

<<Last Updated:2021/07/02>>

Course Schedule Information

Course Code	13A415
Semester	Fall and Winter Term
Day and Period	Fri3
Course Name (Japanese)	Religion in Japanese Society
Room	CELAS-C104
Course Name	Religion in Japanese Society
Capacity	0
Course Numbering Code	G2HUSP2A600
Credits	2.0
Student Year	1,2,3,4,5,6
Instructor	CAVALIERE Paola

Basic Syllabus Information

Subtitle	
Eligibility	

Detailed Syllabus Information

Course Name	Religion in Japanese Society
Language of the Course	English
Type of Class	Seminar Subject
Course Objective	<p>This course explores contemporary Japanese religion and society through the exploration of common themes in worldview of the Japanese people and its changing patterns in contemporary Japan. The course will be divided into thematic modules: the pervasiveness of religion in everyday life; the meaning of 'religion' in the Japanese context; the intimate bond between religion and the nation; and the gendered aspects of Japanese religions. We will consider a variety of issues, including how religious ideas may tell us about Japanese families today; what the importance of purification, specific rituals, and amulets reveal about the everyday lived religion; how religions have been adopting new strategies to meet individuals' needs (marketing strategies and media); and how gender norms are shifting in contemporary Japanese religious institutions as they are in contemporary Japanese society. Students will not only gain broad knowledge of core aspects of Japanese religions and culture but will also be encouraged to think critically and compare these themes with similar situations abroad. Although some background knowledge of Japan is helpful, it is not required.</p>
Learning Goals	<p>Knowledge and Understanding. After studying this course you should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - become familiar with some of the main themes in Japanese religions and society; - to gain some fundamental knowledge about Japanese culture and society through the lens of religion - Understand the level of religiosity or Japanese people and how it is expressed everyday life - Think critically and creatively about religion and society considering the importance of rituals and amulets in Japanese's everyday life. - Identify key cultural ideals and social values within Japanese religions. <p>Skills, Qualities and Attributes. After studying this course you should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reconsider the image of Japan by reflecting on the everyday experiences and religious culture. - Reflect on religious narratives that help challenging gendered cultural values and ideals. - Reflect on how the religious traditions change over time and how they meet the cultural and societal changes. - Explore the intersection of religion and society and acquire first-hand knowledge of the relationship between society and religion through projects requiring fieldwork/interviews.

Requirement / Prerequisite	This is not a course on History of Japanese religions. Therefore, some familiarity with main Japanese religious traditions and related religious doctrines is required.	
Class Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction and Overview: Getting started – Religious life in Contemporary Japan Symbols, Practices, Beliefs and Japanese everyday life 2. The Religiosity of the Japanese 3. The Concept of Religion in Modern Japan Imposition, Invention, or Innovation? 4. The Postwar Constitution and Religion: The bond between religion and the nation 5. The public image of Religion in Contemporary Japan: religious violence and new religious movements in twenty-first century Japan 6. The Rise of the New Spirituality 7. Japanese Religions and gender 8. Traditions and modern transformations: New Religions in Japan - Adaptations and Transformations in Contemporary Society 9. Midterm exam 10. Seminar Topic Presentation Traditions and modern transformations: Shinto 11. Seminar Topic Presentation Traditions and modern transformations: Buddhism 12. Seminar Topic Presentation Traditions and modern transformations: Christianity 13. Seminar Topic Presentation: The religious character of daily life: The importance of purification, specific rituals and amulets 14. Seminar Topic Presentation: Traditions and modern transformations: New Religions in Japan - Adaptations and Transformations in Contemporary Society 15. Seminar Topic Presentation: Religion and the Media; Presentation of Field Study Paper and Submission of portfolio 	
	1st	Period: Day: Title: Introduction to the course. Getting started – Religious life in Contemporary Japan symbols, Practices, Beliefs and Japanese everyday life (ZOOM Meeting)
	2nd	Period: Day: Title: The Religiosity of the Japanese (ZOOM Meeting) An individual Japanese is apt to say “I am Shinto” or “I am Buddhist”, or “I am Both Shinto and Buddhist”, or “I am Christian and Buddhist”, or “I have not religion”. This does not mean that the person is indifferent or against religion. Japanese religiosity is not usually expressed in creeds, and religion in Japan is not always organized into exclusive organizations. In this class we will discuss all these issues and explore the meaning, if any, of religiosity for the Japanese.
	3rd	Period: Day: Title: The Concept of Religion in Modern Japan Imposition, Invention, or Innovation? (ZOOM Meeting) In discussing the general feasibility of applying the category of “religion” to Japan, we will distinguish between two competing definitions of religion that have been prevalent in the Euro-American world. In an earlier version, reference to a god or gods formed an indispensable core of the definition, and religion was understood to have been “revealed” to different cultures. Theocentric definitions of religion posit one universal revelation from the Christian god to various cultures; non-Christian systems of ritual and thought have therefore been understood as flawed representations of a pure original (of which Protestant Christianity has remained the paradigmatic model).
	4th	Period: Day: Title: The Postwar Constitution and Religion: The bond between religion and the nation (ZOOM Meeting)
	5th	Period: Day: Title: Traditions and modern transformations: Shinto
	6th	Period: Day: Title: Traditions and modern transformations: Buddhism
	7th	Period: Day: Title: Traditions and modern transformations: Christianity
	8th	Period: Day: Title: Traditions and modern transformations: New Religions in Japan - Adaptations and Transformations in Contemporary Society
	9th	Period: Day: Title: Mid-term Exam
	10th	Period: Day: Title: The public image of Religion in Contemporary Japan: religious

