

Sub-course: Current Issues in Japanese Culture and Society under Globalization

	Course title	[Code]	(Credits)
Undergraduate students:	Summer Program in English I	[25N3047]	(2)
Graduate students:	Special Lectures in Humanities and Sciences I	[25S0151]	(2)

**1. Description**

This course examines the ways that globalization and other dynamics are shaping contemporary Japanese society and culture from a range of interdisciplinary perspectives. How is Japan adapting to the political, economic, social and cultural challenges of the 21st century, and what challenges remain going forward? Some of the lectures will pay particular attention to the impacts of these challenges and changes from perspectives of gender, diversity, equity and inclusion, while others will focus on other dimensions of contemporary Japanese culture and society.

The format of this course is a series of lectures taught by various lecturers with a range of areas of expertise, giving the course an interdisciplinary dimension. All lectures will be held face-to-face in the classroom, between 9:30 AM and 12:40 PM each day.

NOTE: While this course is an intensive two-week course, the total number of classroom lectures plus the field trip is equal to 15 periods.

**2. Teaching Date, Time and Topic**

Date	Time	Lecturer	Topic	Place
July 22 Fri	6:10pm- 6:40pm	Prof. Makoto KOBAYASHI	Orientation	Plaza 2F, Room B&C
July 23 Wed	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Ryutaro NISHI	Exploring humanity through children's education and care	Plaza 2F, Room B&C
July 24 Thu	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Naoko HASEGAWA	Local Japanese foods from the perspective of geography	Same as above
July 25 Fri	1:00pm – 5:30pm	Prof. Myles CARROLL	Globalization, Gender and Diversity in Contemporary Japanese Political Economy	Same as above
July 28 Mon	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Yukako HATAKEYAMA	Culture and Perception: How are perceptual processes influenced by culture?	Same as above

July 29 Tue	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. ZHANG Jie	Working in Japan as a Foreigner: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Development of Diversity	Same as above
July 30 Wed	1:00pm – 5:30pm	Prof. Myles CARROLL	Lecture and Workshop at Dentsu Japan, Shimbashi Office (Field Trip)	Dentsu Japan, Shimbashi Office
July 31 Thu	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Robert LOWE	Teaching English as a Lingua Franca in Japan	Plaza 2F, Room B&C

### 3. Class Contents:

#### **Topic: Exploring Humanity through Children's Education and Care**

Prof. Ryutaro NISHI

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) is the foundation of human existence. While there are cultural differences in the actual practices of ECEC, we have much in common as human beings beyond such differences. ECEC is a unique discipline that enables us to understand what it means to be human through the experiences and practices of deeply caring relationships.

In this lecture, students will deepen their understanding of the diversity and commonality of humanity and human relationships by watching videos of excellent ECEC practices in Japan and discussing them together.

#### **Topic: Local Japanese Foods from the Perspective of Geography**

Prof. Naoko HASEGAWA

Building on the first lecture, this class examines Japan's welfare regime, from the post-war to the present. While Japan was well known for having a small welfare state in the post-war era, recent decades have seen rapid population aging, a chronically low birth rate, and growing economic insecurity for many people, all of which have necessitated a major rethink of Japan's welfare state. How is Japan adapting to the challenges posed by globalization and demographic change and what are the consequences for gender equality and inclusion?

#### **Topic: Globalization, Gender and Diversity in Contemporary Japanese Political Economy**

Prof. Myles CARROLL

This lecture looks at the question of diversity and gender equality in two areas: employment and politics. In the post-war era, Japan developed an employment model rooted in a rigid gender division of labor between male breadwinners and female housewives. At the same time, women were largely excluded from electoral politics. Yet recent decades have seen various changes that have challenged this model, including population aging and shrinking, economic stagnation, and globalization, and changing gender norms. How have these changes impacted issues of women's inclusion in politics and employment, and

what challenges remain going forward?

**Topic: Culture and Perception: How are Perceptual Processes Influenced by Culture?**

Prof. Yukako HATAKEYAMA

In the current world of diversity, people from various cultural backgrounds get together, share ideas, and have discussions. Culture may influence our way of thinking and communication, but do people from different cultures perceive things differently? In this lecture, students will explore how culture may or may not influence perception through simple experiments, discussions, and group work. The findings reported in research papers and books will be introduced as supplemental materials. The lecture is interactive, involves pair and group work, and welcomes student participation.

**Topic: Working in Japan as a Foreigner: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Development of Diversity**

Prof. ZHANG Jie

What does it take for highly skilled foreign professionals to build a career in Japan? This lecture explores the realities of working in Japan, from career prospects to challenges such as workplace culture, language barriers, and gender difference. We will examine how companies and government policies shape the experiences of foreign workers and discuss the broader impact of diversity and globalization on Japan's workforce. Through case studies and interactive discussions, students will gain insights into the evolving work environment and what the future holds for foreign professionals in Japan.

**Field Trip: Lecture and Workshop at Dentsu Japan, Shimbashi Office**

Prof. Myles CARROLL

For this year's field trip, we will visit the headquarters of Dentsu Japan, one of Japan's leading advertising companies. The field trip will first involve a lecture from company staff about the company's empowerment, diversity, and inclusion initiatives in relation to both Dentsu's corporate governance human resource policies and its work in advertisement content creation. After that we will participate in Dentsu's interactive workshop activities related to course themes.

**Topic: Teaching English as a Lingua Franca in Japan**

Prof. Robert LOWE

It is commonly said that English is now an international language. It is the primary global language of commerce, business, tourism, and academia, and is spoken worldwide by roughly 1.3 billion people. It is used as an official language in numerous countries around the world including India, Nigeria, and Hong Kong, and it has changed and evolved in each area it has reached. However, does the way we teach English reflect this reality? This two-part session will look at the global spread of English, will discuss what implications this change in the form and function of English may have on the way we teach English, and

will consider some of the barriers preventing a truly international approach to English language teaching from being established in Japan.

#### **4. Evaluation**

Class attendance: (25% of final grade)

Reaction paper submissions: (25% of final grade; students submit seven reaction papers in total, one for each day of class including the field trip)

Final report: (50% of final grade)