

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

	Course Title	Code	Credits
Undergraduate students	Summer Program in English I	26N3047	2
Graduate students	Special Lectures in Humanities and Sciences I	26S0151	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.

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 21 Tue	6:10pm- 6:40pm	Prof. Myles CARROLL	Orientation	Plaza, room TBA
July 22 Wed	11:10am – 12:40pm	Prof. Sera MUTO	Emotion, education, and learning at school in Japan: Focusing on respect and related emotions (Part I)	Plaza 2F, Room B&C
July 23 Thu	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Iris ISSEN	Homosexuality in Japan: A Historical Perspective	Same as above
July 23 Thu	1:40pm – 3:10pm	Prof. Shohei NISHIZAKA	General Education: Japanese Culture I “Kyogen” (Special lecture for all courses)	Junior High School Gymnasium
July 24 Fri	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Myles CARROLL	Globalization, Gender and Diversity in Contemporary Japanese Political Economy	Plaza 2F, Room B&C
July 25 Sat	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. SHIN Jiyeon	“Tokyo-ness” and Multicultural Coexistence in Tokyo	Same as above
July 27 Mon	9:30am – 12:40pm	Prof. Yukako HATAKEYAMA	Culture and Perception: How is perception influenced by culture?	Same as above
July 28 Tue	1:40pm – 3:10pm	Prof. Shohei NISHIZAKA	General Education: Japanese Culture II “Kodoh” (Special lecture for all courses)	Plaza 2F, Rooms A-C
July 29 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	11:10am – 12:40pm	Prof. Sera MUTO	Emotion, education, and learning at school in Japan: Focusing on respect and related emotions (Part II)	Plaza 2F, Room B&C

### **3. Class Contents:**

#### **Topic: Emotion, Education, and Learning at School in Japan: Focusing on Respect and Related Emotions**

Prof. Sera MUTO

Do you respect your teachers? What do you think of this question? Respect has multiple meanings within and across cultures, so this question may make some people say "Yes, of course," while others may say "It depends." In Japan, school teachers were often highly respected in the past, but nowadays, respect for teachers depends more or less on their teaching skills or relationships with students. In this class, based on previous studies, I will first introduce three modes of respect: respect as a moral duty, as a relatively stable emotional attitude, and as a momentary emotional state. After considering which mode best describes your own understanding of respect for teachers, we will reflect on and discuss how respect and related emotions, such as admiration, awe, adoration, and wonder, function in education and learning in Japan and in your own country.

#### **Topic: Homosexuality in Japan: A Historical Perspective**

Prof. Iris ISSEN

This course introduces the history of homosexuality in Japan from premodern times to the present. It introduces how same-sex relations were understood before the emergence of modern sexual categories, and how modernisation, globalisation, and state governance reshaped sexual norms in contemporary Japan. Through this historical lens, students will learn how sexuality is shaped by social, political, and cultural contexts.

#### **Topic: General Education: Japanese Culture I “Kyogen” (Special lecture for all courses)**

Prof. Shohei NISHIZAKA

Kyogen is a traditional form of Japanese comic theatre that has been performed for centuries alongside Noh drama. Through its distinctive language, stylized movements, and humorous portrayal of everyday life, Kyogen offers insight into Japanese aesthetics, social values, and perspectives on human relationships. In this session, students will first gain an overview of Kyogen and observe a live demonstration by three professional Kyogen performers—MIYAKE Tokuro, IZUMI Junko, and IZUMI Motoya. They will then participate in introductory training exercises to experience its basic techniques. Through this direct cultural experience, students will reflect on the characteristics of Japanese culture and consider similarities and differences in relation to their own cultural backgrounds.

#### **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: “Tokyo-ness” and Multicultural Coexistence in Tokyo**

Prof. SHIN Jiyeon

In this session, students will consider regional images and identities by examining various places in Tokyo as well as in the cities from which they come, and will reflect on the “authenticity” suggested by these images as well as the diversity that such authenticity conceals. Specifically, by understanding the history and current conditions of places regarded as “typical Tokyo”, students will deepen their understanding of urban society and culture, while at the same time further investigating the diverse cultures that exist within local communities; through this process, they will examine how globalization, national identity, and the interaction and tension among different cultures have influenced the diversity of Tokyo today, and how, as a result, locality has changed and how it is perceived.

**Topic: Culture and Perception: How is Perception Influenced by Culture?**

Prof. Yukako HATAKEYAMA

In today's diverse world, people from various cultural backgrounds come together to share ideas and engage in discussion. Culture may influence the way we think and communicate, but do people from different cultures actually perceive the world differently? In this lecture, students will explore how culture may—or may not—shape perception through simple experiments, discussions, and group work. Findings from research papers and books will be introduced as supplementary materials. The lecture is interactive, includes pair and group activities, and encourages active student participation.

**Topic: General Education: Japanese Culture II “Kodoh” (Special lecture for all courses)**

Prof. Shohei NISHIZAKA

Kodo, the traditional Japanese art of incense appreciation, is considered one of the three major classical arts of refinement in Japan, alongside the tea ceremony and flower arrangement. Compared to these more widely practiced arts, opportunities to experience Kodo firsthand are relatively rare. Through engagement with this traditional cultural practice, students will explore Japanese aesthetics and sensibilities while also reflecting on their own cultural backgrounds from a broader, comparative perspective. In this session, led by SHIMADA Hanako, students will learn about the history of Kodo, experience “listening” to incense, and create their own scented sachets. Through these activities, they will gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and spiritual dimensions of Japanese incense traditions.

**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.

#### **4. Evaluation**

Class attendance: (25% of final grade)

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

Final report: (50% of final grade)