	violence and new religious movements in twenty-first century Japan
11th	Period: Day: Title: The Rise of the New Spirituality
12th	Period: Day: Title: Seminar Topic Presentation The public image of Religion in Contemporary Japan: Japanese Religions and the Public Sphere - the Post 3.11 (ZOOM Meeting)
13th	Period: Day: Title: Seminar Topic Presentation The religious character of daily life: The importance of purification, specific rituals and amulets (ZOOM Meeting)
14th	Period: Day: Title: Seminar Topic Presentation Japanese Religions and gender (ZOOM Meeting)
15th	Period: Day: Title: Seminar Topic Presentation Religion and the Media - Presentation of Field Study Paper and Submission of portfolio (ZOOM Meeting)
Independent Study Outside of Class	Each student will select a contemporary religious institution, community or movement of interest to them. It must have some physical presence or activities in the area around Osaka University or the place they live. This religious community will provide the focus for your Seminar Topic Presentation the Fieldwork Report, which should allow students both to learn about a religious community from several angles, and to apply the themes of the course to a concrete social setting. Students will submit a 2-3 page report (~2000 words) identifying a chosen religious community for their Seminar Topic Presentation. In addition to describing the religious community, explain why Students chose it and what they think will be interesting about it as related to the Seminar Topic. Students should also give a preliminary list of possible sources of information about the community (e.g. reading group web pages, searching popular news media sources, finding previous academic studies. The selection of the religious organization must be discussed with Dr. Cavaliere.
Textbooks	During the semester, I will announce/distribute reading assignments (e.g., copies of articles/chapters, web addresses). Students are expected to complete reading assignments before class starts.
Reference	Michiko Yusa, Japanese religious traditions, 2002, Prentice hall Ama Toshimaro, (2005) Why are the Japanese non-religious?, University Press of America Inken Prohl and John Nelson (2012), Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Religions, Leiden: Brill
Grading Policy	Religious Group Memo 30% Field Study Report 40% Active class participation 10% Seminar topic Presentation 20%
Other Remarks	Field Study Report In order to prepare for their Seminar Topic Presentation, students will be required to conduct an investigation of a Japanese religious community. The selection of the religious organization must be discussed with Dr. Cavaliere. They will be asked to collect information to support their argument on Seminar topic Presentation. The student will then asked to write a research report (2-3 pages, ~2000 words) based on their observations.
Special Note	The course will introduce to main ideas and theories in sociology of religion. Students are expected to engage in careful reading and study about academic study of religion and its research methods.
Office Hour	
Messages to Prospective Students	NOTE: Given the current COVID-19 situation and in compliance with Osaka University policy, during the Autumn-Winter 2020-21 classes will be held online with a mix of Zoom meetings and content-on-demand. Details of the course schedule will be made available to students enrolled on the CLE course page. Please note the course schedule and teaching modality may change during the semester in order to comply with Osaka University policy. You will be informed of any change in due course.

Instructor(s)

Instructor Name	Name (hiragana)	Affiliation, Title, Course	Office	Extension	E-mail
No data found					

Cautions for Students

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