JPN493

PROJECT WORK
IN JAPANESE

Spring 2025
INSTRUCTOR
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PREREQUISITE
JPN 402 or JPN 405 or equivalent, or consent. Repeatable one time.

CREDITS AWARDED
3 credits

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces students to the qualitative research methodology of ethnography, which is used to examine people, communities, and cultures from an insider's viewpoint. By learning how to conduct ethnographic research, students will look closely into various elements of local cultures of the Kansai region, including family and parenting, education and schooling, youth and popular culture, dating and marriage, work and professionalism, and consumer culture and lifestyle. Students will select a topic and engage in a research project throughout the semester. While the main goal of this course is to promote cultural understanding of Japan, this course also aims to further develop students’ Japanese language skills through research activities. In order to achieve these two goals, students are expected to use both English and Japanese when conducting ethnographic observations (E/J), carrying out interviews with local people (J), transcribing spoken data (J), collecting and analyzing media and artifacts (J), making oral presentations (E/J), and writing a research report (E). These activities will help students develop their research skills necessary to achieve a deeper and critical understanding of Japanese language, culture, and society while also enhancing their Japanese language skills.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:
1. Gain cultural knowledge of Japan through research articles on Japanese culture and society.
2. Critically analyze information about Japanese culture and local communities of the Kansai region.
3. Conduct close observations of local communities and their practices.
4. Conduct interviews with local people using Japanese in order to gain insight into their perspectives.
5. Summarize and present their research in a spoken and written format.
6. Comprehend and use a wide range of Japanese vocabulary and expressions in discussing Japan-related topics of current or historical importance to Japanese people.
In addition, the following Study Abroad Center Course Objectives also apply to this course:

7. Demonstrate awareness of own cultural values and biases and how these impact their ability to work with others.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of diversity with a focus on the population or topic of interest in the specific Study Abroad program.
9. Communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals and groups.
10. Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.

**COURSE GRADE**

Reading Responses and Class Participation (SLO#1, 2, 7, 8)..................................................... 20%
Assignments (SLO#3, 4, 5, 6) ........................................................................................................ 50%
  • Observation reports (20%)
  • Interview reports (20%)
  • Media/artifact analysis (10%)
Final Project (SLO#1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)................................................................................. 30%
  • Data collection
  • Analysis
  • Presentation
  • Paper

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.0% or above</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.0 – 96.9%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>90.0 – 92.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.0 – 89.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.0 – 86.9 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80.0 – 82.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.0 – 79.9%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73.0 – 76.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70.0 – 72.9%</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 69.9%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59.9% and below</td>
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**REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS**
The main textbook is “Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting Your Research” by Julian Murchison. All other texts and materials will be made available on the course management site.

**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS**

Week 1: Introduction to ethnography
Week 2: Basic ethnographic method
Week 3: Family and parenting
Week 4: Family and parenting
Week 5: Education and schooling
Week 6: Education and schooling
Week 7: Youth and popular culture
Week 8: Youth and popular culture
Week 9: Dating and marriage
Week 10: Dating and marriage
Week 11: Work and professionalism
Week 12: Work and professionalism  
Week 13: Consumer culture and lifestyle  
Week 14: Consumer culture and lifestyle  
Week 15: Final project presentation

COURSE POLICY

f) Attendance  
   This course will be delivered in the in-person format. Students are required to be present and engage in discussions in each class meeting.

g) Reading and Reading Responses  
   Regular class attendance with readings in hand (either print outs or reliable e-versions on a laptop computer/tablet, not your smartphones) is mandatory. Students are expected to read assigned texts before class and post at least 3 comments/questions to “Perusall” by 10:00 pm before each class.

h) Informed Participation  
   Students are expected to contribute to the class discussion by asking questions, making comments, bringing additional information, etc. They are also expected to actively participate in and contribute to group activities.

i) Homework Assignments  
   Various assignments (e.g., analysis) are given to facilitate students’ understanding of materials. Students are expected to complete and submit these assignments by specified due times/dates.

j) Final Paper and Presentation  
   Each student will be conducting an ethnographic project on a topic of his/her interest. Students will summarize their research in a written report and share the findings in an oral presentation. Details will be announced in class.

ASSIGNED READINGS (TENTATIVE)

Week 1 Introduction to Ethnography  
   † Ethnography Essentials Ch. 1-4

Week 2 Basic ethnographic method  
   † Ethnography Essentials Ch. 5-11  

Week 3-4 Family and parenting  
   † Mieko Hinokidani (2007). Housing, family and gender.  
   † Diana Adis Tahhan (2019). Connections, conflicts, and experiences of intimacy in Japanese-Australian families


**Week 5-6 Education and schooling**
- Toshitsugu Otake (2023). Promoting diversity and inclusion in higher education: The case of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.

**Week 7-8 Youth and pop culture**

**Week 9-10 Dating and marriage**
- Living within the dilemma of choice: Singles.

**Week 11-12 Work and professionalism**
- Lailani L. Alcantara & Yoshiki Shinohara (2023). Diversity and inclusion orientation in Japanese companies Does industry make a difference?

**Week 13-14 Consumer culture and lifestyle**

**Week 15 Final project presentations**

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR THE FINAL PROJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Excellent</th>
<th>3 Satisfactory</th>
<th>2 Acceptable</th>
<th>1 Unsatisfactory</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference to the existing research</td>
<td>More than five references are cited</td>
<td>More than three references are cited</td>
<td>1-2 references are cited</td>
<td>No reference is cited</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SLO#1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of analysis</td>
<td>Accurate and convincing analysis</td>
<td>Analysis is mostly accurate but some parts are not convincing</td>
<td>There are some inaccurate parts in analysis</td>
<td>Major issues with accuracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SLO#2, 3, 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of presentation/writing</td>
<td>Very effective and clear</td>
<td>Somewhat effective and moderately clear</td>
<td>Minor changes are required</td>
<td>Major changes are required</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SLO#5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Japanese culture/concepts</td>
<td>Clear evidence of mastery</td>
<td>Sufficient mention/use of concepts</td>
<td>Only marginal mention/use of concepts</td>
<td>No mention/use of concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>(SLO#6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality of arguments/discussion</td>
<td>Abundant display of awareness toward diverse, disparate viewpoints and issues involved</td>
<td>Some display of awareness toward diverse, disparate viewpoints and issues involved</td>
<td>Insufficient display of awareness toward diverse, disparate viewpoints and issues involved</td>
<td>No display of awareness toward diverse, disparate viewpoints and issues involved</td>
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<td>(SLO#7, 8, 9, 10)</td>
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