

Syllabus—Fall 2023. JAPN/FST 266



**Dr. Linda C. Ehrlich**

**Visting Faculty, Miami University of Ohoi**

**Tuesday/Thursday. 1:15-2:30**

**Online**

**Office hour after class, and by appointment. Please email me at: [ehrlc@miamioh.edu](mailto:ehrlc@miamioh.edu)**

**Course Description**

This course examines key Japanese films set in a range of historical periods, using three “windows”: Japanese cinema, Japanese history, and Japanese literature.. While discussing the cinema as aesthetic works, students will study cultural and ideological implications of the Japanese films. A wide range of discussion topics include: nostalgia and the use of the past in

the formation of the Japanese film; censorship; violence as an expression of cultural authenticity; family, education, and consumer society; blockbuster animation. We will look at a variety of Japanese films, by many of Japan's greatest directors. In general, we focus on Japanese literary works that have been translated into English and into a cinematic form.

### **Course Objectives**

- ✓ Expose students to some significant Japanese films. Enjoy the viewings!
- ✓ To gain an understanding of the timeline of Japanese history.
- ✓ To develop skills as an informed critic of film and literature.
- ✓ Engage students in class discussions to develop critical reading and thinking skills.
- ✓ Enhance students' writing through assignment of reflection papers and essays.
- ✓ Engage students with other learners through small-group projects and small group discussions.
- ✓ Explore creative dimensions of the cinematic art

### **Prerequisites**

None. Some students may have some background in Japanese language and culture, and others might have a background in Film Studies. Each student is judged according to his/her own progress, and not in comparison.

### **Texts**

#### 1. Online film screening

Only excerpts of any film, if at all, are viewed in class. It is imperative you view the film before it is to be discussed in class. Be prepared to answer any of the film-viewing questions during the class discussion. Note: I will show sequences thru Youtube on class. If any of the sequences saved on Canvas change and are inappropriate, please let me know so I can delete it. Youtube sometimes changes in strange ways.

### **Required Books (Reserved in King Library):**

**Hibbett, Howard, ed. *Contemporary Japanese Literature: An Anthology of Fiction, Film, and Other Writing since 1945*. (Cheng and Tsui, 2005)**

**Corrigan, Timothy. *A Short Guide to Writing About Film* (9<sup>th</sup> edition) 2015**

Novels: (these could be read on Reserve as well, if purchasing is a hardship)

*Silence* (Endo Shūsaku)

*The Wild Goose* (Mori Ōgai)

*Twenty-Four Eyes* (Tsuboi Sakae)

*The Makioka Sisters* (Tanizaki Junichirō)

*Harp of Burma* (Takeyama Michio)

## **CLASS ACTIVITIES**

### **Canvas postings**

Before each discussion, post (at least) one informed comment/reaction/question about the readings and/or film. These are not graded but it will count against your participation grade to fail to post. Feel free to comment (wisely) on the posts of others.

### **2-page Reflection papers**

You will write four 2-page reflection pages. (12 pt. font please!)

### **Individual (background) presentation (SP=short presentation)**

5-minute presentation about directors and writers. This is a factual presentation, requiring a small amount of research.

### **Small-Group Oral Presentation (GP=group analytical presentation\_)**

The oral presentation is a **10**-minute presentation by a team of 2-3 students. Each team makes an oral presentation on an approved subject. Please see the Oral Presentation tips. This is an analytical assignment requiring considerable research. Many books about Japanese cinema are on Reserve in the Library.

### **Final Paper**

See the Final Paper guideline. On Canvas

### **Participation**

Discussions in class are a primary means of learning in this course. You are expected to attend **all** class sessions and to actively participate in the discussion. All assigned material for the classes must be read and absorbed before the discussion date. All of the films must be watched in a quiet, focused manner. Taking film notes helps us recall details.

