

POLI 133A: Japanese Politics

Instructor: Charles McClean

Summer Session I

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Important Dates and Deadlines

July 17 (Tuesday) Reading and Lecture Quiz (Puzzles 1–4): In-class, closed-book, paper-based quiz on the readings and lectures covering Puzzles 1 to 4 (Foundations of Japanese Politics). Mostly multiple choice and fill in the blanks. 35% of your grade.

August 4 (Saturday) Final Essays: Submit a hard copy of final essays (take-home, open-book) by 11:30am on TritonEd. 60% of your grade. Final essay prompt will be distributed July 19 (Thurs).

Course Description

This course will introduce you to nine important puzzles about Japanese politics, discuss various ways in which scholars have attempted to solve these puzzles, and suggest pathways for future research.

Part I: Foundations of Japanese Politics

1. Are Japanese politics "unique" or "different" from other developed nations (e.g., the U.S.)?
2. The long-term survival of the Liberal Democratic Party
3. "Miraculous" economic growth and stagnation in the 1990s
4. Egalitarian development and the rise of inequality in the 1990s

Part II: Explaining Public Policy Outcomes

5. Gender gap in the workplace and at home
6. Why was there no large-scale civil society movement against nuclear energy despite the Fukushima disaster?
7. Do Japanese consumers "prefer" higher-priced domestic food? If so, why?
8. Territorial conflicts and constitutional revision
9. Why does the Japanese government accept low-skilled, foreign workers through a temporary internship program?

In the process of trying to solve these puzzles, we will learn:

- Important actors in Japanese politics (e.g., politicians, parties, bureaucrats, firms, citizens)
- The positions that different actors take with respect to various policies, as well as the sources of these policy preferences
- How political institutions such as electoral systems and party systems block or enhance the representation of these actors' interests

The class will *not* emphasize the rote memorization of facts (although you will need to know the basic facts in order to understand why things happened the way that they did), nor will it emphasize the simple digestion of big-picture scholarly debates.

The focus of this class will be on learning how to conduct **critical and in-depth analysis of policy and political events in Japan**, and gaining the **practical skills** necessary to do your own independent research. By the end of this class, you should be able to read the news on Japanese politics and be (better) able to assess: (i) who are the major players in the event (**actors**), (ii) what do these actors want (**policy preferences**), (iii) the relative balance of power among these actors (**power and influence**), and (iv.) why some actors win over others (**explaining policy outcomes**).

Course Requirements

1. Readings and Lecture Quiz (35%) - July 17

I will assign two to three articles or chapters (~60 pages) for each class. Readings are available on our course website at: <https://tritoned.ucsd.edu>. To do well on the exams (i.e., a better grade than a B), you must read the assigned materials carefully before the class, attend class each week, and be prepared to **discuss the readings analytically and critically in your essays**.

The quiz will be a paper-based test with multiple-choice questions that cover the readings and lectures. It will be very straightforward, with no trick questions or factual trivia questions.

2. Final Essays (60%) - August 4

Take-home, open-book, and open-discussion. About 8–10 pages. Questions will be distributed on July 19 (Thursday) and the essays are due August 4 (Saturday) by 11:30am on TritonEd.

You will be required to complete two essays. The first essay will ask you to contrast two to three theories covered in class in order to explain one of the five puzzles (Puzzles 5–9) in the latter half of the course (Explaining Public Policy Outcomes), and to discuss each theory's strengths and weaknesses.

The second essay question will describe a political event that actually happened in Japan recently using newspaper articles and will ask you to identify the actors, preferences, and relative power balance, as well as provide your explanation for why a particular policy was adopted. You are free to consult materials outside of the class readings, such as journal articles, books, or newspaper articles (but NOT Wikipedia).

3. Participation (5%) + 5 Bonus Points

You will receive 5 points for asking good questions or making good comments at least *sometimes* in class (about once every week). There are two ways to earn up to 5 bonus points for your overall grade:

(i) More Class Participation

You will receive up to 5 bonus points if you ask good questions and make good comments *regularly* (about once a class).

(ii) Q&A Challenge!

You can also earn up to 5 bonus points for presenting a mini-research project for **5 minutes** in the class. During our class, if someone asks an interesting question that I cannot answer off the top of my head, then you have the option to do a mini-research project on the topic. "An interesting question" should *NOT* be a factual, trivia question (e.g., what is the name of Shinjiro Koizumi's girlfriend?). The question should also *NOT* be about the future, because we are not prophets. **The question must make us think and require some research and interpretation of evidence to answer (which I call "mini-research").**

Mini-research is open to anyone in the class, whether you asked or did not ask the particular question. For mini-research projects, you will need to spend at least 30 minutes doing research and making PowerPoint slides summarizing what you found (see possible sources of information at the end of this syllabus). Please upload your mini-research slides on our TritonEd website **at latest 20 minutes before the lecture**. See the guide for things to consider for your mini-research project at the end of this syllabus. A template for your PowerPoint presentations is available on TritonEd.

