Japanese Politics and Foreign Policy

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Course Description

This research seminar explores the dynamics of Japanese international and domestic development from WWII to the present, and how Japan is currently adjusting its foreign policies to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Despite having the world’s third largest economy, Japan has been widely viewed as underperforming in world affairs. The central question is whether Japan will remain an “underperformer.” Topics include: prewar Japanese foreign policy, postwar relations with the U.S., China, and South Korea, U.S. military bases, history problems, regional politics, soft power, immigration, human rights, and whaling.

Objectives

Through the prism of Japanese foreign relations, students will develop a better understanding of the dynamics of Japanese external and internal development and international relations in East Asia, as well as the causes and consequences of U.S. policy towards the region. This research seminar: (1) emphasizes the value of concepts and theories for developing generalizable arguments across time and space; (2) familiarizes students with relevant scholars and important research findings in the current field; (3) encourages each student to develop a focused area of expertise through the research and writing of a substantial social science research paper (25-30 pages: Approximately 6,000 words); and (4) provides a setting in which students can learn from one another through discussions and presentations.

Undergraduate seminars in the Department of Government are designed for all concentrators, both for those who plan to write an honors thesis and those who decide not to do so. For honors students, these seminars serve as important preparation for the senior thesis, giving students an opportunity to explore on a smaller scale what writing a senior thesis in the subfield would be like. If students plan to write a thesis related to the topic of the seminars, they will be given a
chance to start on their literature reviews. For non-honors students, these seminars are also important because they serve as the capstone of their training in political science.

**Readings**

Readings are available either on the course web page or through e-journals in the Harvard library system (HOLLIS).

**Grading**

- Online discussion forum: 10%
- Class discussion: 20%
- Research proposal and literature review: 10%
- Research paper draft: 20%
- Completed research paper: 40%

**Grading Scale**

- A (93.0-100%); A- (90.0-92.9%); B+ (87.0-89.9%); B (84.0-86.9%); B- (81.0-83.9%); C+ (78.0-80.9%); C (75.0-77.9%)

**Important Dates**

- Research Proposal (1 page) & Literature Review (3-4 pages): 5 p.m., October 11th (Mon)
- Research Paper Draft (12-15 pages): 5 p.m., November 15th (Mon)
- Final Research Paper (25-30 pages): Mid-Late December (TBD)

**Requirements and Expectations**

1. **Online Discussion Forum**

   The instructor will set up an online discussion forum in the course website. Students are required to post their thoughts on at least three assigned readings, before 5 p.m. on the previous day of the class. Each entry must be no more than a paragraph, addressing weekly overarching questions (Please check the Session Schedule (pp. 9-14) in this syllabus), raising critical questions, and responding to their classmates’ comments. Please do not provide detailed summaries of the reading assignments—that is not the point of the discussion forum. The instructor will review the comments prior to the class. Students are also required to review the comments in the course website prior to class.
The instructor will evaluate how the student engages the ideas in the readings and other students’ opinions in a constructive and thoughtful way. Consistent lack of contributions to the online discussion forum will significantly lower the student’s grade.

2. Class Discussions

Active participation is an important part of this course. During every class, students are expected to demonstrate that they have completed all reading assignments; discriminate the issues which they understand from the ones that are more abstruse; express why some authors are more persuasive or interesting than others; and raise questions that are unresolved or demand further analysis. Discussion is a collective endeavor and a dialogue among class participants including the instructor. Students are required to contribute their share of opinions and questions as well as listen respectfully to others.

The instructor will qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate how the student engages the ideas in the readings and other students’ opinions in a constructive and thoughtful way. Consistent lack of contributions to class discussions will significantly lower the student’s grade.

3. Research Proposal (1 page) and Literature Review (3-4 pages), due on 5 p.m., Monday, October 11, on the course website.

The research topic should be related to Japanese politics and foreign policy, and can include domestic, governmental, nongovernmental, bilateral, international, transnational, regional, cross-regional, global, political, economic, security, social, cultural, historical, and other dimensions.

The Proposal (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point-font, one inch margin, Chicago Style citations) should pose the following three points in a clear, coherent, and logical manner: (1) the central research question that the student seeks to answer; (2) the significance of the research question (i.e., why is the research question important?); and (3) the methodology (i.e., how to answer the research question).

