

BCUSP 188 Spring Quarter 2007
Topics in Asian Cultures: Tea, Brush, and Sword

Meeting in UW2-131, Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00-1:05

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the traditional arts, culture, and history of selected countries of East Asia. The emphasis is on the interaction between culture, on the one hand, and geography, politics, economics, and social structures that shape and are in turned shaped by cultural processes and products. Coverage of specific countries varies with the instructor and quarter offered.

In the version offered spring 2007, the focus is traditional Japanese culture at its high point during the era of samurai rule from the twelfth through sixteenth centuries. This was the formative period in the development of artistic expressions and forms commonly associated with traditional Japan and that still command a wide following today, including calligraphy, short verse (haiku), Noh Theater, landscape painting, and tea ceremony. While the course devotes ample time to the aesthetics, history, and philosophy underpinning these traditional arts, it also helps students situate the arts within the broader sweep of Japanese history, and to see them in relation to the political and social structures associated with the samurai ruling class, the wielders of the sword in the title. Students will also have an opportunity to learn through direct experience by trying their hand at composing short verse and writing basic Japanese characters with ink and calligraphy brush.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

1. Gain basic understanding of the historical development of Japanese civilization.
2. Develop insights into the relationship between culture and the historical, political, and social context in which it develops.
3. Acquire the ability to interpret traditional Japanese art, noting especially its representation of nature and human nature, its use of space, connection to indigenous and borrowed religions, and the influences of China and Korea.
4. Demonstrate mastery of the above through short, focused writing and speaking assignments.
5. Demonstrate understanding of the creative process and materials used through actual practice of composing short verse and simple works of calligraphy.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

(10 %) Discussion and Class Participation: Includes informed, constructive contributions to discussions in class; and also submission of group exercises I'll give you from time to time during the quarter. On most Friday afternoons, I'll post study questions, perhaps sometimes notes or outlines, for the following week's readings. You should check the course Blackboard site for these Friday evening or Saturday; use them to help you study and to prepare for any in-class exercises that I might give you the following week.

(10 %) Essay 1, 500-600 words, on this question: How did the introduction of Buddhism from China and Korea change Japanese culture? ***DUE APRIL 9***

(12.5 %) Essay 2, about 750 words, on this topic: You are asked to look at a set of paintings in the reading for April 16. Choose any one of them (Hakuin's "Blind Men Crossing a Bridge," for example), and write an essay that interprets the meaning of the painting in the context of Zen Buddhism. In other words, what is "Zen" about the painting—not only in the image but the technique used to create it? ***DUE APRIL 25***

(20 %) Midterm exam (multiple choice, short answer, identification, geography), **ON MAY 2**. Note that there may be questions on current events, so be sure to keep up with the news concerning Japan (see under Texts below for references to news sources).

(10 %) Calligraphy work: You will be graded pass-fail for your participation in the calligraphy studio unit. You will be required to produce one or more final compositions on the third day that will be used as a basis for evaluating your work. An unexcused absence during these three days will result in a zero. All students who attend and work constructively with the instructors to develop their technique will receive full credit.

(5 %) Haiku poems: Write, share orally with the class, and submit a set of three English haiku poems at a haiku workshop. I'll distribute guidelines to use when preparing these 10-14 days before the assignment is due. ***DUE MAY 9***

(17.5 %) Final Essay, between 1000 and 1250 words, on any topic related to traditional Japanese culture, art, philosophy, literature, society, or religion. Your task is to identify the topic, narrow it to a point where you can say something interesting and meaningful about it in 1000 and 1250 words. For example, nature as a theme in Basho's (or Issa's) poetry; differences between *tanka* and *haiku*; the *wabi* aesthetic in the tea ceremony, traditional elements in Sumo wrestling, why the samurai class disappeared in the early Meiji Era; calligraphy or black-ink painting as an aid to attaining enlightenment (*satori*); how and why Japan experienced cultural change in the transition from the Heian to Kamakura Periods; the samurai philosophy of swordsmanship; techniques for making samurai swords; difference between the literature of the Tokugawa Period and that of the preceding medieval period. You could also watch another movie, Japanese or American, about samurai or that takes place during the period that we're studying (a Kurosawa film, such as *Seven Samurai*, for example, or *Yojimbo*, *Rashomon*, *Sanjuro*, or *Twilight Samurai*) and critique it by relating it to what we've studied in the course. You could watch a Noh or Kabuki Theatre performance on video, and analyze its meaning with reference to Zen (in