### **Grading: 100 points total**

Participation (attendance, informed discussions), Canvas posts about the readings and films. 20 points

(4) 2-page reaction papers. 20 points total (5 pts. Apiece)

(Individual) background presentation. 10 points

Small-group presentation. 25 points

Annotated bibliography for small-group presentation. 5 points

Final essay project. 20. points

**Grading Scale:** (see end of syllabus for more explanations of the grades)

A+ 100–98    B+ 89.9–87    C+ 79.9–77    D+ 66.9–67    F 59.9–0  
A 97.9–93    B 86.9–83    C 76.9–73    D 66.9–63  
A- 92.9–90    B- 82.9–80    C- 72.9–70    D- 62.9–60

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE. (HW-homework)**

August 29: Introductions

Discuss class format

Read an overview of *Taketori monogatari*.

<https://cjp.asc.ohio-state.edu/books/taketori-monogatari/about>

[https://www.japanesewiki.com/literature/Taketori%20Monogatari%20\(The%20Tale%20of%20the%20Bamboo%20Cutter\).html](https://www.japanesewiki.com/literature/Taketori%20Monogatari%20(The%20Tale%20of%20the%20Bamboo%20Cutter).html)

Homework (HW): Watch *Tale of the Princess Kaguya* (animated film)

Read: Corrigan: Chapter one (Writing about the Movies)

August 31: Discuss film and readings

HW: Read *Rashōmon* and *In a Grove* (short stories by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, on Canvas)

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September 5: Discuss readings and papers. (SP—Akutagawa Ryūnosuke/Brook)

HW: Watch film *Rashōmon*

Read Hibbett, free verse poetry pp. 310-342

Sept. 7: Discuss film and poems (SP=Kurosawa Akira/Hackett, the samurai/medieval period/Kira)

HW: Read *Kanjinchō* (on Canvas)

Corrigan, chapter 2 (Taking Film Notes, Visual Memory)

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Sept. 12: Discuss kabuki and Noh. Medieval Japan.

HW: Watch *Men who Tread on the Tiger's Tail*

Sept. 14 Discuss film *Men who Tread on the Tiger's Tail*

HW: **First 2-page reaction paper due on Sept. 19**

Read *Silence* (novel by Endo Shūsaku)—up through Chapter 3

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Sept. 19: Discuss reading. (SP—Endo Shūsaku/ Payton,) hidden Christians in Japan/Allison)  
HW: Watch *Silence*(film), up to first meeting between the Padre and Magistrate Inoue.

**Preliminary outline for group presentation due on Sept. 21**

Sept. 21: Discuss *Silence* film. (SP—Takemitsu Tōru/Rose. [for the 26<sup>th</sup>])  
HW: Read: Corrigan, chapter 3 (Film Terms and Topics—a key chapter)  
HW: Watch film *Twilight Samurai*

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Sept. 26: Discuss readings and film  
Read Inouye essay about Yamada’s trilogy (on Canvas)

Sept. 28: Discuss Inouye’s esasy (SP—Yamada Yōji/James), samurai Edo period/Jackie  
HW: Read novel *The Wild Geese*

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Oct. 3: Discuss readings. (SP- The Meiji period/Ezra  
HW: Watch *Gan (The Wild Goose, aka The Mistress)*

Oct. 5: Discuss film *Gan*. (SP—Takamine Hideko/Devoni)  
HW: \_Read *Makioka Sisters* (optional)  
Hibbett pp. 354-388 (Tanizaki, “The Bridge of Dreams”)  
HW: Watch film *The Makioka Sisters*

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Oct. 10: Discuss readings. (SP—Ichikawa Kon/Tori

Read: Hibbett, pp. 292-305 (Kawabata Yasunari, Seven Very Short Stories)

Oct. 12: Discuss film vs. novel. (SP The fire-bombing of Tokyo/Lee)

HW: **Second 2-page reaction paper due Oct. 17.**

Read *Twenty-Four Eyes* (novel)

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Oct. 17: Discuss novel.

HW: Watch *Twenty-Four Eyes* (film)

**Annotated bibliography for group presentation due Oct. 19**

Oct. 19: Discuss film.