The Literature Review (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point-font, one inch margin, Chicago Style citations) explains how the research question relates to previous studies and how the research contributes to the scholarly dialogues. The Literature Review needs to demonstrate that the research attempts to explore the understudied areas and/or challenge the conventional wisdom. The Literature Review is NOT a summary of the previous research sources. Students should synthesize what they have found, filter these sources through the research question that they want to answer, and situate the research question within the larger literature.

Students are required to submit the proposal with the literature review as a single MS Word file in the course website.

The Harvard Library website provides a useful information regarding the Chicago Style citations as follows: https://guides.library.harvard.edu/cite/guides.
The assignment of writing a research paper is intended to improve thinking skills. The entire writing process provides students with a chance to develop skills for using relevant resources, to clarify thoughts and put them on paper, to receive comments from peers and the instructor during the student-led conferences in the last two classes, and to rewrite a research paper.


The 12 to 15 page-draft (a single MS Word file; double-spaced; Times New Roman; 12 point-font; one inch margin; Chicago Style citations; footnotes with single-spaced, Times New Roman, 10 point-font) must demonstrate that the student has completed a significant amount of research, and suggest the next direction of the student’s research and likely conclusions.

The 12 to 15 page-draft must consist of the following three main parts: (1) Introduction; (2) Literature Review: and (3) Body. The Introduction provides the reader with a central research question following interest generating sentences, the significance of the research question, the tentative answer/argument/theory in brief (i.e., explanation including the factor(s) and the process), and the methodology. The Literature Review explains how the research question relates to previous studies, situates the research question within the larger literature, and demonstrates how the research contributes to the scholarly dialogues. The Body must provide the reader with evidence collected by the ongoing research in order to support the tentative answer/argument/theory. The Body also offers the students’ analysis of the evidence.

Harvard College Writing Center offers writing support to students as follows: [https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/](https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/). The Writing Center helps students strengthen their argument, clarify and organize their ideas, develop their writing style, and understand citations and disciplinary conventions.

The 12 to 15 page-drafts will be circulated to class members in the course website for discussion during the student-led conferences in the last two classes. Students are required to post at least one comment to each research paper draft in advance in the course website, before 5 p.m. on the previous day of the student-led conferences.

5. Final Research Paper (25 to 30 pages excluding the Bibliography), due Mid-Late December (TBD).

The final research paper (a single MS Word file; double-spaced; Times New Roman; 12 point-font; one inch margin; Chicago Style citations; footnotes with single-spaced, Times New Roman, 10 point-font) is expected to reflect the suggestions and critiques the student received from the instructor and classmates during the student-led conferences of the last two classes.

The final research paper must consist of the following six main parts: (1) Abstract; (2) Introduction; (3) Literature Review; (4) Body; (5) Conclusion; and (6) Bibliography.
The Abstract should be in the range of 200-300 words. The Abstract is an important part of a social science research paper. It should summarize the content of the research paper, including the research question, the research methodology, the research findings, and the students’ argument. The Abstract should be written in the present tense and in the third person (e.g., The paper deals with …) or passive (e.g., … is discussed …).

The Introduction provides the reader with the central research question following interest generating sentences, the significance of the research question, the answer/argument/theory in brief (i.e., explanation including the factor(s) and the process), and the methodology. The last paragraph of the Introduction should describe an outline for the remaining parts of the paper.

The Literature Review explains how the research question relates to previous studies, situates the research question within the larger literature, and demonstrates how the research contributes to the scholarly dialogues. Please keep in mind that the Literature Review is NOT a summary of the previous research sources.

The Body must provide the reader with evidence collected by the research in order to support the answer/argument/theory. The Body also offers the students’ own analysis to the evidence, and answers the research question stated in the Introduction in a clear, organized, and logical manner. The last section of the Body generally discusses possible counterarguments against the students’ answer/argument/theory.

The Conclusion summarizes the research findings and students’ answer to the research question. The Conclusion also discusses a theoretical/empirical/policy implication.