the case of Noh) or to the new urban culture of the commercial class (in the case of Kabuki). Another option would be to visit the Seattle Asian Art Museum at Volunteer Park in Seattle and study the “Discovering Buddhist Art” exhibit; information on this exhibit can be found here: <http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/exhibit/exhibitDetail.asp?WHEN=&eventID=4442> You are required to find and use at least two scholarly sources in your research, and one or two non-scholarly sources. You will turn in your work in three stages near the end of the quarter: a **topic statement May 16**, two scholarly sources obtained from the library data bases by **May 23**, and the final paper on **June 4**.

(15 %) In-class final exam (multiple-choice, identification, short answer) on **June 4**. The exam covers material since the midterm.

FORMAT FOR ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS

1. Double-space.
2. Use Times New Roman 12 Font.
3. Use 1-inch margins top and bottom, 1.25-inch margins left and right.
4. Number all pages, except for the first page.
5. Make sure your name, the assignment name (Essay 1, Final essay, etc.) and course number (BCUSP 188) appear at the right-hand corner of the first page.
6. Staple the pages.
7. Insert the word count at the bottom of the last page. To get this automatically in MS Word, position the cursor at the top of the document, click on the “Tools” menu, and then click on “Word Count.”
8. Cite all sources in APA or MLA format, whichever you’re most comfortable with.
9. Turn your work in before or after class in person. Never email assignments to me until you notify me in advance and receive my authorization to do so. If you do email an assignment, assume I haven’t received it unless I send you back a note confirming that I have it.
10. Keep a back-up copy of the files for all your assignments.

Finally, here’s one very important guideline. I’d like to reinforce the practice of having you peer-review each other’s work. Therefore, you will be organized into groups of three students—depending on the number of students, there may be one two-person or four-person group. Each student must peer-review the essays of the other members of the group for each of the three writing assignments. Your signature on the final draft of your fellow group member’s paper will signify that you have reviewed his or her paper. To ensure that everybody is faithfully carrying this out, I may randomly ask to see an earlier draft of your paper with the mark-up from your fellow group member. To help facilitate information exchange, I will create on the course Blackboard site a discussion forum for each group so that you can pass information back and forth electronically.

TEXTS

The following three texts are required and can be purchased in the UWB Bookstore:

1. Albert M. Craig, *The Heritage of Japanese Civilization* (Prentice-Hall, 2004)
2. Donald Keene, ed., *Anthology of Japanese Literature: From the Earliest Era to the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Grove Press, 1960)
3. D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton University Press, 1970)

Additional readings are posted on the library's electronic reserve page at the following URL:
<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>
Access the readings using your UW NetID and password.

We will also be using a variety of video materials, most of which will be on reserve in the library media center. These include the following:

Kokoro: The Heart Within (5 volumes)

The Samurai, produced by Greystone Communications for the History Channel

The Last Samurai, directed by Edward Zwick

Japan Past and Present

Introduction to Japanese Noh Theatre

As a writing reference, please refer to *The New McGraw-Hill Handbook* (McGraw-Hill, 2007)

Finally, you will be expected to keep up with news and current events related to Japan. Perhaps the most widely respected source of international news is *The Economist*; its Japan page always has a collection of the most recent articles related to Japan, along with other general information and statistical data:

<http://www.economist.com/countries/Japan/>

The best sources of daily news inside Japan are the English version of the *Yomiuri Shinbun* (the world's largest newspaper by circulation) and the *Japan Times*, which is English-only:

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/>

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>

The *Japan Times* has more coverage of arts and culture so will probably be more useful for this class. Make it a habit at least to scan the headlines of one of them every day.

POLICIES

1. Grades are recorded on a 4-point scale. On assignments where the maximum possible score is 100 points, I convert the score to the 4-point scale as follows: 95-100=4.0, 90=3.5, 85=3.0, 80=2.5, 75=2.0, 70=1.5, 65=1.0, etc. By this conversion method, a score of 83 would be converted to a 2.8 on the 4-point scale; 85 would be a 3.0. For the conversion between letter grades and numerical grades on the 4-point scale, see the UW's official grading system here:
http://www.washington.edu/students/genclat/front/Grading_Sys.html
Perfect 4.0 grades are rare and will be reserved for work that is truly extraordinary.
2. Late work submitted without a compelling explanation will be docked 0.5 grade points for each day it is late. Short of a sudden illness or emergency, in which case you should

contact me in advance, exams cannot be made up. If you think you'll miss an exam, contact me at least two weeks in advance to arrange an alternate date to sit for it.

