



CIEE Tokyo, Japan

Course name:	Japanese Popular Culture
Course number:	JAPN 2004 TOJA
Programs offering course:	Summer Japanese Studies
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Summer 2020

Course Description

This course aims to provide students a basic understanding of Japanese Popular culture, notably anime, video games, music, and television. This course will explore the social, economic, and cultural dynamics of popular culture mediums in Japan as well as the spread of popular culture globally.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students will:

- Describe the origins of certain Japanese popular culture phenomena
- Understand central artistic / narrative themes in various popular culture phenomena
- Understand domestic social, cultural, and economic impacts of popular culture phenomena
- Understand the global impact of Japanese popular culture

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

This course will incorporate in-class lectures, discussions, readings, videos, and field research.

Assessment and Final Grade

• Participation	20%
• Online Journals	20%
• Presentation	20%
• Mid-term Paper	20%
• Final Exam	20%

Course Requirements

Participation and Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and unexcused absences may result in a lower grade for any affected CIEE course. Unexcused absences from 10 to 20% of the course will result in a reduction of your final grade. Unexcused absence from 20% or more of the course may result in failure of the course. Points may also be deducted for tardiness. Please see the CIEE Academic Manual for more information on CIEE's attendance policies.



Students are expected to actively participate in class. This includes preparing in advance, engaging in discussions, and being attentive and responsive.

Online Journals

Students will be expected to post a short journal entry to the online discussion group by 11:59pm about the readings assigned that day. The entries must be between 370 and 450 words long. These posts will aid the discussions to be held the following day.

Presentation

Students will present on a topic of their choice that is relevant to the course's learning goals, subject to instructor approval. Presentations should be 10 to 15 minutes including a Q&A session.

Mid-term Paper

Students must write a Mid-term Paper on a topic of their choice that is relevant to the course's learning goals, subject to instructor approval. The paper must be thoroughly and consistently referenced and must be 1500 to 2500 words in length.

Final Exam

Closed books exam covering topics covered throughout the class. The exam will include a combination of multiple-choice questions as well as short-essay questions.

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: The following schedule and assignments are subject to change.

Week 1:

- 1.1 Course Introduction
Origins of Manga
Readings: (Darling-Wolf 2018 Section 5)

Week 2:

- 2.1 Manga in the 1980s
Readings: (Atkins 2017 Chapter 9)
- 2.2 Manga in the 1990s
Readings: (Iwabuchi 2002 Section 4)
Due: Online Journal
- 2.3 Manga in the 2000s
Readings: (Steinberg 2004)
- 2.4 Field trip to a location related to popular / "otaku" culture

Week 3:

- 3.1 Origins of anime
Readings: watch video *What is and What is not Anime* before class



3.2 Anime in the 1980s
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Chapter 21)
Due: Online Journal

3.3 Anime in the 1990s
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Section 25)
Due: Mid-term Paper

Week 4:

4.1 Anime in the 2000s
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Section 26)

4.2 J-pop music and Japanese “idol” culture
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Chapter 13)
Due: Online Journal

4.3 J-pop music and Japanese “idol” culture (2)
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Chapter 15)

Week 5:

5.1 Japanese comedic TV and “manzai” comedy

5.2 Video game culture
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Section 7)
Due: Online Journal

5.3 Due: Presentations

Week 6:

6.1 Japanese popular culture, globalization, and “Cool Japan” initiatives
Readings: (Freedman and Slade 2018 Chapter 3)

6.2 Course review
Due: Presentations
Readings: (Atkins 2017 Section Afterword)

6.3 Final Exam

Course Materials

Readings

Atkins, E. T. 2017. *A History of Popular Culture in Japan: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Darling-Wolf, F. 2018. *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Media*. Taylor & Francis.



- Freedman, A. and T. Slade. 2018. *Introducing Japanese Popular Culture*. Taylor & Francis.
- Iwabuchi, K. 2002. *Recentring Globalization: Popular Culture and Japanese Transnationalism*. Duke University Press.
- Steinberg, Marc. 2004. "Otaku Consumption, Superflat Art and the Return to Edo." *Japan Forum* 16(3):449–71.

Video materials

What is and What is not Anime by Digibro, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc0tIjw7fII>