HW: Read *Harp of Burma* (short novel)

Corrigan chapter 4 (Six Approaches to Writing about Film)

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Oct. 24—Discuss readings

HW: Watch *Harp of Burma* (film)

Oct. 26: Discuss film *Harp of Burma*. (SP-GODZILLA/Paige)

HW: Read Corrigan Chapter 6 (Researching the Movies)

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Oct. 31: In-class read aloud, the scenario for *Tokyo Story* (Hibbett, pp. 189-237)

HW: Watch film *Tokyo Story*

Note: David Desser, ed. *Tokyo Story* (a collection of essays) is on Reserve (if you want to read more about the film).

Nov. 2: Discuss reading and film.

Finish in-class read aloud of the scenario

HW: **Images list for Group presentation due Nov. 7**

**Third 2-page reaction paper due Nov. 7**

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Nov. 7: Discuss “Exquisite Short Films of Kawamoto Kihachirō” (*Breaking of Branches, Dōjōji*)

HW: Read short story “Tony Takitani” (by Murakami Haruki, on Canvas)

Nov. 9: Discuss short story. SP—Murakami Haruki (Griff), Miyazaki Rie (Sujin’s presentation)

HW: watch film *Tony Takitani*

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Nov. 14: Discuss film *Tony Takitani*.

Nov 16: **NO CLASS MEETING.** Time for group presentation meetings (to practice and start Process Reports)

HW: Read short story “Phantom Light” (on Canvas)

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Nov. 21: Discuss short story (SP-Miyamoto Teru/COOPER). Group presentations—Yakusho Kōji, yakuza

HW: See film *Maborosi*

Read: Hibbett pp. 412-434 (“Aghwee the Sky Monster, by Ōe Kenzaburō)

**Fourth 2-page reaction paper due Nov. 28**

THANKSGIVING

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Nov.28: Discuss film *Maborosi* (SP—Kore-eda Hirokazu/BOWEN, Ōe Kenzaburō/ EMILY)

Nov. 30: Small-group presentations (2 groups). Discuss reading.

Nov. 30: WWII, Horror

HW: Process reports for Nov. 30 presentations due Dec. 5

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Dec. 5: Small-group presentations. (2 groups)

Dec. 5: Studio System, Anime’s Popularity

HW: Process report for Dec. 5 presentations due Dec. 7.

Dec. 7: Small-group presentations. (Dec. 7: Women Directors, Stop-Motion Animation

Wrap-Up of course

HW: Process report for Dec. 7 small-group presentation due Dec. 9

Study days Dec. 9,10:

**FINAL PAPER DUE: Dec. 10**

See description on Canvas. Any extra-credit contributions are also due on this date.

For Final Paper

Watch either:

*Double Suicide* (Shinoda Masahiro, 1969, ble/white). Available on Criterion Channel

<https://www.kabuki21.com/stna.php> (summary of SHINJU TEN NO AMIJIMA)

The play is on reserve in Donald Keene's MAJOR PLAYS OF CHIKAMATSU (*Love Suicide at Amijima*)

or *Shall We Dansu?* (Suo Masayuki, 1996, 118 min., color. Comedy)—digitized on Media Library

## COURSE POLICIES:

### Electronic Devices in the Classroom

You may not use your cell phone or any other mobile device during class. The electronic device should be stored in your bag, i.e., not out on the desk or chair. Surfing the web, texting, gaming, etc. during class is disrespectful to the instructor and to the students around you. This will affect your daily class participation grade. If you expect an important phone call, please inform me before class and quietly excuse yourself when you receive it. Exceptions will be made in the case of students who need personal technology devices in order to learn course content due to documented disabilities (See ADA compliant)

- It is your responsibility to know and follow these guidelines stated on the following Miami University's Integrity website: [Academic Integrity policy](#)

### Attendance:

Online classes require a special focus. Students are expected to attend each class on time and to be prepared. Absence, for whatever reason, is never an excuse for failing to turn in assigned work due on the day of the absence. Excused absences are documented case(s) of illness, a family emergency, required travel with a campus team, or a religious holiday(s). All absences which are not excused are *unexcused*. Each student will be allowed three (3) unexcused absences during the semester. Students who have four (4) unexcused absences will receive a lower final grade than they would have otherwise by 1/3 letter grade (e.g., A → A-). This grading Policy is strictly enforced. If a student misses six (6) or more classes without being excused in writing by the instructor, the instructor may, at his or her the sole option, either drop the student from the course or assign the student an F as the final grade for the course.

