



MSc and MPhil in Japanese Studies 2020/2021

Japanese Politics: Domestic Institutions and International Relations

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There will be a set of 9 one-hour lectures followed by one-hour class discussions in Michaelmas Term.

This option provides a broad introduction to contemporary Japan's domestic politics and its international relations. Students will have the opportunity to read and consider several alternative approaches to conceptualizing, modeling, and analyzing Japanese politics.

Course Description

The course begins by considering modern Japan's political traditions and the impact of the post-war American occupation on contemporary Japan's political layout. Then we spend three weeks analysing recent changes in Japan's political economic model, its government structure, and the peculiar case of Japan's fourth estate and its relationship with power. The second half of the classes focuses on a series of policy issues pertaining Japan's foreign and defence policy: continuity and change in its security practice, the evolution of the US-Japan alliance, Japan's thorny relations with its neighbours and the legacy of Empire, culminating with a discussion on the nature of Japan's domestic and international outlook: What role for 21st Century Japan?

Course Aims

The course has four aims:

- To develop your understanding of the political dynamics of the government of Japan, possibly in comparative perspective.
- To apply and develop the skills and knowledge of political theory and method acquired in courses taken earlier in your academic careers through the analysis of a non-western political system.
- To appreciate the diversity of government responses to similar political demands.
- To provide you with the background that will enable you to include reference to Japan in your research, not least by making use of Japanese scholarship

Classes

1. Post-War Japan's International Environment and its Internal Political Layout: Continuity and Change
2. Japan's Developmental State and its Neo-Liberal Transformation?
3. Alternation in Power and Centralization of Power
4. The Curious Case of Media and Politics in Contemporary Japan

5. Foreign and Defence Policy: Turning Japan into a “Normal” Country
6. Between Scylla and Charybdis: Japan-China-US Relations
7. The Burdens of History, Identity and Japan’s Thorny Relations with its Neighbors
8. Japan in the 21st Century
9. The LDP’s dominance and the DPJ’s failure: a new 1955 system?

Course Assessment

The main assessment will be through a three-hour examination in Trinity Term.

All students will be required to submit a piece of written work for assessment by the end of week 4 of the term in which the classes are taught. Details will be given during the first class of the term.

Recommended introductory reading

GAUNDER, A. ed. The Routledge Handbook of Japanese Politics, Routledge, 2010

BROWN DJ and KINGSTON J, Handbook of Japan’s International Relations in Asia, London; New York: Routledge, 2017

T INOBUCHI and P JAIN Japanese Politics Today from Karaoke to Kabuki politics, Palgrave, 2011

GAUNDER A Japanese Politics and Government, 2017

GORDON, Andrew (ed.), Post-war Japan as History (California, 1993), esp. Part II and Part IV.

HAYES Louis D. Introduction to Japanese Politics 6th edition 2018

HOOK, Glenn D. et alia, Japan’s International Relations: Politics, Economics and Security (Routledge, 3rd edition 2012).

JOHNSON, Chalmers, Japan, Who Governs? the Rise of the Developmental State (Norton, 1995).

McCORMACK, Gavan, Client State Japan in the American Embrace (Verso 2007)

NEARY, Ian J., The State and Politics in Japan. POLITY, 2002. ***NEW EDITION 2019***

McCARGO Duncan Contemporary Japan (3rd edition, Palgrave 2013)

Frances ROSENBLUTH & M F THIES, Japan Transformed (Princeton, 2010).

STOCKWIN , J .A .A. & AMPIAH K, Rethinking Japan (Lexington 2017).

Statement of Coverage

This document applies to students starting the MSc and/or MPhil in Japanese Studies in Michaelmas Term 2020. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years.

Disclaimer

The information in this document is accurate as at 28 September 2020, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained at www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges. If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.