

PIA2918: A PORTRAIT OF JAPAN : EXPERIENCING JAPANESE CULTURE

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

A Portrait of Japan : Experiencing Japanese Culture

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

2918

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English/Japanese

Medium of Assessment

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Assessment

English/Japanese

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

AI2918 A Portrait of Japan: Experiencing Japanese Culture

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details**Abstract**

This course aims to raise students' awareness of and appreciate cultural differences between Japan and China as well as Japan and the Western cultures. The influence of Chinese culture on traditional Japanese values and the impact of Western culture on modern Japanese culture will be introduced in lectures. It also explores the influences of Japanese culture to Hong Kong society.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify the influence of Chinese culture on traditional Japanese culture;		x	x	
2	Describe the impact of western culture on modern Japanese culture and vice versa;		x	x	
3	Discuss Japanese cultural influences in Hong Kong;		x	x	x
4	Relate the cultural heritage of the Japanese people to contemporary developments of the Japanese society.			x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures will introduce the various aspects of Japanese society and culture that will enable students to have an introductory knowledge of topics covered.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	If schedule allows, field trips may be organized so as to deepen students' understanding of Japanese culture in Hong Kong.	3	

3		Group discussion, presentations/project will involve students in active learning through interactive debates and on-line forum.	1, 2, 3, 4	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Quiz/field trip report	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of cultural concepts and theories studied in the course and in the readings.	No
2	On-line discussion forum	1, 2, 3, 4	20	Students will be assessed on their level of active participation in on-line forum	Yes
3	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4	10	Students will be assessed on their level of active participation in classroom discussions.	No
4	Group presentation/project	1, 2, 3, 4	40	Students will have to make a 20-minute presentation under the scope of cultural interflows.	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Quiz

Criterion

Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of cultural concepts and theories studied in the course and in the readings.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of critical thinking; and capacity to analyse; superior grasp of Japanese culture.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of grasp of the subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of Japanese culture.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Shown understanding of the subject matter.

Marginal (D)

Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter.

Failure (F)

Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills.

Assessment Task

2. On-line discussion forum

Criterion

Students will be assessed on their level of active participation in on-line forum

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Participate very actively in on-line discussions at all time.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Participate actively in on-line discussions.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Satisfactory participation in on-line discussions.

Marginal (D)

Barely satisfactory participation in on-line discussions.

Failure (F)

Rarely participate in on-line discussions.

Assessment Task

3. Class participation

Criterion

Students will be assessed on the level of active participation in classroom activities.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Participate very actively in class at all time.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Participate actively in classroom activities.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Satisfactory participation in classroom activities.

Marginal (D)

Barely satisfactory participation in classroom activities.

Failure (F)

Rarely participate in classroom activities.

Assessment Task

4.Group presentation/project

Criterion

Students will make a 20-minute presentation. They will be assessed on their understanding of the cultural heritage of Japan and its influences to the world.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of original thinking; excellent organization and analytical skills; very good collaboration between team members.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of original thinking; good organization and analytical skills; good collaboration between team members.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Satisfactory organization and analytical skills; evidence of collaboration between team members shown.

Marginal (D)

Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter; barely satisfactory organization and analytical skills; shown effort on collaboration between team members.

Failure (F)

Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weak in organization and analytical skills; little effort on collaboration between team members.

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Japanese aesthetics and art; appreciation of Japanese culture; Japanese film arts; the influence of Confucianism, thought and religion;; social customs and lifestyle; Japanese corporations; Japanese food; festivals; leisure activities and entertainment; Japanese popular culture in Hong Kong (e.g. manga, movies, TV drama and magazines).

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Sosnoski, D. (1996) Introduction to Japanese Culture. Tokyo: Tuttle.
2	Benedict, R. (1989) The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
3	Kristina, I. W. and Roman, R. eds. (2015) Visions of Precarity in Japanese Popular Culture and Literature. New York: Routledge.
4	Plutschow, H. E. (2003) Rediscovering Rikyu and the Beginnings of the Japanese Tea Ceremony. Folkestone: Global Oriental.
5	Sparnon, N. J. (1969) A Guide to Japanese Flower Arrangement. Tokyo: Shufunotomo Co.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Asquith, J. and Kalland, A. (1997) Japanese Images of Nature Cultural Perspectives. Richmond: Curzon.
2	Kumagai, F. (1996) Unmasking Japan Today: the Impact of Traditional Values on Modern Japanese society. Conn: Praeger.
3	Matsumoto, D. (1996) Unmasking Japan: Myths and Realities about the Emotions of the Japanese. Calif.: Stanford University Press.
4	Davies, R and Ikeno, O. (2002) The Japanese Mind: Understanding Contemporary Japanese Culture. Boston: Tuttle Pub.
5	Martinez, D. (1998) The Worlds of Japanese Popular Culture: Gender, Shifting Boundaries and Global Cultures. UK: Cambridge University Press.