The Bibliography should be in a single-spaced alphabetical list in the Chicago Style. The following are an example:

**Books:**


**Journal articles:**

**Sections from books:**

**Newspaper articles:**


Internet based-sources:


6. Deadlines for Proposal, Draft, and Research Paper

Students must plan their schedules in advance to meet all the deadlines. Grades will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade for every twenty-four hours after the deadline of the assignments. This means that a grade of “B+” will be “B” if work is submitted within the first 24 hours after the deadline, and will be “B-” if work is submitted between the 24 to 48 hours after the deadline.

The instructor grants extensions for the written work, only in cases of documented personal, health, and family emergencies. Students must provide a signed note from a doctor, a family member, or an academic dean.

Student-led Conferences (November 23rd and 30th)

The sole purpose of student-led conferences is to give students a chance to refine their paper in progress through peer-reviews. No serious social science work is ever published without a peer review in advance. Greater feedback from peers will definitely improve the final paper, which will be graded. When students make a comment, they are expected to think about how their remarks will help to improve their classmates’ paper. Their comments are expected to be constructive, advisory, and thoughtful. Based on the research paper draft (12 to 15 pages, due on 5 p.m., Monday, November 15th), students are expected to give a 5 minutes (or less) presentation, describing their research question, interests/variables, argument, methodology, evidence, and (expected) conclusions. Following the presentation, the class will have a 10 minutes (or more) discussion. The instructor does NOT grade the presentation because the sole purpose is to give all students the chance to refine their paper in progress. It is not necessary to spend too much time preparing for the presentation.

Absences
Students are expected to attend all assigned meetings. Absence from academic exercises for whatever reason, including representing the University in extracurricular and athletic activities, does not relieve a student from responsibility for any part of the work required by the course during the period of absence. Students who, by their classroom absence, neglect work in a course may be excluded from the course. If students miss class for any reason, it is expected that they will approach the instructor in a timely and responsible fashion to discuss the issue of schedule conflicts.

**Dropping and Withdrawing from the Class**

Students may drop from the class without a “WD” until Monday, October 4th and withdraw from the class with a “WD” until Monday, October 18th.

**Academic Integrity and Honor Code**

Students must commit themselves to producing academic work of integrity – that is, work that adheres to the scholarly and intellectual standards of accurate attribution of sources, appropriate collection and use of data, and transparent acknowledgement of the contribution of others to their ideas, discoveries, interpretations, and conclusions. Cheating on exams or problem sets, plagiarizing or misrepresenting the ideas or language of someone else as one’s own, falsifying data, or any other instance of academic dishonesty violates the standards of our Harvard College community, as well as the standards of the wider world of learning and affairs. For more information about the honor code, see [http://honor.fas.harvard.edu/home](http://honor.fas.harvard.edu/home).

Students are expected to provide citations in papers for all quotations, paraphrases, and ideas taken from any source other than their own original thoughts. The instructor also reserves the right to use computer software for plagiarism detection.

**Collaboration Statement**

Through the activities of student-led conferences, students are allowed to consult with one another on the choice of paper topics, and they may also share library resources. They may find it useful to discuss their chosen topic with their peers, particularly if they are working on the same topic as someone else, but they must ensure that the written paper they submit for evaluation is the result of their own research and reflects their own approach to the topic.

**Accommodations**

Harvard University is committed to ensuring access to learning opportunities for all students. Students seeking accommodations based on a disability should consult with the Accessible Education Office (AEO). If students have questions about requesting accommodations, please contact Grace Moskola (aeo@fas.harvard.edu), a local student disability coordinator. For more
Electronic Devices in Class

Students are free to use laptop computers, IPADs, or other devices to take notes, to look at the syllabus or reading material online, or to look up other factual material relating to the course, but not for the purpose of texting or emailing.

Seminar Events at the Program of U.S.-Japan Relations

The Program of U.S.-Japan Relations (https://programs.wcfia.harvard.edu/us-japan/home) at Harvard is scheduled to launch a new seminar series, titled “Policy Innovation in Crises: New Pathways for Japan-U.S. Cooperation, this fall. Students enrolled in this course will be required to attend the seminar events.

