

JPN 307: Introduction to Japanese Cinema: Directors, Genres, History

Spring 2006

University of Oregon

Instructor: Daisuke MIYAO

Class Meetings: Tuesday 4:00-7:00pm @ 182 Lillis

+ 1 Discussion Sessions

1. Course Description:

This course offers an introduction to the historical study of Japanese cinema, focusing on its major directors and genres. This course pays close attention to the languages and styles of films as well as the film-historical and socio-cultural contexts. The primary goal of this course is to learn how to read formal and historical aspects of films and develop ability to talk about films in critical terms.

2. Required Textbooks:

Donald Richie, *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film: A Concise History, with a Selective Guide to DVDs and Videos* (2nd Revised and updated edition; New York: Kodansha America, 2005).

Warren Buckland, *Teach Yourself: Film Studies* (Revised edition; New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003).

All other required texts are e-reserved in the Knight Library website.

3. Course Requirements:

1. Attendance & Discussion: Students will be expected to attend all lectures and screenings and do the reading assignments on time. Students are also expected to attend the discussion section for which they are registered and be prepared to discuss the readings and films. Active participation on the part of every student is expected during discussion sections. Students cannot get credit if they attend a different section. Excessive unexcused absences will adversely affect a student's grade and may result in FAILURE of the course. Please be punctual, as lateness to class will be penalized. In the case of illness or emergencies, you must provide appropriate documentation and notify the professor or GTF in advance.

Six quizzes (five questions in each quiz) will be administered by discussion GTFs during the course of the quarter (see syllabus for dates). Quizzes will be on readings, films, and lectures.

Each student will also be expected to help lead one class discussion. Discussion leaders are expected to post discussion questions on the Discussion Board for JPN 307 by 5 p.m. the day before they are to lead discussion. (Students who are enrolled in Wednesday discussion sections should post questions by 9 p.m. on Tuesday. Otherwise, consult your discussion GTFs.) The JPN 307 Discussion Board may be found in the Communications section of Blackboard. During the first week of classes, discussion sections will meet to go over discussion section policies and to sign up discussion leaders. Discussion sections

will not meet during the week of Final Exams. Total possible points: 50 points for attendance (automatic 5 points just for showing up at each discussion); 50 points for participation (maximum of 5 points per discussion: discussion GTFs will evaluate your “participation”); 30 points for quizzes (6 quizzes X 5 points each); and 20 points for discussion leading.

2. **Examinations:** Two exams will be given during the course of the quarter on April 25th (Midterm) and during the week of Final Exams (Final, date and time TBA), respectively. Midterm exam will consist of 20 questions and Final exam will consist of 30 questions, including multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions drawn from the lectures, readings, and media viewed in class. Midterm exam will be worth 40 points and Final exam will be worth 60 points (2 points per question). Total possible points: 40 + 60 = 100 points. Exam results will be posted on Blackboard for each student. **BE SURE TO BRING A #2 PENCIL. NO ELECTRONIC DICTIONARIES, LAPTOPS, CELL PHONES, OR MP3 PLAYERS/IPODS WILL BE PERMITTED DURING THE EXAM.**

3. **Grade Calculation:** Final grades will be made on a curve based on the accumulation of up to 250 total possible points derived from the categories listed above. These requirements apply both to those taking the course for a grade and to those taking it on a P/N basis.

4. **Extra Credit #1 (5 points):** Any student who poses a question during the Q & A at the Guest Lecture in Week 5 will be offered 5 extra points. **Only the substantial questions on the contents of the Guest Lecture will earn extra credit.** The students who pose questions should then email their discussion GTFs after the talk with the questions that they posed to ensure that they receive credit.

5. **Extra Credit #2 (up to 20 points):** Write an essay (7-8 pages) engaging the issues discussed during the course of the quarter in relation to Japanese films. The extra credit essay is due on **Thursday June 8, 4pm** at 415 Friendly. For general guidelines on how to write a paper, see http://www.uoregon.edu/~munno/Writing/Writing_Papers.html. Please slip your paper under the office door if professor is not present.

6. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the professor as soon as possible. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

4. Schedule:

Week 1 (April 4): Introduction

Screening: *Zatoichi* (Kitano Takeshi, 2003, 116min)

No reading assignment.

Week 2 (April 11): Languages of Film

Screening: *Taboo* (Gohatto, Oshima Nagisa, 1999, 100min)

Readings:

Buckland, pp. 8-23.

David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, “Glossary,” *Film Art: An Introduction* (5th ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997): pp. 477-482.

1st quiz at discussion session

Week 3 (April 18): Jidaigeki and Kurosawa Akira

Screening: *Yojimbo* (Kurosawa Akira, 1961, 108min)

Reading: Richie, pp. 22-25, 64-77, 166-176.

2nd quiz at discussion session

Week 4 (April 25): Gendaigeki and Ozu Yasujiro

Screening: *Ohayo* (Ozu Yasujiro, 1959, 93min)

Reading: Richie, pp. 32-46, 54-59, 119-125.

Midterm exam at the end of class

Week 5 (May 2): Guest Lecture by Dr. Sharalyn Orbaugh (Associate Professor in Asian Studies, University of British Columbia), “*Kamishibai: the Construction of Space and the National Imaginary in Modernizing Japan.*”

No reading assignment

Week 6 (May 9): Anime and Oshii Mamoru

Screening: *Urusei yatsura: Movie 2, Beautiful Dreamer* (Oshii Mamoru, 1984, 90min)

Readings: Daisuke Miyao, “Before *Anime*: Animation and The Pure Film Movement in Prewar Japan,” *Japan Forum* 14.2 (2002): pp. 191-209.

Richie, pp. 255-258.

3rd quiz at discussion session

Week 7 (May 16): Melodrama and Naruse Mikio

Screening: *Mother (Okaasan)*, Naruse Mikio, 1952, 98min)

Readings: Peter Brooks, “The Melodramatic Imagination,” in Marcia Landy, ed.

Imitations of Life: A Reader on Film and Television Melodrama (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991): pp. 50-67.

Riche, pp. 107-115, 125-129.

4th quiz at discussion session

Week 8 (May 23): Fantastic Cinema/J-Horror and Mizoguchi Kenji, Nakata Hideo

Screening: *Ringu* (Nakata Hideo, 1998, 95min)

Clip: *Ugetsu (Ugetsu monogatari)*, Mizoguchi Kenji, 1953, 94min)

Readings: Darrell William Davis, *Picturing Japaneseness: Monumental Style, National Identity, Japanese Film* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996): 219-227.

Richie, pp. 129-134.

5th quiz at discussion session

Week 9 (May 30): Film Noir and Suzuki Seijun

Screening: *Branded to Kill (Koroshi no rakuin)*, Suzuki Seijun, 1967, 91min)

Readings: Richie, pp. 177-191.

Buckland, pp. 117-123.

Week 10 (June 6): Independent Cinema and Miike Takashi

Screening: *The Happiness of the Katakuris* (Katakurike no kofuku, Miike Takashi, 2001, 110min)

Reading: Richie, pp. 213-247.

6th quiz at discussion session

Final Exam Date and Time: TBA