This class focuses on the heart of Japanese culture in terms of Japan’s modernization. Students should become aware of, analyze and discuss a number of the key issues involved in the kernel of Japanese culture and traditional values. These issues are then followed up in studies of Japanese history, education and business. Class discussion involves the use of on-line material, newspaper and power-point handouts in order to create a leaner-centered interactive and communicative class. We will discuss the heart of "Haiku" with Haiku moment, "Mono no Aware", human sensitivity to the wonder of nature and people and its transience, "Wabi", aesthetic taste for simplicity, tranquility and transcendental attitude toward life for peace of mind, and "Mujokan", the philosophy of mortality and transience of human attitude. Let us explore the heart of Japanese implicit culture and its possibility as another universal value in Japan.

Although known as a homogeneous society, in fact Japan is home to a number of ethnic minorities, and as a major port city, Kobe is no exception. This class will consist of a mini-lecture which gives a short historical overview of some of the main ethnic minority groups in Kobe, as well as several Japanese NPOs in Kobe that are involved with these groups and are seeking to promote a more multicultural and diverse society. Following the mini-lecture, two or three guest speakers will tell their own stories about living as a member of an ethnic minority in Japanese society and the progress they have noticed over the years.

After the bursting of the bubble economy in the early 90’s, how have the working conditions in Japan changed? What are the newly amended laws to resolve current
working issues in Japan? What are the labor power projections for Japan in the future? In this lecture, the annual report, white paper and Labour Standards Law publicized by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will be used to help understand the real meaning of working in Japan in the past, present and future.

Monday, July 1 14:45~16:25

Thomas M. Mach
Class Title: Sustainable Living in Japan: From Edo to Today

Japan’s rapid industrialization in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century was an economic success story but an environmental tragedy. Nevertheless, these days, whether we look at rural villages or crowded cityscapes, remnants of this country’s traditional approach to living lightly are not hard to find.

In this class, as we explore the Japanese variant of earth-friendly living, we’ll touch on a wide variety of topics including home design, rice cultivation, food stalls, and human waste. We’ll start in the \textit{Edo} era when Japan, closed off from the rest of the world, achieved full self-sufficiency while supporting a relatively large population on limited resources. We’ll also look at modern equivalents of \textit{Edo} innovation and discuss prospects for the wider applicability of sustainable living as practiced in Japan.

Monday, July 8 14:45~16:25

Midori Iba
Class Title: Japanese Flower Arrangement (Ikebana 生け花)

Japanese Flower Arrangement had its origin in early Buddhist practices and has developed into a unique art form since the 15th century and now has many styles and schools. Following a lecture on the history and meaning of Ikebana, a hands-on demonstration of the art of flower arrangement will be given. Students are supposed to arrange flowers by themselves after the demonstration.