If a student is not present in class for **20 minutes by being late, leaving early, or other reasons, it will be considered as an absence. If less than 20 minutes, 3 such cases will equal 1 absence.** . Regular sleep, a nutritious diet, and exercise will benefit concentration and comprehension in class and will help prevent illnesses that might otherwise keep you from attending.

### ADA Compliant:

Students with disabilities are encouraged to request reasonable accommodations. Student Disability Services (SDS) registration should be completed prior to the provision of accommodations. Please visit the [SDS website](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/) (<http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/>) for more information. You can contact SDS at 513-529-1541 or [sds@miamioh.edu](mailto:sds@miamioh.edu).



If you are eligible to receive accommodations, please schedule an office hour appointment at the beginning of the semester to discuss accommodation plans.

### **Mental Health Services**

If you are a student who may be experiencing mental or emotional distress, you are encouraged to call Student Counseling Service (513-529-4634). For emergencies outside of business hours, the Community and Counseling and Crisis Center (844-427-4747) has a 24-hour hotline.

### **Academic Support**

Howe Center for Writing Excellence (King Library) <http://miamioh.edu/hcwe/hwc/index.html>  
513-529-6100

Rinella Learning Center (Shriver Center 306): <https://miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/index.html> 513-529-8741

### **Dept. of GRAMELAC: Grading Criteria for Language and Literature Courses**

A= Superior performance; consistent excellence in both written assignments and class participation. In a literature course there is nearly flawless command of the concepts and in written and/or oral work, superior analysis going beyond class discussion, showing original critical thinking, synthesis of ideas and identification of relationships.

B=Very good performance in both written and oral work. All assigned work is completed accurately and well; both written and oral work demonstrate knowledge and understanding of principles in spite of occasional errors. Writing is clear and shows logical organization.

C=Shows mastery of many of the basic concepts of the course, but there is frequent inaccuracy or error of fact or knowledge. Written and oral work show some gaps in completeness or correctness. Mastery of concepts is sufficient to continue to the next course.

D=Work demonstrates some familiarity with basic concepts but is deficient in important ways; oral and written assignments are incomplete or missing or show major gaps in knowledge or understanding of fundamentals. Continuation to the next course is possible but inadvisable,

F=Work is missing or seriously incomplete or is fundamentally off the point.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT ADDITIONS**

- WHAT IS CHEATING?:
- using or attempting to use or possessing any **unauthorized** aid, information, resources, or means in the completion of an academic assignment or providing such assistance to another student.:
- Possessing, referring to, or using in any way unauthorized textbooks, notes, study aids, websites, crib/cheat sheets, **AI tools**, or other information during an academic assignment, in paper, electronic, or other format

- AI is more than ChatGPT. AI also may include tools such as Grammarly, QuillBot, Chegg grammar tools or AI-Powered Tutoring (CheggMate), other AI-powered assistive writing tools, translators, Symbolab, PhotoMath, and other answer-generating tools/Apps.
- Use of Generative AI is allowed in this class for idea/topic generation and organizing/outlining of your work. You may NOT use AI to write drafts of your work. Writing assistive tools such as Grammarly or translators should be used sparingly, and require a conversation with the instructor before use regarding the extent they can be used and how to indicate their use.

Generative AI is not allowed in this class because the purpose of the assignments is for you to generate your own thoughts and practice articulating them in your own voice. The goal is for you to convey your understanding of the concepts. I do not expect you to know everything about a topic or to write in a perfect or highly academic/professional style. If you are having trouble understanding the concepts, getting started, or want help with your writing, please talk with me. The HWC and ELLWC consultants also can help you with your writing.