Japan’s Aging Society

History 4510

SPRING 2016 / TUES. – THURS. / 3:40-5:00 PM / OSH 113

Class Overview

At the turn of the 20th century, Japan was a young industrializing country. Life expectancy was roughly 43-44 years for men and women respectively and about one-third of the population was under the age of 15. In the first decade of the 21st century, life expectancy had nearly doubled and some 20% of the population was over the age of 65, making Japan the “oldest” society in the world. This dramatic demographic shift has major economic, social and political implications as Japan tries to cope with its “graying” society. This includes everything from living arrangements and new architectural forms, to immigration and the gender make-up of labor, to new consumer products and services, to changing religious practices, in addition to the expected changes in medical practice, health insurance and social security systems. Japanese society now is a window to everyone else’s future.

This course examines historical factors in this shift focusing especially on post-World War II changes. It will also examine attempts to cope with the changes that have occurred and analyze projections for the future. The course does not assume any prior knowledge of Japan’s history, and it will draw comparisons with the situation in the West and in other Asian countries. Materials will include videos, novels, statistics, magazine and newspaper articles, and personal accounts.

Please note that there is an affiliated, optional 1-credit course for those who wish to study content related to this course in the Japanese language. This is Hist 4920-004 taught on Fridays at 9:40-10:30 AM in CTIHIB 211. The instructor is OMI Keita. For more information about CLAC courses, please use the following link: http://ias.utah.edu/language/clac.php

Instructor: Wesley Sasaki-Uemura
Office: 215 CTIHIB / Phone: 801-585-6991
Office Hours: Mon. 1:30-3:00 pm, Tues. 10:00-11:00 am or by appointment
E-mail: wes.sasaki-uemura@utah.edu
Required Texts

ARIYOSHI Sawako, *Twilight Years* (physical reserve, Marriott Library - PL845.R5 K651 1984)


MATSUMOTO Yoshiko, ed., *Faces of Aging: The Lived Experiences of the Elderly in Japan* (online access, Marriott Library)

John W. TRAPHAGAN, HASHIMOTO Akiko, eds., *Imagined Families, Lived Families: Culture and Kinship in Contemporary Japan* [excerpts] (online access, Marriott Library)

John W. TRAPHAGAN, John KNIGHT, eds., *Demographic Change and the Family in Japan’s Aging Society* (online access, Marriott Library)

Other readings and visual materials will be available electronically through CANVAS.

Other Useful Texts and References

Ralph LÜTZELER, Florian COULMAS, eds., *Imploding Populations in Japan and Germany: A Comparison* (online access, Marriott Library)


Student Learning Assessments (Grading Policies)

Students are evaluated on the basis of their class participation, written assignments, a group presentation in class, and a final research paper.

1) **Class participation** counts for 20% of your grade and is based on a combination of attendance and your contributions to class discussions. If you have more than five unexcused absences, you forfeit this portion of your grade. Please see below regarding excusable absences.

2) A second component is a **small group presentation** to be given in class and constituting another 20% of your final grade. Depending on the class size, the groups will consist of 2-3 students who will present in-depth information and analysis of specific issues related to the elderly in Japan.
Specifics about the format for the presentation will be given in class. Those in the same group receive the same grade for their presentation. You will be expected to hand in a written report or Powerpoint (or some equivalent like Keynote or Prezi) file of the presentation you make.

3) The primary research goal of the course is to produce an individual research paper. Accordingly, there will be assignments leading up to the final draft that constitute part of your grade. These components will be a) a **prospectus** (5% of the final grade) for the research paper, b) a detailed **outline** and preliminary annotated **bibliography** (10%), and c) a partial or first **draft** (15%) of the paper.

4) The **final version of your research paper** counts for 30% of your final grade and will be due on **May 3 (T)** by **5:00 PM**. Students who are taking the class for Japanese credit will be expected to use some sources in the Japanese language. You may hand in your paper at the History office mailboxes or send it to me via e-mail attachment.

5) Please note that according to University grading policies, instructors may only give an incomplete if the student has less than 10% of the assigned work left to complete. If you need to take an incomplete, please meet me before the end of the term to discuss a schedule for completing the work. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for an incomplete.

**Classroom Guidelines**

As mentioned above, class participation involves both attendance and active engagement in discussions. Students are expected to be civil, mature and respectful of diverging points of view in class. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. If a student is not particularly comfortable speaking in front of other students, then arrangements can be made for contributions in a written form.

Excusable absences include illness, hospitalization, family emergencies, National Guard duty, and official university functions. (Work is **not** an excusable absence. If you are on a sports team, then your program director should contact me.) If you know that you will be missing a session, then you should see me prior to that class to discuss your assignment to make up for that session.

