

Japan and Nature: Landscape, Disaster, and Food Culture

From 17 January to 28 March 2023

Tuesdays, 13:00 to 16:00

3 credits

Instructor: Prof. Yoshimasa Kurashige, Dr. (USP)

Course description

This course will focus on nature of Japan. In Japan, tectonic activity is very high, and four seasons change is clear. Such nature makes beautiful and unique scenery in Japan, as well as variety of natural disasters. In this course, students will understand about beautiful sceneries in Japan, such as Three Great Views in Japan. The tectonic activity also made typical culture, such as Onsen (hot spring spa). Students will understand variety of Onsen in Japan, including how to Onsen for the sake of visiting public Onsen spa in Japan.

On the other hand, students have risk to face severe disaster during stay in Japan. For example, a huge earthquake with magnitude more than 9.0 is predicted to occur in the next 30 years with probability of 70 to 80% in western Japan. Volcanic activity is also increasing. Severe rain and typhoon makes flood disaster at somewhere in Japan every year. Students understand characteristics of these disasters, and consider about disaster prevention, including emergency training against natural disasters. Two field trips are prepared for this sake.

The variety of nature in Japan also affects to food culture of each prefecture. For example, Okinawa Prefecture exists in subtropical region, thus its scenery is very different from mainland Japan. Foods in Okinawa is also typical and unique. In contrast, Hokkaido Prefecture locates in subarctic region, and its living style and food are very different from Kansai area. In addition, food culture at around Tokyo is very different from that around Osaka. Students will understand about such difference in nature and food culture.

Goal of this course

1. Students understand the nature of famous topography in Japan, and can explain how Japanese people recognizes its beauty.
2. Students understand characteristics of disasters which they can meet in Japan, and can consider how to prepare and how to evacuate in case of emergency by such disasters.
3. Students can explain important difference in food culture in Japan, including difference in culture and nature behind such difference.

Schedule (tentative)

Two field trips are tentatively set on 10 February and 25 February, but its date can be fixed only after number of students in this class is determined, and after make reservation for visiting place. The final

schedule can be shown on the first day of the class.

17 January: Introduction / Ukiyoe

To understand old scenery in Japan, Ukiyoe is very useful. Beautiful sceneries during Edo period are well expressed in some Ukiyoe series. If we compare to the recent scenery, we can understand how the scenery was changed by the modern artificial change. Students understand about such important Ukiyoe series to know old scenery in Japan.

24 January: Flood and Volcanic Eruption

Severe flood occurs every year at somewhere in Japan. The residence of JCMU students may isolate during severe flood because of its topography. Students have to understand danger and risk of flood, and also have to read hazard map for flood.

Volcanic activity is also increasing now in Japan. At some active volcanoes, such as Mt. Aso in Kyushu has risk to occur pyroclastic flow. Students will understand how dangerous it is, and consider about risk when you visit a region close to active volcano.

31 January: Mt. Fuji

Mt. Fuji is the tallest mountain in Japan (3776 m). It locates at the border between Shizuoka and Yamanashi Pref., and its scenery from Shizuoka side and that from Yamanashi side is different. In addition, many peoples climb Mt. Fuji in summer, in particular to see “Goraikoh” (sunrise) from the summit. In this class, scenery of Mt. Fuji from the two side is at first explained, and further students understand how to climb Mt. Fuji for the sake for climbing in summer season in near future.

Mt. Fuji is also the largest active volcano in Japan, and its activity is increasing. The last eruption occurred in 1707, and volcanic ash from Mt. Fuji covered all over Edo City. Students will understand about the next disaster due to the eruption of Mt. Fuji.

7 February: Earthquake and Tsunami

Hyogoken Nambu Earthquake (so called Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake or Kobe Earthquake) occurred at 5:45 AM on 17 January 1995, and 6,437 peoples were killed. Many peoples were killed by house collapse. Magnitude of this earthquake was 7.3, and maximum intensity was 7. Students will understand at first about JMA magnitude and intensity, and consider about characteristics of this earthquake.

The 2011 off the Pacific coast of Tohoku Earthquake (so called Great East Japan Earthquake) occurred at 14:46 PM on 11 March 2011. Magnitude was 9.0, and the maximum intensity was 7. 19,747 peoples were killed mainly by tsunami. Students will understand mechanism of tsunami disaster, and consider about tsunami disaster prevention through VTR taken during this tsunami disaster.

11 February (Saturday): Emergency Drills (Fire, Earthquake, Typhoon etc.) 5 hours

Students will gather at West Exit of JR Kyoto Station, and visit Kyoto City Disaster Prevention Center, and take disaster drills for severe wind, earthquake, fire etc. In particular, evacuation drill for earthquake of intensity 7 is very much important to survive even if students face to such severe earthquake during stay in Japan. Firefighting drill and fire

evacuation drill are also important if fire occurs immediately after earthquake. The drills at the prevention center need about 2 hours. After the drills, students have to go back JCMU by yourself using JR train.

14 February: How to Onsen and Onsen in Nature

Because of volcanic activity, we can enjoy many Onsen spa, including public Onsen in Japan. However, students from foreign countries do not know how to Onsen. Students at first understand how to Onsen in Japan. In addition, we can find many kinds of characteristic Onsen chemistry in Japan. In many places, we can find Onsen in nature. Students will understand such variety of Onsen in Japan.

21 February: The Three Views of Japan

The three views are Matsushima in Miyagi Prefecture; Amanohashidate in Kyoto Prefecture; and Itsukushima Shrine in Hiroshima Prefecture.

