

Syllabus  
**PS 44**  
**JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS:**  
**CONFLICT AND CONSENSUS**  
**Spring Term 2000**

Prof. Ted Gilman  
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 Office Hours: Friday 1:30-3:30 p.m.  
 and by appointment.

This course provides an overview of political structure, process, and policy in contemporary Japan. It begins with a brief historical narrative of postwar politics, and proceeds to discussions of Japanese culture and society, electoral politics, decision-making structures and processes, foreign affairs and political economy. It is based on lectures and discussions, with plenty of time for questions and answers.

Thematically, we will focus on the issues of conflict and consensus in Japan. The Japanese are often portrayed as group-oriented people who shun conflict and individualism. Is this image correct? We will study numerous examples of conflict and consensus in Japanese political and social relations.

There are three types of readings in this course: books, reserve materials, and electronic resources. Six books are assigned nearly in their entirety and are available in paperback. They are listed here by the short-form title used in the reading list.

*Parties.* Ronald Hrebnar, *Japan's New Party System* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000).

*Foreign Policy.* Gerald L. Curtis, ed., *Japan's Foreign Policy After the Cold War: Coping with Change* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993).

*Japanese Women.* Anne E. Imamura, ed., *Re-Imaging Japanese Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

*Minorities.* Michael Weiner, ed., *Japan's Minorities: The Illusion of Homogeneity* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

*Common Sense.* Steven R. Reed, *Making Common Sense of Japan* (Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

*Dark Side.* Ikkô Shimizu, *The Dark Side of Japanese Business: Three "Industry Novels"* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996).

All other readings, those marked with an asterisk (\*), will be left on reserve in the library. All assigned readings are required. They should be completed prior to the start of class on the assigned day.

Electronic resources will be an integral part of this course. All students must have an email account. There are many useful and interesting resources available through the Internet, and I will periodically send you relevant items which I treat as required reading. Furthermore, I will introduce you to some useful resources for your written assignments available on the WorldWide Web.

Daily news from Japan will be an important part of this course. Since no American daily newspapers provide consistent and sufficient coverage of Japanese politics, I **require** you to check the web sites of the major Japanese daily newspapers to keep up on Japanese current events. The URLs are:

**<http://www.asahi.com/english/english.html>**

**<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/>**

**<http://www.mainichi.co.jp/>**

Again, keeping up on current events in Japan is required reading! Make these sites part of your daily routine. Another site to visit for good Japanese politics information is:

**<http://www.people.Virginia.EDU/~ljs2k/webtext.html>**

Grading for this course will be based on an in-class midterm examination, a group presentation and paper project, a take-home final examination (10-15 pages), and bi-weekly email to be submitted by the students to the instructor. The email assignments are as follows: Each week you must submit questions before the first class of the week and short summary essays after the second class of the week. The questions should address issues in the readings, online resources, or current Japanese political events and affairs. Two to four questions and comments must be submitted via email to the instructor no later than noon on Monday. The essays (no more than one page in length) should summarize the main points of the previous three class lectures and discussions. Summary essays are due by Saturday at noon. These submissions will be used to construct class discussion. The grading percentages are as follows:

Weekly email submissions	10%
Class participation	10%
In-class midterm examination	25%
Group project	20%
Take-home final examination	35%

Finally, I want to emphasize the fact that this class is an *interactive* exercise. The more you participate, the better it will be. Japan is a controversial topic that affords plenty of material for good discussion. Dig in!

### **Boring Bureaucratic Stuff**

All work must be completed in order to pass this course. No makeup or extra credit work will be allowed. No alternate final examination time will be offered. Attendance matters. For every unexcused absence, you will lose one-third of a grade off your final grade. Come to class.

## SCHEDULE AND READINGS

**Week 1. (3/27 & 3/29)**  
***Aisatsu* (Greetings and Introduction)**  
**The Japanese System**

*Common Sense*, "A Unique Nation," pp. 3-24.

Get acquainted with the Japanese newspapers listed above.

**Week 2. (4/3 & 4/5)**  
**Japan Before WWII**  
**The Postwar Political Soap Opera**

*Parties*, Chapters 1-3

**Week 3. (4/10 & 4/12)**  
**Cultural Explanations and Beyond**

*Common Sense*, "Culture as Common Sense," "A Structural Learning Approach,"  
 and "Making Common Sense of Permanent Employment," pp. 25-105.

*Dark Side*, "Keiretsu," pp. 83-277.

**Week 4. (4/17 & 4/19)**  
**Japan's Minorities**

Minorities, Chapters 3-7.

**Week 5. (4/24 & 4/26)**  
**Protest Politics**  
**Value Change**  
**How People Vote**

*Japanese Women*, Patricia Steinhoff, "Three Women Who Loved the Left: Radical Women  
 Leaders in the Japanese Red Army Movement," pp. 301-324.

*Dark Side*, "Silver Sanctuary," pp. 3-31.

**Week 6. (5/1 & 5/3)**  
**Women and Politics**  
**The Politics of Futility: Opposition Parties**

*Japanese Women*, Nancy Rosenberger, "Fragile Resistance, Signs of Status: Women Between State and Media in Japan," pp. 12-45.

*Japanese Women*, Sally Ann Hastings, "Women Legislators in the Postwar Diet," pp. 271-300.

*Parties*, Chapters 6-8

**Week 7. (5/8 & 5/10)**  
**The Politics of Success: The LDP**  
**Japan's New Political Parties**

\*John C. Campbell, "The Old-Fashioned Way: How the LDP Stayed in Power"  
(unpub. ms., 1993), 25 pp.

*Parties*, Chapters 4-5

**Week 8. (5/15 & 5/17)**  
**The Government and the Economic Miracle**

*Common Sense*, "Making Common Sense of Government-Business Cooperation," and "What Should We Learn From Japan?," pp. 106-153.

*Japanese Women*, John Mock, "Mother or Mama: The Political Economy of Bar Hostesses in Sapporo," pp. 177-191.

*Japanese Women*, Glenda S. Roberts, "Careers and Commitment: Azumi's Blue-Collar Women," pp. 221-243.

**Week 9. (5/22 & 5/24)**  
**Foreign Policy**  
**US-Japan Relations**

*Foreign Policy*, Michael Blaker, "Evaluating Japan's Diplomatic Performance,"; T.J. Pempel, "From Exporter to Investor: Japanese Foreign Economic Policy"; Norman D. Levin, "The Strategic Dimensions of Japanese Foreign Policy", pp. 1-42, 105-136, 202-217.

*Foreign Policy*, John C. Campbell, "Japan and the United States: Games That Work," and Timothy J. Curran, "Internationalization, Innovation, and the Role of Japanese Multinational Corporations in U.S.-Japan Relations," pp. 43-61, 160-178.

**Week 10. (5/29 & 5/31)**

**Japan's New International Role?**

*Foreign Policy*, Part IV, "Japan and Its Neighbors," pp. 263-322.