3. Your use of electronic devices shall not be a disturbance to me or other students. I reserve the right to ban the use of such devices at any time.
4. It is the responsibility of all students to understand and honor the university's policies on academic standards and conduct. Take time to refresh your memory of the guidelines, the most important points of which are posted here:
<http://www.uwb.edu/students/policies/academicconduct.xhtml>
By taking classes here you are honor-bound to abide by this conduct code. Pay special attention to the definitions of academic misconduct as they relate to cheating and plagiarism. Guard against plagiarism by forming the habit of correctly citing all sources used in completing an assignment, including text, data, figures, and graphs. The library has prepared the following reference on strategies for avoiding plagiarism; study it carefully: <http://www.uwb.edu/library/guides/research/plagiarism.html>
The minimum penalty for academic misconduct on an assignment is a grade of zero for that assignment and the filing of a report with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.
5. I am happy to accommodate students with a documented disability. Please refer to the following website for details on making use of disability support services:
<http://www.uwb.edu/students/services/dss/index.xhtml>

SCHEDULE

Note that readings are to be completed by the date under which they are listed! **Items highlighted in yellow are on library e-reserve.**

1. March 26 Introduction and the Origins of Japanese Civilization

Teacher and student introductions

Film: *Kokoro: The Heart Within*, Volume 1, Part II (Shinto: Way of the Gods) BOT 1326 v. 1

2. March 28 Japanese History: Origins to the Twelfth Century

a. Craig, chapter one (pp. 4-31)

b. Familiarize yourself with Japan's geography, using the map in Craig, p. 157. You should remember the countries and water bodies surrounding Japan, the names and locations of the four main islands (Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu), and the names and locations of the eight regions making up Japan and the names and locations of the eight largest cities (Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya, Sapporo, Kobe, Kyoto, and Fukuoka). See

<http://www.japan-guide.com/list/e1001.html> and

<http://www.japan-guide.com/list/e1003.html>

In-class film: *Kokoro: The Heart Within*, Volume 2, Part IV (Religion: Buddhism) BOT 1326 v. 2

3. April 2 Writing System and Classical Literature

Read the following in the order given:

a. Hiragana: http://www.omniglot.com/writing/japanese_hiragana.htm

b. Kanji: http://www.omniglot.com/writing/japanese_kanji.htm

c. Boudannat, L & Kushizaki, H (2003). Traces of the Brush: A History of Japanese Calligraphy. In *Traces of the Brush: The Art of Japanese Calligraphy* (pp. 53-95). E-Reserve: <https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

Study the images of the works presented on pp. 5, 9, 10-11, 16-17, and 18; think about the artistic and aesthetic qualities embodied in them. Read the section “Heian: A Golden Age” on pp. 12-25.

d. Keene, Manyoshu (pp. 33-top of p. 48), Kokinshu (all), The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon (all).

In-class film: Japanese Language (personal collection)

4. April 4 Early Medieval Japan: The Twelfth Century to 1467

a. Craig, chapter 2, pp. 34-50

b. Suzuki, chapter 1 (“What is Zen?”), pp. 3-18

In-class film: *The Samurai*, first part

5. April 9 Zen and Medieval Art, Culture, and Literature

ESSAY 1 DUE!

a. Suzuki, chapter II (General Remarks on Japanese Art Culture) pp. 21-37

b. Keene, The Tale of the Heike (pp. 179-184 only), Shinkokinshu (all), An Account of my Hut (all)

Explore this web site: <http://www.do-not-zzz.com>

In-class film: *The Samurai*, middle segments (tentative)

6. April 11 Late Medieval Japan: The Era of Warring States 1467-1600

a. Craig, chapter 2, pp. 50-61

b. Keene, Essays in Idleness (all), Seami on the Art of Noh (all)

c. Suzuki, chapter IV (Zen and the Samurai) from middle of p.69, paragraph beginning with “Led by such strong characters...” through p. 85.