The view of Matsushima was formed by submergence of land into sea due to tectonic activity in this region. In contrast, Amanohashidate is formed by sand-bar formation between lake and sea. Students will understand the reason of the formation of such beautiful scenery. Itsukushima Shrine is a large shrine locates at Miyajima Island, offshore of Hiroshima City. If you visit at high tide time, you can see that the Torii gate and the main hall exist in the sea, whereas not at low tide time. In addition, Itsukushima Shrine is a very active shrine, so students also can understand about Shintoism ceremony, such as wedding.

25 February (Saturday): Field trip to Neodani Fault, Gifu Pref. (8 hours)

Nobi earthquake occurred on 28 October 1891, and 7,273 peoples were killed. Its magnitude was 8.0, and this is the largest magnitude induced by inland active-fault type earthquake. The movement of Neodani Fault induced this earthquake, and this fault is still now clearly remained. Students will visit Neodani Earthquake Fault Museum and the fault, and understand about the displacement of the fault as well as the disaster.

After visiting the museum, students will take lunch at a Soba Restaurant near the museum. Students may have chance to experience “Mochi-tsuki” (pounding rice cake).

Departure from JCMU will be 8:00 AM, and will come back JCMU before 16:00 PM. A chartered bus will be used for this field trip.

28 February: Okinawa: Its Nature and Food Culture

Okinawa Prefecture locates in subtropical region; thus its nature is completely different from mainland Japan. In old days, Okinawa was governed by Ryukyu Kingdom. Old language in Okinawa (so called Uchinah-guchi) is completely different from standard Japanese, whereas citizens in Okinawa normally use Uchinah-guchi. Completely different nature and culture are strongly affected its food culture, thus we can meet very different food and cuisine in Okinawa. In addition, after Second World War, Okinawa was governed by USA for 27 years (from 1945 to 1972), thus food culture from USA also remains now. Students understand such characteristic food culture of Okinawa related to its nature and history.

7 March: Hokkaido: Its Nature and Food Culture

Hokkaido Prefecture locates in subarctic region. The prefecture was land of aborigine “Ainu people” until Edo period, whereas it was developed by peoples from mainland Japan (i.e. Wajin) from Meiji period. Thus the food culture remains now in Hokkaido is formed from Meiji period. However, because of its cold climate, the taste of Hokkaido cuisine is salty and sweet similar to cuisine in Northern Tohoku region. The cold climate largely affects to ingredients. In addition, peoples in Hokkaido started to eat lamb meat, and now 90% of lamb meat imported from New Zealand and Australia is consumed in Hokkaido. Moreover, many dairy farms exist in eastern and northern Hokkaido, thus fresh milk, butter, cheese etc. are very good to taste in Hokkaido. Students understand characteristics of traditional and modern Hokkaido cuisine.

14 March: Difference in food culture between Tokyo and Osaka

If you visit Tokyo and order Udon noodle in traditional Tokyo noodle restaurant, you can feel that taste and color of noodle soup are different from those you can taste in Hikone. The Udon noodle in Hikone is very similar to that in Osaka. This shows many differences exist between Tokyo and Osaka, even if name of cuisine is same. For example, “Nigiri-Sushi” is Tokyo original, whereas traditional Osaka style sushi is “Oshi-sushi”. Taste and shape of “Inari-Sushi” are also different between Tokyo and Osaka. Students understand the differences in cuisine between Tokyo and Osaka. Some another differences in cuisine between two cities is also explained in this class, such as difference in “Okonomiyaki” between Osaka and Hiroshima.

28 March: Final Presentation (2 hours), Traditional foods in Shiga (1 hour)

Each student has to select one theme related to the contents of this course, and make presentation for 15 minutes including question and answer. Students have to prepare PPT file for your presentation. In the presentation, you have to mention about some other things not taught in this course as well as your opinion.

If the time remains, the teacher explains about traditional foods in Shiga, such as Funa-Sushi, Moroko, Gori and Red Konnyaku.

Scoring policy

Students have to write essay(s) every week. The theme will be shown at each class. You have to write the referenced WEB site address and/or referenced article.

Each student has to e-mail to the following address: kurashige.y@office.usp.ac.jp

Word file is the best, and PDF file is also acceptable. Dead line is 14:15 of the next class day.

The essay(s) will be scored as follows:

- S (10 point): Excellent essay with sufficient information and well considered opinion. In addition, the essays are very logical.
- A+ (9 point): Very good essay with sufficient information and well considered opinion, but there is a lack in logical writing

- A (8 point): Very good essay with good information and opinion, but they are not sufficient.
- B (7 point): Good essay with information and opinion. However, only single information and/or opinion is written in the essay(s).
- C (6 point): Passable essay. There is only single information or opinion.
- D (5 or less point): Insufficient essay.

If I can find grammatical error and/or spelling mistake, I will reduce 1 or 2 points from your score depend on number of errors. (less than 2 errors: 1-point reduction, more than three errors: 2-points reduction)

If your essay is judged to be “complete copy-and-paste from Wikipedia”, then the essay will be scored to be “zero”.

The final presentation will be scored similar to the essay(s).

If you cannot submit me the essay until the dead line without reason, I will decrease “1 point” per week from the score of the essay. So, if you have any trouble to submit the essay, you have to e-mail me.

If you attend a class but DO NOT submit the essay(s), your score will be zero.

Even if you DO NOT attend a class with valid reason (illness, accident, etc.), I will give you a chance to submit your essays. In this case, your maximum point will be 8. If you DO NOT attend a class without valid reason (e.g. personal travel), your score of the class will be zero.

The points will be summed up for 12 classes, and its average will be your final score of this course. For example, when the average is 8.46 and 8.43, the final score will be 85 and 84, respectively.