Schedule of Topics and Due Dates

9/7. Introduction and Course Overview

9/14. Application of International Relations Theory

9/21. Domestic Factors on Japanese Foreign Policy

9/28. U.S.-Japan Alliance

10/5. Japan-China Relations

10/11 (Mon). Research Proposal (1 page) and Literature Review (3-4 pages) due at 5 p.m.

10/12. Japan-South Korea Relations

10/19. History Problems

10/26. Nuclear Weapons

11/2. Territorial Disputes

11/9. U.S. Military Bases in Japan


11/16. Japan and International Institutions and Norms
11/23. Student-led Conference (I)
11/30. Student-led Conference (II)

**Final Research Paper** (25-30 pages: approximately 6,000 words) due in Mid-Late December (TBD).

**SESSION SCHEDULE**

**Week 1 (September 7): Introduction and Course Overview**

- **Topics:**
  - Basic organization and themes of the course

- **Reading:**

**Week 2 (September 14): Application of International Relations Theories**

- **Overarching Questions:**
  - How do the three major IR theories (realism, liberalism, and constructivism) explain the causes of Japan’s external behaviors? Which IR theories are more convincing than the others? In September 2020, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga took office. If you try to understand and predict the current and future Japanese foreign policy, what would you do?

- **Reading:**
Week 3 (September 21): Domestic Factors on Japanese Foreign Policy

Overarching Questions:
- How do domestic factors affect a country’s external behaviors? Which domestic factors are more convincing than the others? In September 2020, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga took office. If you try to understand and predict the current and future Japanese foreign policy, what would you do?

Reading:

Week 4 (September 28): U.S.-Japan Alliance

Overarching Questions:
When and why do states form an alliance? Why did the U.S. and Japan form an alliance? Is the U.S.-Japan alliance promoting peace or creating instability in the region? Would the Yoshida Doctrine and/or the U.S.-Japan alliance survive?

Reading:

Week 5 (October 5): Japan-China Relations
Overarching Questions:
When and why have the Japan-China relations been sometimes cooperative, and sometimes not? What factors, external and/or internal, have been most influential in the Japan-China relations over others? Any advice to leaders and publics in Japan and China?

Reading:

Week 6 (October 12): Japan-South Korea Relations

Overarching Questions:
When and why have the Japan-South Korea relations been sometimes cooperative, and sometimes not? What factors, external and/or internal, have been most influential in the Japan-South Korea relations over others? Any advice to leaders and publics in Japan and South Korea?

Reading:
- Glosserman and Snyder, Chapter 4: 93-119. (Convergence and Alienation in Japan-South Korea Relations)

Week 7 (October 19): History Problems

Overarching Questions:
What are the history problems? What factors, external and/or internal, have been most influential in the history problems of East Asia? Are the history problems solvable? If so, how?

Reading:

- Thomas U. Berger. War, Guilt, and World Politics after World War II. (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chapters 1 [just skim but be familiar to three analytical models], 4, and 5

Week 8 (October 26): Nuclear Weapons

Overarching Questions:
When and why do states build nuclear weapons? Why has Japan not gone nuclear yet? Will Japan go nuclear? What would be the pros and cons of Japanese nuclear armaments?

Reading:


Week 9 (November 2): Territorial Disputes

Overarching Questions:
When and why do states go to wars/conflicts over territory? How have Japan’s territorial disputes begun and developed over time? Are there any solutions for Japan’s territorial disputes?

Reading:


**Week 10 (November 9): U.S. Military Bases in Japan**

**Overarching Questions:**
Why does the central government of Tokyo sometimes listen to the protesters’ demands but sometimes not? When do the protests succeed in gaining concessions from Tokyo? What were Okinawa’s motives when accepting the bases? Should the U.S. military leave Japan if Japan becomes able to defend itself?

**Reading:**

**Week 11 (November 16): Japan and International Institutions and Norms**

**Overarching Questions:**
How would the IR theories explain Japan’s approaches to international institutions and norms? Is Japan using international institutions and norms as a tool in order to achieve their own national interests? Is Japan an institutional and/or norm entrepreneur/protector or an institutional and/or norm shirker/free rider?

**Reading:**


**Week 12 (November 23): Student-led Conference (I)**

**Week 13 (November 30): Student-led Conference (II)**

(END)