HONORS 200-010: SHAPING OF THE MODERN MIND (HU)
Samurai and Geisha: Understanding Japan (Fall 2016)
Mondays and Wednesdays, 3:30-4:45 pm, Honors House 190

Instructor: Hilary K. Snow, PhD
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9 – 10:30 am
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 am – 12:30 pm
By appointment
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Course Description
Our perception of traditional Japan is heavily influenced by the ideals of the samurai and the geisha. Both groups represented a small percentage of the Japanese population during their peak in the 17th-19th centuries, but the ideals associated with them have shaped modern Japan’s understanding of itself and the West’s view of Japan. In this class, we will look at the history and legends that created the stereotypes of these two groups, along with modern perceptions in Japan and the West.

This course will use fiction, autobiography and scholarly texts to delve deeper into the true meaning of “samurai” and “geisha.” The course will begin by studying these two groups in their historical context. We will explore how the samurai came to be the most important social class in Japan and how these warriors adjusted to 250 years of peace from the early 17th to the mid-19th century. We will also address the contrast between the romantic ideal of the geisha and the truth of their difficult lives.

The course will also reconsider popular 20th and 21st century depictions of samurai and geisha. We will contemplate what these depictions teach us about Japan, modern society’s relationship to history, and the persistence of legend.

GER Statement
This course fulfills UWM’s GER requirements. To this end, this course is intended to:
1. Increase students’ critical and creative thinking skills through classroom discussions and written assignments.
2. Provide students with opportunities to hone their effective communication skills through classroom discussions and presentations.
3. Stimulate students’ intercultural knowledge and competence through the introduction of new content and ideas.

Credit Hour Breakdown
The expected minimum number of hours of energy expended by students in this class is as follows:

- Classroom discussion and discussion: 37.5 hours
- Reading and outside activities: 56.5 hours
- Paper research and writing: 50 hours
- Total: 144 hours
Textbooks
There are two textbooks for this course. You may purchase them through the bookstore or another source of your choice.


All other readings are available as PDFs or links on the course D2L site.

Accommodations for students with disabilities
The University of Wisconsin Milwaukee supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the Accessibility Resource Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Assignments
Further instructions for written assignments will be distributed later in the semester.

- Discussion leading – Students will work in small groups to lead discussion twice during the semester.
- Three papers – Each paper will relate to a theme from the course. The first paper must be rewritten and the second paper may be rewritten for a higher grade.
- Research presentation – Each student will select a topic related to the course and make a brief in-class presentation based on scholarly research through library resources.
- Students are expected to actively and productively participate in class discussions and peer reviews. To fully participate, preparation is required outside of class.

Grading Procedure
Participation including regular attendance, evidence of careful class preparation, active and productive contributions to class discussions, thoughtful responses to readings and peer critiques, and respectful engagement with peers: 30%.
Three 5-7 page papers. 20% each. (60% total)
Formal presentation of a topic related to the class: 10%.

Late written assignments will be docked one full grade for each day late (i.e. an A- paper would become a B-). All written assignments are due at the beginning of class. For the purposes of this policy, a day is defined as a 24 hour period beginning at the start of class (i.e. 12:30 pm). A written assignment due on a Monday at 12:30 pm will be counted one day late if submitted at 4 pm and two days late if submitted at 4 pm on Tuesday.

Tardiness and unexcused absences will lower your grade for class participation. Of course, if you are sick, especially with a fever, you should stay home. Please notify me as soon as possible to be granted an
excused absence. If you have a medical or personal emergency that affects your ability to be present in class and complete your work, please contact your adviser.

**Technology in the classroom**
Computers and other devices may not be used for anything other than note-taking or viewing assigned readings. Students who use their computers for anything other than approved activities or whose computer or device use is distracting to other students or the instructor will lose the privilege of using their computer or device in the class. The determination of disruptive computer or device use is at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Students participating in non-course related activities during class, including but not limited to inappropriate use of computers or cell phones, work for other classes, and excessive side conversations, will be marked absent for the day.

**Communicating with the instructor**
You are always welcome at my office hours without an appointment, and I available to make appointments at other times. Most students find email the most convenient way to communicate with me between class meetings. I check email regularly during business hours, but generally do not read email in the evenings and on weekends. Please anticipate a twenty-four hour response time for emails sent on weekdays, although I will usually respond more promptly. Likewise, you are expected to check your UWM email regularly, as it is the primary way for the university and your instructors to contact you outside of class.

When emailing, please remember that our correspondence is professional communication. Include a subject line referencing the class and the general topic of your email (e.g. “Honors 200/Samurai – idea for paper three”). Begin your email with a salutation (e.g. “Dear Hilary”) and end with a closing (e.g. “Thank you, Dan”). Remember that using first names with your instructors is a privilege of Honors College and you should use titles like “Prof. Snow” with other faculty unless they instruct you to use their first name.

**Schedule of Classes**
All readings are to be read in advance of the meeting for which they are assigned.

| Sept 7 | Introduction to the course |
| Sept 12 | Samurai before the Edo Period |
| Sept 14 | The Edo Period |
Sept 19  Library research instruction  
Meet at Golda Meir Library in Library Instruction Room B (North Commons)  

Sept 21  House Codes in the Kanto  

Sept 26  Ieyasu’s Codes  

Sept 28  The Way of the Warrior  
Access through the link on our D2L page (this book is available online because it is out of copyright). Read the Preface, Introduction, Chapters 1-4, and Chapter 16. Each chapter is very short.

Oct 3  Presentations

Oct 5  Paper One in-class peer review.  
Bring two hard copies of your paper to class.

Oct 10  The Ako Incident and Chûshingura  
**First paper due**  

Oct 12  Chûshingura, part II  

Oct 17  Presentations

Oct 19  No class – individual paper review meetings.  
Sign up at my office (HH 151) for a slot on Oct. 18-20. Bring your paper with my comments to the meeting.

Oct 24  A 19th Century Samurai  
Oct 26  American Samurai
**Paper One rewrite due**
The Last Samurai, 2004, dir. Edward Zwick
The film is on reserve at the library and we will arrange an optional screening before our class discussion.

Oct 31  American Samurai, part II

Nov 2  Courtesans and Geisha

Nov 7  Presentations

Nov 9  Paper Two in-class peer review

Nov 14  Geisha in Kyoto
**Paper Two due**

Nov 16  Meiji Geisha

Nov 21  Geisha training

Nov 23  **NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Nov 28  Memoirs of a Geisha

Nov 30  Mineko speaks
**Paper Two rewrite due**

Dec 5  Modern Geisha

Dec 7  Presentations
Dec 12  No class. Extended office hours 12:30-4:45 to discuss paper three. Sign up at my office (HH 151) for a slot.

Dec 14  Last day of class. 

Paper three due