

D2 Globalization and Japanese Popular Culture

TTH 4:25-5:40 UHTN 23 034F

Instructor: Kyle Ikeda; E-mail: kikeda@uvm.edu
Office Phone: 656-1044

Office: L/L CM, Rm 303
Hours: MW 2:15-3:15



Course Description:

Over the past decade-and-a-half anime, manga, video games, toys, J-pop music, and horror movies, among other cultural and consumer products from Japan, have garnered a larger presence in the American, as well as global, popular culture scene. What are some of the reasons for this increased interest? In what ways has the age of globalization and increasing digital media flows altered the way fans of Anime communicate with each other across national borders? What accounts for differences in how anime and collectible items such as Hello Kitty accessories have been marketed in the US as opposed to Japan?

Through the course readings and discussions, we will examine these and other questions concerning Japanese popular culture in the age of globalization. Students will be introduced to key concepts and questions concerning Japanese popular culture global flows and be given the opportunity to apply insights gained through course readings, lectures, and discussions to a Japanese popular culture research project of their own design.

Goals, Objectives & Outcomes:

Content: Students will develop and deepen their understanding of global and transnational culture flows in relation to Japan’s economic, political, and historical relationships. Students will read research about Japanese popular culture from a variety of academic disciplines in order to increase their understanding of the complexity of Japanese popular cultural forms as well as develop an understanding of key findings and arguments concerning Japanese popular culture.

Skills: Students will further develop critical reading skills necessary for reading academic and scholarly research and hone critical thinking and writing skills necessary for university level coursework and research. Opportunities to develop and practice presentation and group work skills related to research manifest in the group research **poster presentation**, and individual **research presentation** and **final research paper** (10-12 pages).

Diversity Competency: The course promotes an awareness of and appreciation for the diversity of human experience through an examination of Japanese popular cultural forms and how cultural norms in Japan differ from those in the United States. How one’s identities, attitudes, beliefs, values, and assumptions influence how one views those who are similar to or different from oneself.

Course Readings:

Course reading assignments will be made available via links on blackboard or through library course reserve.

Grading Breakdown:

Class Participation..... (20%) Includes attendance, participation in discussions, & reading summaries.

Reading Questions Worksheets... (15%) Reading Questions worksheets will be assigned for each reading.

Research Journals.....(15%) Research Journals are an important record of your research activities & findings

Poster Project.....(15%) Includes group & individual contributions to the poster & presentation.

Research Paper Presentation.....(10%) Presentation of your Final Research Paper’s findings and arguments.

Final Research Paper.....(25%) 10-12 pages final paper based on your research and findings.

Explanation of Grading & Expectations:

Class Participation: It is vital that every student comes to class well prepared to share their findings, reactions, questions, and observations regarding the research journal assignment or assigned reading. Each week a student will be asked to give a brief (under five minutes) summary of the reading assignment(s)’ main arguments. Students are expected to raise questions or offer comments in relation to the summary in discussion of the reading assignment. Please note that attendance alone does not constitute participation and students will be evaluated on the basis of both the quantity and quality of their contributions to class discussions.

Reading Questions Worksheets (RQW): You are expected to complete the assigned readings and Reading Questions Worksheets (RQWs) before coming to class. RQWs for assignments will be posted on blackboard. Print the completed worksheets and turn them in each class session. The RQWs will be graded on the depth and completeness of your answers. Late worksheets will not be graded, but receive completion credit. RQWs count toward 10% of your overall course grade.

Explanation of Grading & Expectations (continued):

Research Journals (RJ): Starting the second week, the class will be given a weekly research task designed to help them make progress on their research project due each Tuesday. In your research journal record your progress in response to the given research tasks. The journal will be your opportunity to raise specific questions about your project, ask for advice about your work, as well as a forum to report your progress. Your journals should be printed out and turned in at the beginning of class on Tuesday (expected length: between 300-500 words per entry; counts toward 10% of overall course grade.) Key to writing a successful research paper lies in conducting proper research and recording your findings in the research journal.

Final Research Paper, Poster Project and Research Presentations:

Drafts of different stages of the course **Final Research Paper** will be due at various times during the course, with the final draft due on the scheduled day of the final exam 5/10. Preliminary background research for the research paper will constitute the basis of your contribution to a group **poster project**. Students will also make research related Poster Presentations (details forthcoming 3/21). Students will give presentations on their research during the final weeks of the course. The Poster Project (including group and individual contributions) count toward 15% of course grade, the research paper including drafts count as 25%, and the final research presentation count toward 10% of your overall course grade.

Classroom Policy:

The use of cell phones, smart phones, i-Pads or other mobile communication devices is not allowed during class. Turn off those devices and put them in your bags. Failure to comply with this policy will result in the lowering of your class participation grade.

