

Nature and People in Shiga and Japan

The University of Shiga Prefecture (USP)
2500 Hassaka-cho, Hikone, Shiga, Japan

Fall Semester 2024: Wednesdays from 13:30~16:20

Room Number: A7-102

This course consists of two parts, both offered in English for JCMU students and USP students. JCMU students need to take both parts as one unit to receive full credit for this course.

Part 1

Views on Nature in the Japanese Literary Tradition

Time: 13:30~14:40

Instructor: Kiyoko SAKAMOTO (Office A1-111/Phone 0749-28-8607)

Office Hours: 14:50~16:20 on Wednesdays or by appointment

Email: sakamoto.ki@office.usp.ac.jp

Course Description

This part provides an overview of Japanese poetry and oral literature, from waka and haiku to modern poetry, and examines the meanings and uses of various motifs related to "nature" in each period and genre. Through small group discussions, students will explore how the images and themes they perceive in the same poems and stories may differ among them based on their cultures, native languages, and literary traditions.

We will have a day trip to the Omi Jingu Shrine (famous for the national "karuta" championship) and the Enryakuji Temple on Mount Hiei (founded in 788 and designated a World Heritage Site) to experience the landscape and history of waka poetry.

Course Objectives

1. To understand the motifs of nature as expressed in Japanese literature, focusing on traditional short poems such as waka and haiku and myth/legends/folk tales.
2. To share interpretation of poems in small group discussions and translation activities.
3. To broaden one's perspectives on poetry and stories by studying with students from different cultural backgrounds and experiences.

Evaluation for Part 1

1. Weekly assignments (50%)
Students will be required to read assigned texts and answer questions before class. There is no required textbook to be purchased. Reading materials will be provided by the instructor in class and via PDF downloads.
2. Final paper (20%)
Students are required to write a paper on a topic related to the Japanese literary tradition.
3. Attendance and active participation in class (30%)
Simply being there is not the same as participating. Points for participation will be awarded only when students are actively engaging in classroom activities, discussion, field exploration, and other learning activities for this course.

Part 2

Lecture Series: Nature and People in Shiga and Japan

Time: 14:50~16:20

Coordinator: Kiyoo SAKAMOTO (Office A1-111/Phone 0749-28-8607) and
Amanda MASHIMA (Office A1-212/Phone 0749-28-8251)

Office hours: 14:50~16:20 on Wednesdays (Sakamoto), 14:50~16:20 on Tuesdays (Mashima), or by
appointment

Email: sakamoto.ki@office.usp.ac.jp / mashima.a@office.usp.ac.jp

Course Description

Each session of this part will feature a lecture in English by a USP faculty member, followed by small group discussion and Q&A with the faculty. The goal for students is to gain a deeper understanding of the lecture content by interacting, discussing, and presenting with classmates from a variety of native languages and cultural backgrounds.

We will take two field trips: (1) Maibara Hikiyama Festival (which began in the Edo period and is famous for festival floats and kabuki performed by local children); and (2) the west coast of Lake Biwa (sites of earthquake disasters) with the instructor on the topic.

Course Objectives

1. To learn about the nature, history, and culture of Japan (and Shiga) from their respective expert faculty members and to deepen their understanding through small group discussions and Q&A.
2. To learn with class members of different native languages and experiences to broaden their perspectives.

Evaluation for Part 2

1. Class and field trip preparation (30%)
Students will be required to read assigned texts and answer questions prior to class. There is no required textbook to be purchased. Reading materials will be provided by the instructor in class and via PDF downloads.
2. Reflections on class and field trips (30%)
3. Group presentation (10%)
Students are required to give a group presentation on a topic related to the nature, culture, or history of Shiga or Japan.
4. Active participation in class and field trips (30%)
Simply being there is not the same as participating. Points for participation will be awarded only when students are actively engaging in classroom activities, discussion, field exploration, and other learning activities for this course.

Course Requirements/ Assignments and Evaluations for Both Parts

Attendance Policy

Your attendance is very important not only to you but also to other classmates. Your tardiness may be counted as 1/2 unexcused absence. Excessive unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the course.