Your work for this course should conform to the student code regarding issues of misrepresenting one’s work, fabrication or falsification of materials, and plagiarism. Plagiarism is an especially serious academic violation and it is the responsibility of the student to know exactly what it is. Please refer to the
student code for a definition of this violation ([http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8.8-10.html](http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8.8-10.html)). You must properly acknowledge sources with footnotes. Any quotation, paraphrase, or use of another person’s theory or analysis that is not properly attributed with a footnote or endnote constitutes plagiarism. The offense is punishable by grade reduction, course failure and/or suspension from the University, and the information regarding the incident will be forwarded to the Academic Misconduct Committee.

Please consult the History Department’s web site regarding the expectations for a student’s “Learning Outcomes” in terms of historical knowledge, thinking and skills in our courses. ([http://history.utah.edu/about/learning-outcomes.php](http://history.utah.edu/about/learning-outcomes.php)) Completing this course, the student should gain, among other things, knowledge of other cultures and their histories and modes of thought, written and oral skills in presenting arguments and critiques, and research and analytical skills.

**Schedule (subject to change)**

Week 1 – Jan. 12 – Introduction & Issues (Coulmas, Ch. 12)
   Jan. 14 – Early modern demographics

Week 2 – Jan. 19 – Cultural traditions regarding elders
   Jan. 21 – *Obasuteyama*

Week 3 – Jan. 26 – Meiji Transition (1868 – ca. 1920)
   Jan. 28 – Interwar Issues (1920s – 1930s)

Week 4 – Feb. 2 – Wartime/ EarlyPostwar Japan (1940s – 1960s)
   [Student meetings during the week to discuss paper topics.]

Week 5 – Feb. 9 – **Prospectus due** / Contemporary Shifts
   Feb. 11 – Library / Media

Week 6 – Feb. 16 – Generational Structure (Coulmas, Chs. 2, 4)
   Feb. 18 – Family Relations (Matsumoto, Chs. 3-4) / **Group Presentation**
Week 7 – Feb. 23 – Living Arrangements (Traphagan, Chs. 2-3)
Feb. 25 – Elder Care (Coulmas, Ch. 6 / Traphagan, Chs. 9-10) / 
    Group Presentation*

Week 8 – Mar. 1 – Outline & Bibliography due / Medical Issues
Mar. 3 – Health Insurance (Coulmas, Ch. 8) / Group Presentation*

Week 9 – Mar. 8 – Labor
Mar. 10 – Gender & Labor (Coulmas, Ch. 5) / Group Presentation*

Week 10 – Mar. 14-18 – Spring Break (no class)

Week 11 – Mar. 22 – Immigration Impact (Coulmas, Ch. 11)
Mar. 24 – Rural Aging (Traphagan, Chs. 5-6) / Group Presentation*

Week 12 – Mar. 29 – Consumer Economics (Coulmas, Ch. 7)
Mar. 31 – Social Networks (Coulmas, Ch. 3 / Matsumoto, Chs. 1-2) / 
    Group Presentation*

Week 13 – Apr. 5 – 1st Draft due / Communication (Matsumoto, Chs. 8-9)
Apr. 7 – Death & Religion (Coulmas, Ch. 10 / Traphagan, Ch. 7) / 
    Group Presentation*

Week 14 – Apr. 12 – Political Change (Coulmas, Ch. 9)
Apr. 14 – Comparisons with Asia / Group Presentation*

Week 15 – Apr. 19 – Predictions and Recommendations
Apr. 21 – Individual Reports

Week 16 – Apr. 26 – Individual Reports

Final paper due by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, May 3rd.

* Indicates activity as needed.
RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. http://disability.utah.edu

Wellness Statement
Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - www.wellness.utah.edu 801-581-7776.

Veterans Center
If you are a student veteran, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

LGBT Resource Center
If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone#. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: http://lgbt.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language
If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources
include: the Department of Linguistics EAS Program (http://linguistics.utah.edu/eas-program/index.php); the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/); the Writing Program (http://writing-program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Academic Conduct

All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. Faculty must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-12.3, B. Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-10, II. Please consult the following website for History’s departmental policies on Academic Misconduct. http://history.utah.edu/students/misconduct-policy.php. See “Principles for Grading” below for the definition of plagiarism and a discussion of consequences.

Accommodations Policy

Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience. For more information, please consult Section Q of the University of Utah’s Regulations Library, Policy 6-100: Instruction and Evaluation, which appears at: http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php

This syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.