Cheating is a violation of the student conduct code, unethical, and counterproductive to proper learning. **Plagiarism** is a serious academic offense and will be penalized. See UVM's academic integrity policy <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Week 1 Introduction to Course: Japanese Popular Culture as Global Phenomenon**
- 1/16 (T) Course Overview & introductions [HCOL Plenary (Wed 1/17) 5:05-6:20 pm Billings Lecture Hall]
 - 1/18 (Th) Discuss readings "Japan's Gross National Cool" (McGray), "Is Japan Losing its Cool?" (Grunebaum) & "Japan Spends Millions in order to be Cool" (Kelts) [on BB]. RQW 1 due

MATERIAL AFFLUENCE AND NATIONAL ANXIETY

- Week 2 Post-bubble Japan**
- 1/23 (T) Research Journal 1 due; discuss "Forms & Themes in Japanese Popular Culture" (Tsutsui) [BB]
 - 1/25 (Th) "Millennial Japan: Intimate Alienation & New Age Intimacies" (Allison, 66-92) [BB]; RQW 2 due

RECESSION AND SURVIVAL

- Week 3 Recession & Survival: Post-bubble Anxiety**
- 1/30 (T) Research Journal 2 due; Watch film *Battle Royale* (2000)
 - 2/1 (Th) Discuss film & "Recession & Survival in 21st Century Japan" (Arai 367-379) [BB]; RQW 3 due

CULTURAL ODOR / CULTURAL FRAGRANCE

- Week 4 Pokémon goes Global (the first time)**
- 2/6 (T) Research Journal 3 due [HCOL Plenary (Wed 2/7) 5:05-6:20 pm Billings Lecture Hall]
 - 2/8 (Th) "How Japanese is Pokémon?" (Iwabuchi, 53-79) [on BB]; RQW 4 due

PINK GLOBALIZATION

- Week 5 Global/Local - modes of Consuming Hello Kitty**
- 2/13 (T) Research Journal 4 due
 - 2/15 (Th) "Monsterring the Japanese Cute: Pink Globalization & its Critics Abroad" (Yano) [BB]; RQW 5 due

NARRATIVE & DATABASE CONSUMPTION

- Week 6 Contemporary Modes of Media Consumption**
- 2/20 (T) Research Journal 5 due
 - 2/22 (Th) "World and Variation: The Reproduction & Consumption of Narrative" *Fanthropologies* (Ôtsuka, 99-116); "The Animalization of Otaku Culture," *Networks of Desire* (Azuma) [on BB]; RQW 6 due

K-pop idol Girl Groups in Japan

Week 7

J-pop & K-pop: Asia and the Global Market

- 2/27 (T) “Conflicting Desires: K-pop idol Girl Group Flows in Japan,” RQW 7 due [HCOL Plenary (Wed 2/28)]
- 3/1 (Th) Research Journal 6 due; View first part of *Summer Wars* in class

SUMMER WARS and descriptive essay

Week 8

Descriptive Essays & Summer Wars

- 3/6 (T) TOWN MEETING
- 3/8 (Th) View part 2 of *Summer Wars* (Research Journal 7: Descriptive Essay due); discuss movie

SPRING RECESS

Week 9

Spring Recess 3/12-3/16 SPRING RECESS

POSTER PROJECT PLANNING

Week 10

Group project planning- Poster Project

- 3/20 (T) Research Journal 8 due; [HCOL Poster Plenary (Wed 3/21) Billings]
- 3/22 (Th) Poster Project Group Meetings (instructor out of town)

SUPER FLAT & YOSHITOMO NARA

Week 11

Japanese Pop Art

- 3/27 (T) Research Journal 9 due
- 3/29 (Th) “The Art of Cute Little Things: Nara Yoshitomo” *Fanthropologies* (Ivy, pp 3-29); RQW 8 due

MEDIA CONSUMPTION IN THE AGE OF THE INTERNET

Week 12

Fandom and Online Community Practices

- 4/3 (T) Research Journal 10 due: Paper Outline & Argument statement due; peer critique & feedback
- 4/5 (Th) “The World of Anime Fandom in America” (Napier) [on BB]; RQW 9 Due [Posters due 4/8]

STREET FASHION (TBD) & POSTER PRESENTATIONS I

Week 13

From the ‘Street’ to Global Market

- 4/10 (T) Research Journal 11 due; Research Poster Presentations I (Wed 4/11; in Kalkin 4, 5:05pm)
- 4/12 (Th) “J-Teens as Producers of Street Fashion” (Kawamura) [BB]; RQW 10

POSTER PRESENTATIONS II

Week 14

Poster Project: Presentations & Evaluations

- 4/17 (T) Research Journal 12 due; Research Poster Presentations II (Wed 4/18; Kalkin 4, 5:05 pm)
- 4/19 (Th) Discuss Poster Presentations & Peer Evaluation of poster project contributions

ROUGH DRAFTS AND RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Week 15

Project Presentations & First Year Research Symposium (Wed 4/25; UVM Alumni House)

- 4/24 (T) Full Drafts Due; Presentations (3-4 people) _____, _____, _____, _____
- 4/26 (Th) Presentations (3-4 people) _____, _____, _____, _____

Week 16

PROJECT PRESENTATIONS wk 2

- 5/1 (T) Presentations (3-4 people) _____, _____, _____, _____
- 5/3 (Th) Presentations (3 people) _____, _____, _____ Course evaluations

Final Exam Week

Project Presentations wk 3 & Final Drafts of Paper Due (5/10 at 4:30 pm)

- 5/10 (Th) Presentations, (5-8 people) _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____
4:30-7:15 pm