Preparation and Participation

Please note that the student is expected to have read and studied the assigned reading and prepared for discussions prior to each class. Be sure to bring to class the texts under discussion. Participation is a key element to your success in this course. Class discussion and interactivity with the class as a whole is critical to developing an awareness of the content described in lectures and readings.

Academic Honesty and Classroom Etiquette

Students must prioritize academic integrity in their academic endeavors. Plagiarism, notably, stands out as a flagrant violation of this principle. It entails the act of submitting work that has been directly copied from online sources or any published material without proper attribution. Moreover, students must refrain from presenting others' work as their own, whether it's through direct copying or uncredited paraphrasing. As specified by university policy, such academic dishonesty may result in a penalty grade for the course. For more information on academic dishonesty policy please refer to the Ombudsperson's webpage:

<https://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/plagiarism-policy.html>

Grading Criteria and Grading Scale

The average of the two parts is used to calculate the total score.

Grade Breakdown

Conversion Table between 4.0 Scale and Points

Scale	4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.0
Points	90-100	85-89	80-84	75-79	70-74	65-69	60-64	59 ↓

Extra Assistance

If you need extra assistance with course materials or assignments, or have questions about your performance in the course, please feel free to contact us. You can make appointments outside of office hours by emailing us to arrange a time.

Class Schedule

		Part 1 Views on Nature in the Japanese Literary Tradition	Part 2 Lecture Series: Nature and People in Shiga and Japan
Week	Date	Contents	
	9/25	< For JCMU students > Campus tour of the University of Shiga Prefecture	
1	10/2	Orientation Explanation of class content and self-introductions	
2	10/9	Nature in Japanese myth The creation myth of Kojiki and elements of nature	Maibara Hikiyama Festival Professor Hideyuki ICHIKAWA (Department of Regional Studies)
Field Trip 1	10/12 Sat.	Field trip to the Hikiyama Festival in Maibara under the guidance of Prof. Ichikawa	
3	10/16	Nature in Japanese legends Stories of Yamato-takeru from the perspective of monomyth	Ecosystem around Lake Biwa Professor Shoko HOSOI (Department of Ecosystem Studies)

4	10/23	Nature in Japanese folktales Comparison of marriage tales between humans and animals	Earthquake, active fault, and Lake Biwa Professor Naoji KOIZUMI (Department of Ecosystem Studies)
Field Trip 2	10/26 Sat.		Field trip to earthquake disaster sites on the west coast of Lake Biwa under the guidance of Prof. Koizumi *1
5	10/30	Songs of Manyo-shu Metaphor and personification using nature	Japanese culture in broadleaf evergreen forest culture hypothesis Professor Sachiko YOKOTA (Department of Regional Studies)
6	11/6	Waka, or poems in "yamato kotoba" Contrast and coexistence of Japanese and Chinese poetry	History of ancient Omi from an archaeological perspective Professor Woodae KIM (Department of Regional Studies)
7	11/13	Religion and Poetry Syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism	Analysis of female figures portrayed in pictures and handscrolls: from the point of view of gender studies Professor Wakana KAMEI (Department of Regional Studies)
Field Trip 3	11/16 Sat.	Field trip to Omi Jingu Shrine and Enryakuji Temple (Mt. Hiei). *2	
8	11/20	Buddhism and nature Influence on poems and aesthetics	Allied prisoner of war camps in Shiga during World War II Professor Kaoru KAWA (Department of Intercultural Communications)
9	11/27	Renku and Haiku The elegant and the vulgar: Basho's haiku	Lifestyle and culture of satoyama through folding screen paintings Professor Yohei UEDA (Regional Development Education Research Center)
10	12/4	Encounters with Western Civilization The World of "Tono monogatari" and nature	Preparation for group presentations
11	12/11	Encounters with Western Civilization Poems and Stories of Kenji Miyazawa <u>Paper due for JCMU students</u>	Group presentations

*1 In case of rain, the destination of Field Trip 2 will be Lake Biwa Museum.

*2 In case of rain, the destination of Field Trip 3 will be Kyoto National Museum.