perspective and with reference to political science concepts and theories.

Since we are fortunate this semester to be studying Japanese politics during the immediate aftermath of a major Lower House election (scheduled for August 30), we will devote significant time to class discussions on current events. Students are thus encouraged to regularly consult one of Japan's on-line English language newspapers (Japan Times, Asahi Newspaper, The Daily Yomiuri, or the Mainichi Daily News).

Assignments:

1. Quizzes: 15%
2. Midterm exam #1 (Sept. 29): 20%
3. Midterm exam #2 (Nov. 10): 25% (Students have the option of writing a 6-8 page research paper instead of the exam. Students are also free to do both assignments; the grades for the two assignments will be averaged. See Assignments on Blackboard for a list of topic suggestions; topics must be approved by the instructor by Nov. 12. Due date for papers: Dec. 1.)
4. Final exam during scheduled exam period: 40%

Required Readings: The following texts are available for purchase at the University Co-op on Guadalupe:

1. Andrew Gordon, *Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. Oxford University Press, 2008 (2nd edition).
2. Gerald Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*. Columbia University Press, 1999.
3. Robert Pekkanen, *Japan's Dual Society: Members Without Advocates*. Cornell University Press, 2006.
4. Robin LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizens: The Political World of the Japanese Housewife*. University of California Press, 1999.
5. Jacob M. Schlesinger, *Shadow Shoguns: The Rise and Fall of Japan's Postwar Political Machine*. Sanford University Press, 1999.

Additional readings can be accessed directly through UT's on-line library system (usually JSTOR or Academic Search Complete), or under Documents on the Blackboard site for this course. (An explanation for finding articles through JSTOR is noted in Item #1 under Documents.)

Class Guidelines:

1. Students with disabilities are welcome to request appropriate accommodations. Please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (471-6259) and the instructor for further information.
2. While this course includes no attendance grade, successful completion of the snap quizzes requires you to attend all classes and to arrive for each class on time.
3. All lectures, readings, and films will be subject to examination.
4. You are responsible for keeping up with e-mail correspondence with the instructor, as well as notices and other postings on the Blackboard site for this course.
5. All assignments must be completed on schedule. Only students with officially documented illnesses can be exempted from this rule. Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day.

6. PowerPoint presentations are designed to provide you with rough outlines of basic concepts and themes. If you wish to do well in this course, you should take detailed notes during lectures and class discussions. Lecture notes and PowerPoint presentations will not be posted on the web.

7. Students guilty of academic dishonesty (ex., cheating on an exam or plagiarizing a paper) will receive a “0” for the assignment in question. No exceptions. Students are strongly urged to refer to the following link from the Dean of Students for an explanation of what plagiarism is and how it can be avoided:

http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php. Information about plagiarism can also be found on the homepage of the UT library system (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu>).

8. You *must* take the final exam during the time-slot designated by the university. Don’t make travel arrangements during the exam period until the exam schedule has been finalized!

9. Please keep in mind that texting and Internet browsing in class are distractions to you, to the instructor, and to the students around you.

10. I respectfully ask you to arrive for class on time. Please let me know well in advance of unavoidable absences, late arrivals, and early departures from class.

Grading Policy: We will adopt UT’s new “plus & minus” grading system in this course. The following is a list of letter grades, their corresponding GPA values, and the percentage values that I plan to use for your assignments. Note that these percentage grades will be recorded on Blackboard for our purposes only (i.e.: they will not be noted on your transcript).

Letter Grade	GPA	Percentage Score
A	4.0	94-100%
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	64-66
D-	.67	60-63
F	0	59 & below

Lecture Schedule

Aug. 27: Introduction to the Course

No readings

Sept. 1: Overview and Discussion of August 30 Lower House Election

Newspaper articles will be posted on Blackboard (under Documents) immediately following the election. Please read in advance of class.

Tobias Harris and Colum Murphy, "Can the DPJ Bring Democracy to Japan?" *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 3, 2009.

