

*National Faculty Development Institute
Incorporating Japanese Studies into the Curriculum*

As an international relations professor, I have a number of classes into which Japan could integrate easily, but I wanted to take the wonderful opportunity I have with the Japan Studies Institute to try and meet the challenge of incorporating Japan into a class that, at first glance, doesn't seem an obvious fit. To that end, I've chosen my *International Environmental Politics* (IEP) class as the target for inclusion. And as I sat down to think about the process of that integration, I found that Japan was symbiotic with many of the central concepts within IEP.

What follows is a brief outline of my plan for Japanese Studies inclusion within the class. First, as a structural note, it's important to know that I divide IEP into subject areas (climate change, water policy, environmental justice, etc.) Then, within each subject area, the students learn macro-level international relations theories which explain why countries make the environmental policy decisions they do. Once I've covered those broad IR theories, I ask the students to **apply** and **test** the theories on a micro-level country-by-country basis so that they can come to understand that theoretical ideas have utility in the real world. It is in this way that I plan to weave discussion of Japan into the IEP class – essentially, Japan will become a case study for several of the subject areas within the class.

Specifically, I'll use utilize Japan in the following subject area discussions:

1. **Global Climate Change** – Students will examine Japan as a country that 1) contributes to global climate change (through high level of CO₂ emissions), 2) is affected by climate change (rising sea levels, changing rainfall patters, and food insecurity), and 3) is trying to combat climate change (as an active signatory of the Kyoto Protocol).
2. **Water Scarcity** – Japan, like most countries, suffers from both physical and economic water scarcity, and students will study the distribution and allocation of Japan's water resources. They will also study Japan's robust and effective Comprehensive National Water Resources plan as a positive example of the Integrated Water Resources Management policy framework.
3. **Environmental Migration** – The concept of refugees v. internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the face of environmental disaster is an important component of the class, and the Fukushima evacuees will serve as strong examples of environmental IDPs for the students.
4. **Population** – Japan is such an interesting case when it comes to population growth and environmental carrying capacity. Most Asian countries have growing populations, while Japan's population is declining currently. As a class, we will compare and contrast Japan's population reality with that of other countries and discuss which concept is more important for the survival of a nation -- a growing population size as a measure of military capability and economic power or a smaller population that can live in harmony within the carrying capacity of the environment?

I intend for students to leave my IEP class with a strong grounding in 1) international relations theory and 2) how/if that theory applies to various countries around the world, including, for the first time, Japan. I'm very excited about the opportunity to modify my future IEP classes so that I can offer my students more exposure to a country that I have come to respect deeply during my time at the Japan Studies Institute.