

*Title and Code of Course:*

**Contemporary Japanese Society**

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Credit Point Value: <b>6</b>	Number of Lessons per Week: <b>1</b> (90 min.)	Type of Course: <b>Seminar</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lecture</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Method of Evaluation: <b>Oral Examination</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>In-Class Presentation</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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**Course Description:**

The course aims at providing a comprehensive view of major processes, information sources, research problems and paradigms, policy issues and discourse agenda of/on contemporary Japanese society and culture in a long-term global perspective. The approach combines sociological, anthropological and psychological disciplinary frameworks in a broad historical and comparative context in order to equip participants with appropriate theoretical and methodological skills for developing their own orientation in and interpretation of key issues in Japanese socio-cultural regimes and its transformation. Three dimensions of those regimes are elaborated in relative detail: its institutional, status and value patterns, both in its changes and continuities, and in its regional and subcultural varieties. In respective institutional spheres the interpretive and policy problems of population trends, 'Japanese capitalism', 'Japanese democracy' and 'Japanese religion' are scrutinized. In the policy realm distinct attention is paid to youth, deviance, and minority concerns. Institutional analysis is complemented with highlights on patterns of status stratification, mobility and inequality as well as on interrelations with values, personality and identity characteristics. Mapping academic and ideological debates, the course includes criteria and methods for the critical assessment of those debates and for enriching cultural and epistemic self-awareness.

**Bibliography:**

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- Barshay, A. E.: The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: The Marxian and Modernist Traditions, University of California Press, 2007.
- Bestor, V.L. - Th.C. Bestor - A. Yamagata (eds.): Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society, Routledge, 2011.
- Ishida, H. – D.H. Slater (eds.): Social Class in Contemporary Japan, Routledge, 2010.
- Kingston, J.: Contemporary Japan: History, Politics, and Social Change since the 1980s, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.
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