Course Policies

Attendance

Attendance in all class sessions is strongly encouraged. Especially in a summer course where there are only 10 class sessions, attending each one is critical. I will not take attendance, but participation in class discussions makes up 5% of your grade (plus up to 5 bonus points). In addition, exams will draw heavily on material covered in class, so it is in your best interest to attend.

Extensions and Quiz Retake

You must request an extension or quiz retake **before the deadline or at the latest an hour before the quiz**. You must have a documented reason (i.e., medical, extenuating personal circumstances, etc.) for not being able to turn in an assignment or quiz on time. You will need to bring in supporting documentation to be granted an extension. If you are sick but don't have money to visit your primary care physician, try to document things that you can later show me as evidence.

Assignments/Late Papers

Note that we will **not accept** any email submission of your essays. Late essays will be penalized one third of a grade per day (e.g., an A- paper becomes B+ the next day) until it bottoms at C-. **Late papers will not be accepted past noon of three days after the deadline.**

Academic Honesty

Cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of academic honesty are **serious offenses** and **will not be tolerated**. Please refer to the UCSD policy on integrity of scholarship for further details. If you are caught cheating in this course (this includes plagiarism), you will receive a letter grade of F. I reserve the right to check your essays electronically when necessary.

Learning Disabilities

Students with University-documented learning disabilities should make arrangements with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) as soon as possible.

Technology

Please silence your cell phones before coming to class. If you are expecting an important call, please tell me before class, keep your phone on vibrate, and leave quietly when you receive the call. I prefer that you do not use your laptop or tablet in class. There is increasing evidence that students perform better academically when laptops are banned from classrooms. If you feel that you must use your laptop, please be courteous to your peers and avoid looking at distracting content that is unrelated to the course.

Course Schedule

The schedule is tentative and subject to change.

July 3 (Tuesday) - Election Campaigning, Japanese Style?

- *Puzzle 1: Are Japanese politics "unique" or "different" from other advanced industrialized nations (e.g., the United States)? If so, how? If not, what are the similarities?*
- Readings (63 pages):
 1. Curtis, Gerald. 1971. *Electoral Campaigning, Japanese Style*. pp. 33-61 (Ch. 2).
 2. Curtis, Gerald. 1992. "Japan," in David Butler and Austin Ranney (eds.). *Electioneering: A Comparative Study of Continuity and Change*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. pp. 222-242.
 3. Catalinac, Amy. 2016. "From Pork to Policy: The Rise of Programmatic Campaigning in Japanese Elections." *Journal of Politics* 78(1): pp. 1-15.
- Optional Reading:
 1. Curtis, Gerald. 1971. *Electoral Campaigning, Japanese Style*. pp. 62-86 (Ch. 3).
- Discussion Questions:
 1. How do Japanese election campaigns compare to campaigns in the United States?
 2. What are the possible explanations (theories) for these similarities and differences?

July 5 (Thursday) - The Survival of the Liberal Democratic Party

- *Puzzle 2: The long-term survival of the Liberal Democratic Party*
- Readings (92 pages):
 1. Curtis, Gerald. 1988. *The Japanese Way of Politics*. Columbia University Press. pp. 1-44 (Ch. 1).
 2. Scheiner, Ethan. 2006. *Democracy Without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party Dominant State*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 7-30; 64-89 (Ch. 1, 3).
- Optional Reading:
 1. Curtis, Gerald. 1988. *The Japanese Way of Politics*. Columbia University Press. pp. 45-79 (Ch. 2).
- Discussion Questions:
 1. What are the existing explanations for the long-term dominance of the LDP?
 2. Which explanation do you find most convincing? Why?

July 10 (Tuesday) - Explaining Economic Growth

- Puzzle 3: "Miraculous" economic growth and stagnation in the 1990s
- Readings (83 pages):
 1. Johnson, Chalmers. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*. pp. 1-34 (Ch. 1).
 2. World Bank. 1993. "The East Asian Miracle." Policy Research Report of the World Bank. pp. 1-26.
 3. Hoshi, Takeo, and Anil K. Kashyap. 2004. "Japan's Financial Crisis and Economic Stagnation." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18(1): pp. 3-26.
- Optional Reading:
 1. Johnson, Chalmers. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle*. pp. 35-82 (Ch. 2).
- Discussion Questions:
 1. What roles did politicians play in making miraculous economic growth possible?
 2. Do the readings assigned this week address this? Why or why not?