7. April 16 Zen Painting

a. Addiss, S. (1996). Secular and Zen Painting. In *How to Look at Japanese Art* (pp. 54-75). E-reserve: <https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

b. Stanley-Baker, J. (2000). Kamakura and Muromachi (1185-1573). In *Japanese art* (pp. 107-140). E-reserve: <https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

Start reading with “Muromachi Ink Painting on p. 8 and read to the end on p. 19.

c. View Muromachi Period paintings by Bonpo, Shubun, and Sesshu at Tokyo National Museum:

http://www.tnm.jp/en/servlet/Con?pageId=E12&processId=00&ref=2&start=1&Q4=11310_15

d. View Josetsu’s “Catching a Catfish with a Gourd” at Kyoto National Museum:

<http://www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/dictio/data/kaiga/fushigi.htm>

e. View Hakuin’s “Blind Men Crossing a Bridge”

<http://www.mrcophth.com/ophthalmologyinart/New%20Folder/blindtree.html>

f. View “Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang” by Sesson Shukei

<http://www.miho.or.jp/booth/html/artcon/00003251e.htm>

g. View “Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons”

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/ho/08/eaj/ho_1987.342.1.2.htm

h. View paintings by Shubun:

<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Shubun>

i. View paintings by Sesshu

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sesshu_Toyo

8. April 18 Samurai as a Warrior and Swordsman

a. Turnbull, Stephen. (2004). *Samurai: The Story of Japan's Great Warriors*, pp. 150-158, 178-182.

E-reserve: <https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

b. Suzuki, chapter V (Zen and Swordsmanship I), part 1 (pp. 89-93); chapter VI (Zen and Swordsmanship II), parts 1-5 (pp. 139-165)

The next three sessions will be a calligraphy workshop by teachers from the Meito-kai Calligraphy School in Redmond (<http://www.meitokai.com>).

9. April 23 Calligraphy Studio Session 1

a. Addiss, S. (1996). Calligraphy. In *How to Look at Japanese Art* (pp. 76-93). E-reserve:

<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

b. Boudannat, L & Kushizaki, H (2003). Traces of the Brush: A History of Japanese Calligraphy. In *Traces of the Brush: The Art of Japanese Calligraphy* (pp. 53-95). E-Reserve:

<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

Read the text and study the images on pp. 28-43

10. April 25 Calligraphy Studio Session 2

ESSAY 2 DUE!

11. April 30 Calligraphy Studio Session 3

12. May 2 First Hour: In-Class Mid-Term Exam

Second Hour: Share and discuss calligraphy work

13. May 7 The Tokugawa Shogunate, 1600-1868

Craig, chapter 3, pp. 64-91

In-class film TBA

14. May 9 Haiku Poetry 1: Introduction and the poetry of Matsuo Basho

a. Keene, Donald. "Japanese Poetry." In *Japanese Literature: An Introduction for Western Readers*, 22-46. E-reserve: <https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

b. Keene, "The Narrow Road to Oku" (all)

15. May 14 Haiku Poetry 2: Zen and the Art of Nature

a. Suzuki, chapter VII, parts 3-4 (pp. 226-238)

b. Spring. (2002). In D. Cobb (Ed.), *Haiku: The Poetry of Nature* (pp. 8-29). E-reserve:
<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

16. May 16 Tea Ceremony: History and Aesthetics FINAL ESSAY TOPIC DUE!

a. Suzuki, chapter VIII “Zen and the Art of Tea I” (pp. 271-289)

b. Tanaka, S., & Tanak, S. (1998). *Temae*. In *The Tea Ceremony* (pp. 130-150). E-reserve:
<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

17. May 21 The End of the Samurai and Birth of Modern Japan

Craig, chapter four (all)

18. May 23 The Samurai in Modern Film: The Last Samurai

FINAL ESSAY SOURCE LIST DUE!

In-class viewing of feature-length film, *The Last Samurai*. Discuss on May 30.

Turnbull (2006). *Last of the Samurai*. In *Samurai: World of the Warrior* (pp. 191-206). E-reserve:
<https://eres.bothell.washington.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1105&page=docs>

May 28 NO CLASS Memorial Day Holiday

19. May 30 Conclusions and Review

Finish viewing *Last Samurai* and discuss.

Review for final exam.

20. June 4 Final Exam at 11 AM FINAL ESSAY DUE!