

## Osaka Gakuin University 2016-17 Fall Semester

### Japanese Religions

#### Instructor :

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Lesson: Monday 12:50-14:20 & Friday 14:30-16:00

Office Hours : Monday before class, Friday after class, or by appointment

Subject code : 1038

#### Course Description:

This course will examine the histories, teachings, beliefs, and practices of various religions in Japan, including Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity as well as other minor religions (i.e. Shugendo, Onmyodo, and other folk religions). In addition, modern/contemporary religious phenomena referred to as New Religions will be studied. Students are encouraged to (1) challenge the traditional division of Japanese religions by analyzing the relationship between various religions and recognizing the interconnectedness and/or syncretism between them and (2) have discussions on their religious, political, and/or socioeconomic issues. There will be a series of field trips in which students will visit various religious sites and experience ceremonies and rituals (if possible).

#### Resources

Earhart, H. Bryon. Japanese Religion: Unity and Diversity (2004)

**Note:** Other necessary hand-outs will be provided for each class

#### Evaluation

- Class Attendance/Multiple Assignments **(15%)**
- An Individual or Group Presentation(s) **(35%)**

- Field Trip Worksheets/Reports **(20%)**
- Final examination **(30%)**

**Note:** (1) Class attendance and participation, particularly taking field trips, are very important since this course places emphasis on the actual observation and experience of Japanese religions.  
(2) Evaluation method may change at the instructor's discretion depending on the class size and other factors.

#### Notes:

No Previous knowledge on Japanese religions or culture is required.

#### Course Schedule:

- Class 1: Course orientation and introduction:** What is religion? What do you know about Japanese culture and religions?  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
- Class 2: Persistent themes in Japanese religious history:** Human beings and nature, family, and purification  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 2 (cont.)
- Class 3: Persistent themes in Japanese religious history (cont.):** Local festivals, individual cults, and religion in everyday life  
Group discussion: Persistent themes in Japanese religions  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 3
- Class 4: Field Trip (1) Prehistoric heritage:** Imashirozuka Burial Mound 今城塚古墳, Takatsuki, Osaka (\*subject to change)  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 3 (cont.)
- Class 5: The prehistoric heritage:** The religious significance of burial and the dead, fertility, and divine descent  
Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (1)  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 4
- Class 6: Early Shinto:** Mythology and the origins of Shinto  
\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 4 (cont.)

**Class 7: Field Trip (2) Shinto:** Nagaoka Tenmangu Shrine 長岡天満宮, Nagaokakyo, Kyoto (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 4 (cont.)

**Class 8: Early Shinto (cont.):** The organization of Shinto—priests and rituals in shrines

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (2)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

**Class 9: Early Japanese Buddhism:** Indian and Chinese influence; the Buddhism as a state religion; and the six philosophical schools of Nara Buddhism

**Confucianism and Taoism:** Chinese importation; Confucianism and Taoism as Japanese traditions (i.e. Onmyodo)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 7

**Class 10: Field Trip (3) Folk Religion:** Seimei Shrine 清明神社 and Shinsen Garden 神泉苑, Kyoto (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 7 (cont.) and Chapter 8

**Class 11: Folk Religion:** Religiosity outside organized religion

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (3)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 9

**Class 12: The development of Japanese Buddhism:** The new Buddhism of the Heian period (Shingon and Tendai) and the way of mountain asceticism (Shugendo)

Group discussion: Shingon, Tendai, and Shugendo

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 9 (cont.)

**Class 13: Field Trip (4) Tendai Buddhism:** Enryakuji Temple 延暦寺, Mount Hiei 比叡山, Otsu, Shiga (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 9 (cont.) and Chapter 10

**Class 14: The development of Japanese Buddhism (cont.):**

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (4)

**Elaboration within Japanese Buddhism:** The Emergence of Pure Land, Nichiren, and Zen Buddhism in the Kamakura period

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 10 (cont.)

**Class 15: Elaboration within Japanese Buddhism (cont.):**

Group discussion: Pure Land, Nichiren, and Zen; three schools of Zen Buddhism in Japan

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 10 (cont.) and Chapter 11

**Class 16: Field Trip (5) Rinzai Zen Buddhism:** Tofukuji Temple 東福寺, Kyoto (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 11 (cont.)

**Class 17: Elaboration within Japanese Buddhism (cont.):**

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (5); Japanese religions from the early to the medieval period (summary)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 12

**Class 18: The appearance of Christianity in Japan:** The Introduction, acceptance, and expulsion of Christianity

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 12 (cont.)

**Class 19: Field Trip (6) Christianity in Japan:** Takayama Ukon, Takatsuki castle town, and Takatsuki Catholic Church, Takatsuki, Osaka (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 13 and Chapter 14

**Class 20: The appearance of Christianity in Japan (cont.):**

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (6)

**Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism and restoration Shinto in the Tokugawa period:** The Tokugawa government and religion

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 14

**Class 21: Buddhism, Neo-Confucianism and restoration Shinto in the Tokugawa period (cont.):** Neo-Confucianism, political stability, and social conformity; Motoori Norinaga and restoration Shinto

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 15

**Class 22: The Meiji Restoration and State Shinto:** The political and religious significance of the Meiji Restoration

Group discussion: Shrine Shinto as an expression of nationalism and militarism

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 16 and Chapter 17

**Class 23: Religious currents from 1868 to 1945:** Buddhism, Christianity, and the New Religions

**New Religions:** Tenrikyo, Soka Gakkai, and others

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 17 (cont.)

**Class 24: Field Trip (7) New Religions:** Religious Centers in Tenri, Nara (\*subject to change)

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 17 (cont.)

**Class 25: New Religions (cont.):**

Group discussion: The reflection on Field Trip (7); The significance of the New Religions

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 18

**Class 26: Religion in post-war Japan:** Shinto, Buddhism, Christianity, and the post-war boom of New Religions

\*Reading HW: Earhart, Chapter 19

**Class 27: Religious life in contemporary Japan:** Transformations of religious life in contemporary Japan

Group discussion: Problems concerning contemporary Japanese religions

**Class 28: Review and preparation for presentations**

**Class 29: Individual or group presentations**

**Class 30: Final Examination**

**Note:** Course contents and schedule are subject to change depending on the class size and the discretion of the teacher.