July 12 (Thursday) - Egalitarian Development and its Demise

- Puzzle 4: Egalitarian development and the rise of inequality in the 1990s
- Readings (65 pages):
 1. Moriguchi, Chiaki. 2000. "The Evolution of Employment Systems in the United States and Japan, 1900–1960: A Comparative Historical and Institutional Analysis." *Journal of Economic History* 60(2): pp. 515-519.
 2. Estevez-Abe, Margarita. 2008. *Welfare and Capitalism in Post-War Japan*. Cambridge University Press. (Introduction and Chapter 1): pp. 1-48.
 3. Ohtake, Fumio. 2008. "Inequality in Japan." *Asian Economic Policy Review* 3(1): pp. 1-10.
 4. Schlesinger, Jacob M. 2015. "Japan May Be Exception to Piketty's Thesis." *Wall Street Journal*, February 9, 2015: pp. 1-3.
- Optional Reading:
 1. Furlong, Andy. 2008. "The Japanese Hikikomori Phenomenon: Acute Social Withdrawal Among Young People." *The Sociological Review* 56(2): 309-325.
- Discussion Questions:
 1. In the United States, the question of to what extent a government should respond to widening inequality is a highly partisan issue. How do the politics of inequality play out in Japan where there was no major partisan turnover before 2009?
 2. Who contributed to the reduction and widening of inequality? Bureaucrats, politicians, businesses, labor, or citizens?

July 17 (Tuesday) - Quiz

- **Reading and Lecture Quiz (Puzzles 1-4)**

July 19 (Thursday) - Gender Inequality

- **Distribution of Final Essay Prompt**

- *Puzzle 5: Gender gap in the workplace and at home*

- Readings (59 pages):

1. Frances, Rosenbluth, ed. 2007. *The Political Economy of Japan's Low Fertility*. (Introduction and Overview). Stanford University Press: pp. 3-25.
2. Norgren, Tiana. 1998. "Abortion before Birth Control: The Interest Group Politics Behind Postwar Japanese Reproduction Policy." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 24 (1): 59-94.
3. Funakoshi, Minami. 2013. "Japan Cries Out for Daycare: Tokyo Makes the Childcare Shortage Worse by Trying Too Hard to Fix It." *Wall Street Journal*, August 7, 2013: pp. 1-3.

- Discussion Questions:

1. Who benefits from declining fertility in Japan?
2. What can a government do to increase fertility?
3. Why are there so few women in Japan's parliament?

July 24 (Tuesday) - Energy Policy—Nuclear and Its Alternatives after 3.11

- *Puzzle 6: Japanese citizens have been known to oppose having nuclear weapons. Despite this sentiment and the Fukushima disaster, we have not seen a large-scale civil society movement against nuclear energy or many politicians pledging to reduce nuclear energy. Why?*

- Readings (35 pages):

1. Cohen, Linda, Mathew D. McCubbins and Frances M. Rosenbluth. 1996. "The Politics of Nuclear Power in Japan and the United States," in Peter Cowhey and Mathew McCubbins eds. *Structure and Policy in Japan and the United States*: pp. 1-24.
2. Kato, Takaaki, Shogo Takahara, Masashi Nishikawa, and Toshimitsu Homma. 2013. "A Case Study of Economic Incentives and Local Citizens' Attitudes Toward Hosting a Nuclear Power Plant in Japan: Impacts of the Fukushima Accident." *Energy Policy* 59: pp. 808-818.

- Discussion Questions:

1. How has the Fukushima disaster changed Japanese opinions about nuclear power?
2. Why have we not seen many large-scale protests against nuclear energy?

July 26 (Thursday) - Agricultural Protectionism

- *Puzzle 7: Do Japanese consumers "prefer" higher-priced domestic food?*
- Readings (51 pages):
 1. Yusaku Horiuchi and Jun Saito. 2010. "Cultivating Rice and Votes: The Institutional Origins of Agricultural Protectionism in Japan." *Journal of East Asian Studies* 10: pp. 425-452.
 2. Naoi, Megumi and Ikuo Kume. 2011. "Explaining Mass Support for Agricultural Protectionism: Evidence from a Survey Experiment During the Global Recession." *International Organization* 4: pp. 771-795.
- Discussion Questions:
 1. Why do Japanese consumers support protecting domestic agriculture when it leads to higher prices at the supermarket?
 2. Why does the United States oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal, while Japan supports it?

