Japanese 16
Great Books and Films in the Original
Amherst College

Instructor
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About the courses

This course is a continuation of Japanese 15. The course is designed for the students who possess a high proficiency level of speaking but need training cover-to-cover reading or film comprehension. Class materials will be selected from well-known books and films. Writing assignments will be given to develop critical and creative writing skills in Japanese. Small groups based on the students' proficiency levels will be formed, so that instruction accords with the needs of each group. Two group meetings and two individualized or small group evaluations per week are normally required throughout the semester.

The courses, Japanese 15 and 16, are designed for students who are at the advanced level of Japanese. In this course, a student will read book length materials and/or use films as the means to learn Japanese and its culture.

Teaching will be individualized or in a small group. The rationale for this individualized teaching is the following.

At this level, the student learns the language most effectively through the material in which he or she is interested. Although it is the student's responsibility to select the reading for the course, his or her selection must be approved by the instructor. The instructor will consider the appropriateness of the material for the student.

The cost of copying and the book(s) will be charged to your account at the end of the semester. This is true for all students, including 5-college interchange students.

About the courses

• Objectives

General objectives for the Fifth-Level Japanese at Amherst are the following: by the end of the sequence of Japanese 15 and 16, a student will:

1. be able to handle book-length materials or entire films;
2. know the difference between spoken and written Japanese;
3. be able to judge situations for appropriate speech and writing styles;
4. be able to discuss and support abstract ideas in sustained conversations and writings.
In order to achieve these objectives, every student must:

1. attend every class;
2. do daily work, as directed and suggested by your instructor (it need not be long, but it is very important to study everyday);
3. communicate the problems he or she has with the material to the instructor as soon as and as often as possible;

- **Instructor's role and responsibility:**

The most important task for the instructor is to know the language level and the learning strategy of each student in the class, and make sure that he or she will learn Japanese efficiently and effectively.

In order for each student to learn Japanese optimally, the instructors will provide effective practice, suggest effective and efficient ways to study, and answer questions each student may have.

- **Students' responsibilities:**

Every student must learn Japanese actively. What this means is that the student should initiate his or her learning of this language. The needs of each student are different. If you need to learn a certain type of vocabulary or expressions, ask your instructor. Do not limit your learning to what has been provided to you. Learn to search for the information. Your instructor is the resource person for your active learning.

- **Reading materials**

Each student must choose one or more books (or films). For each reading, you must go through the following step evaluations. The aim is to learn speaking, listening, writing, and cultural matters through the readings (and/or films) that you choose.

A list of suggested readings and films is attached at the end of this syllabus. As mentioned above, if you have a particular book or film that you want to use for this class, you need to get approval from your instructor.

**Steps for your reading**

Although the following Steps should have been mastered for the most part by this level, the instructor and the student may want to learn in a Step-by-Step fashion occasionally when the need arises.

**Step-1: Check the vocabulary and Kanji on your own**

(1) At this level, it is important that you check the words and Kanji that you are not familiar with on your own rather than relying on the word or Kanji list that an instructor used to provide in lower level classes. After all, if and when you go to Japan and want to read things in Japanese, no one will provide the word and Kanji list for you!!

(2) If you encounter words or Kanji that you cannot find in the dictionaries, leave them for discussion with your instructor. Do not spend too much time on one word or Kanji.

**Step-2: Structures**
(1) Prepare a list of questions on structures in the readings that you are not clear about.
(2) Discuss the list with the instructor.
(3) The instructor will give you some exercises relevant to your questions **only when the instructor thinks it is beneficial to you.**
(4) Submit exercises, correct mistakes, and discuss the issues with the instructor.

**Step-3: Comprehension (Specific → General)**

The purpose of this Step is to ensure that you have solid comprehension of each reading. There are different ways to read your material: speed reading, detailed reading, etc. Whether you do speed reading or detailed reading is the instructor's decision.

**Step-4: Speaking and Writing Application**

(1) Complete the speaking and writing tasks on the topic(s) given by the instructor.
(2) Some corrections may be requested by your instructor. You must correct your own mistakes after your corrections are checked. Consult with your instructor whenever the need arises.

**Steps for films**

Steps for using films for your learning materials will be suggested by your instructor.

- **Notebook**

Please prepare a 8.5”x11” notebook with a spiral binding for this course. Do all Step work described above in this notebook. The instructor will show the students how to use this notebook.

**Portfolio**

Everyone in the class must progress through the material in a certain sequence, in order to learn Japanese most efficiently and effectively and to balance the four skills. But these steps are not necessarily taken in a uniform pattern.

In order to control this individual learning pattern, each student, together with the instructor, must gain an understanding of his or her level. This is done by means of the portfolio for each and every student in the class.

Whenever you go to an evaluation, please bring your portfolio with you, so that the instructor can mark the result and make comments.

**Examination**

There will be no mid-term or final examinations in this class because every Step is evaluated by an instructor.

In class, you will be often asked to speak and occasionally write, and we believe that we can evaluate your proficiency that way.
Projects

You will be asked to do two or three projects per semester, each of which has oral and written aspects.

Grades

Grade sheets will be distributed twice a semester:

Fall Semester: mid-October and mid-November
Spring Semester: late February and early April

The final grade is based on:

(1) regular attendance;
(2) consistent preparation for each step, within a reasonable time limit;
(3) quality of each evaluation;
(4) projects;
(5) consistent effort.

General Policies

• Regular practice and study is the single most important requirement for learning Japanese in this class. We have observed over and over again a strong correlation between steady study habits and performance in this class: We have never met a student who did well in this course without attending classes and evaluation sessions regularly. On the other hand, everyone who takes attendance seriously does well in the course.

• Use Japanese as much as possible in all sessions.

• Communicate with your instructor regularly via any method you may have: e-mail, phone, office visit, etc. Everyone has problems in learning Japanese. Silence or absence from classes is not an effective way to communicate your issues. No problem is a small problem. We deal with every issue seriously, so please bring any issues you have to us as soon and as often as possible.
**Reading Materials list**

- **books:**

  - 坂部健郎「甘い構造」弘文堂（1971）
  - 中根千枝「タテ社会の人間関係」講談社現代新書（1967）
  - マークス寿子「ひ弱な男とフワフワした女の国日本」草思社（1977）

- **film:**

  「手紙」

- **articles:**

  - 椎名誠「ひるめしのもんだい」より抜粋

アエラ 2007年より抜粋記事
読売新聞