<http://www.feer.com/essays/2009/july/can-the-dpj-bring-democracy-to-japan>

Sept. 3: Politics in Prewar Japan

Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, pp. 61-201.

The Postwar Period

Sept. 8, 10 & 15: The Occupation (1945-52)—The Political Legacies of Democratization, Demilitarization, and the "Reverse Course"

Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, pp. 202-241.

Sept. 17, 22 & 24: "The 1955 System"—Parliamentary and Electoral Institutions, Party Competition, and the Secrets of One Party Dominance

Curtis, *The Logic of Japanese Politics*, pp. 25-64.

Schlesinger, *Shadow Shoguns*, Parts One & Two.

Sept. 29: In-Class Midterm Exam

Oct. 1 & 6: Explaining the Postwar "Economic Miracle"—Industrial Policy and the Government-Business Relationship

Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, pp. 245-88.

Chalmers Johnson, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford University Press, 1982), pp. 3-34. (Download from Documents on Blackboard.)

Oct. 8: The Media in Politics

☺ No readings ☺

Oct. 13 & 15: Interest Groups and the Problem of Structural Corruption

Chalmers Johnson, "Tanaka Kakuei, Structural Corruption, and the Advent of Machine Politics in Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* vol. 12, no. 1 (1986): 1-28. (Access via JSTOR).

Patricia L. Maclachlan, "Post Office Politics in Modern Japan: The Postmasters, Iron Triangles, and the Limits of Reform." *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 30:2 (2004): 281-313. (Access through JSTOR.)

Oct. 20 & 22: Japan's Evolving Civil Society

Pekkanen, *Japan's Dual Society*, Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 5.

Oct. 27 & 29: Women's Issues in Postwar Japanese Politics

LeBlanc, *Bicycle Citizens*, Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 6.

1993 to the Present: Political and Economic Reform

Nov. 3 & 5: The Bubble Economy & Japan's Current Economic Woes

Yukio Noguchi, "the 'Bubble' and Economic Policies in the 1980s," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 20:2 (Summer 1994): 291-329. (Access through JSTOR)

Richard Katz, "The Japan Fallacy," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2009): 9-14. (Access through Academic Search Premier)

Nov. 10: In-Class Midterm Exam

Nov. 12, 17 & 19: The Fall (and Rise?) of the LDP: Party Politics and Electoral Reform

Curtis, pp. 65-205.

Schlesinger, *Shadow Shoguns*, Part Four.

Nov. 24 & *Dec. 1: The Koizumi Phenomenon and the Politics of Change

Patricia L. Maclachlan, "Storming the Castle: The Battle for Postal Reform in Japan," *Social Science Japan Journal* (April 2006): 1-18. (Under Research Tools on UT library website, choose "Find a Journal" and enter "Social Science Japan Journal.")

Ray Christensen, "An Analysis of the 2005 Japanese General Election: Will Koizumi's Political Reforms Endure?" *Asian Survey* (August 2006): 497-516. (Access through JSTOR)

*Research papers due

Dec. 3: Summing Up & Review

Useful Japan-related websites:

<http://web-japan.org/links/index.html> (provides links to government websites and English-language newspapers)

<http://jpcentral.virginia.edu/index.htm> (includes a very useful bibliography for Japanese politics)

<http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/index-e.html> (home page of the prime minister's official residence)

<http://newslet.iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp/> (Social Science Japan Newsletter, from the University of Tokyo)

http://hcl.harvard.edu/research/guides/data_japan/index.html (data resources on Japan from Harvard University. Not all resources are available to non-affiliates.)

http://www.mansfieldfdn.org/polls/polls_listing.htm (an up-to-date list of public opinion polls on Japan from the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation)

<http://www.mmz.kantei.go.jp/foreign/m-magazine/index.html> (subscription information for the Japan Prime Minister's e-mail magazine)

<http://www.observingjapan.com/> (A cool blog on Japanese politics by Tobias Harris)

<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/eastasia> (the website for UT's Center for East Asian Studies. Check for list of upcoming events on Japan and useful research resources)