July 31 (Tuesday) - Territorial Conflicts and Constitutional Revision

- *Puzzle 8: What motivates the Japanese government to take a tough stance on territorial disputes with South Korea and China? Why do some conservative politicians want to revise Japan's constitution?*
- Readings (67 pages):
 1. Katzenstein, Peter J., and Nobuo Okawara. 1993. "Japan's National Security: Structures, Norms, and Policies." *International Security* 17(4): pp. 84-118.
 2. McCormack, Gavan. 2013. "Much Ado Over Small Islands: The Sino-Japanese Confrontation over Senkaku/Diaoyu." *Japan Focus* 11(21): 1-14.
 3. McElwain, Kenneth Mori and Christian G. Winkler. 2015. "What's Unique About the Japanese Constitution? A Comparative and Historical Analysis." *Japanese of Journal Studies* 41(2): 249-280.
- Optional Readings:
 1. Kagotani, Koji, Kan Kimura, and Jeffrey R. Weber. 2014. "Democracy and Diversionary Incentives in Japan-South Korea Disputes." *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*. 14: 33-58.
- Discussion Questions:
 1. Is Japan's approach to territorial disputes similar to its neighbors (South Korea and China)?
 2. Do politicians and the public agree on the need to revise Japan's constitution?

August 2 (Thursday) - Immigration

- *Puzzle 9: Why does the Japanese government accept low-skilled, foreign workers through a temporary internship program?*
- Readings (36 pages):
 1. Yamanaka, Keiko. 1993. "New Immigration Policy and Unskilled Foreign Workers in Japan." *Pacific Affairs* 66: pp. 72-86.
 2. Kage, Rieko, Frances McCall Rosenbluth, and Seiki Tanaka. 2016. "Four Types of Attitudes Towards Foreign Workers: Evidence from a Survey in Japan." Center on Japanese Economy and Business Working Paper Series, WP 351: pp. 1-22.
- Optional Reading
 1. Orkin, Ivan 2013. *Ivan Ramen: Love, Obsession, and Recipes*. The Speed Press: Berkeley CA. pp.41-83.
- Discussion Questions:
 1. What are the pros and cons of a more open labor market for various actors: the Japanese government, businesses, labor, politicians, and citizens?
 2. Why does Japan accept so few immigrants given its demographic challenges?

August 4 (Saturday) - Final Essay

- **Final essays are due by 11:30am on TritonEd.**

Guide for Analyzing Politics and Policy Outcomes

1. Identify relevant actors

- Usual suspects: politicians, political parties, bureaucrats, interest groups (business, farmers, doctors, etc.), voters, media, NGOs, foreign governments, etc.

2. Lay out what these actors want (i.e., policy positions) and why (voters, money, power, ideology, culture, etc.)

- If there is a divergence of preferred policy options among actors (even within the same political party, bureaucracy, industry, etc.) or ambiguity of policy positions, discuss them.
- It is important *not* to "settle down" quickly with the conventional wisdom or cursory reporting of the news media. Keep asking yourself, are you really convinced? If not, you can point to the ambiguity and discuss what you are not sure about. What the class needs to hear is not the facts or the correct answer. It is your thought process based on the materials you found. Use your imagination, too, just like when you read a novel: if you were in his/her shoes, what policy would you prefer?
- Useful tips: When discussing politicians, think about their three common incentives: votes, seats, and policy. Mobilizing campaign donations (money) often helps them get reelected, too.
- It is sometimes unclear what bureaucrats want. Some scholars argue they want to maximize their budget, staff members, and jurisdictions (Niskanen). Others have argued that they are committed to realize their ideal policies.
- Industries and firms generally want to maximize their income, but they sometimes diverge from this prediction due to imperfect information and market failures.
- There are also psychological theories on why people (appear to) behave irrationally. See Naoi and Kume (2011) on agricultural protectionism.

3. Power

- Whose opinions are likely to be reflected in the policy-making process and why? This gets to the question regarding various sources of power that industries and citizens have: votes, money, power to organize (e.g., concentration and intensity of interests), information, legitimacy, etc. Institutions, such as electoral systems and party systems, can empower some actors and disempower others. Socio-economic organizations, such as labor unions and industry associations, can also shape their bargaining power over policies. We cover these topics in Part I: Foundations of Japanese Politics.

4. "Good analysis" will...

- (a) Go beyond what news reports said, and discuss what they did not report or any ambiguity that is left in the newspaper articles
- (b) Discuss the difference between what the readings (or "theories") will predict and what you found in your research
- (c) Provide some critiques of the readings (or "theories") based on the items (a) and (b).

Sources for Your Original Research

Please do *not* cite Wikipedia. As Michael Scott (in the TV show "The Office") said: "Wikipedia is the best thing ever. Anyone in the world can write anything they want about any subject...so you know you are getting the best possible information." **NOT. You will get one point deduction each time you cite Wikipedia in your final essays.**

Scholarly articles (<http://scholar.google.com/>): Citation counts relative to when it was published is a good proxy for the impact and quality of the article and/or the book.

Newspaper articles: Factiva and Lexis Nexis Academic are the two best sources for English-language news on Japan. Factiva also has Japanese-language newspaper articles as well. Go to UCSD library website (<http://libraries.ucsd.edu>) and type in "Factiva" in the search window.

Acknowledgements

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