

JSI Course Projects

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Japanese culture and history are indispensable part in teaching Asian history. It helps students to understand the diversity of Asian cultures and to make more comparisons in order to reflect upon their native cultures, which would truly support the formation of a multicultural and equal global environment. I have an ultimate goal and a detailed course project to incorporate Japanese components into my Asian history curriculum. First of all, in 2018 I plan to offer a course, “Women in Asia,” and place the discussion of Japanese women in a broader and comparative context. In the long term, I hope that the incorporation of Japanese history and culture into the curriculum will allow students to apply research methods to explore different Asian perspectives and to examine a diversity of primary sources and scholarly publications in both Japan and other countries.

In addition, I will direct students to study the topics in a diversity of disciplines in my historiography and methodology course. Interesting and significant topics include but are not limited to: minority groups (the Ainu, the Okinawans, Korean Japanese, and Burakumins); gender (including geisha); family and the aging society; Anpo, the SDF, and the US military bases issues; emperorship; the East Asian trading network; the Meiji Restoration; imperialism and colonization policies; the A-bombs; the Tokyo Trial; immigration and emigration; constitution; tradition and modernity (samurai, urbanization, and Edo culture); and the Film industry (Kurosawa Akira and Miyazaki Hayao).

Each of the aforementioned topics could be further developed into a course or an indispensable component in any Asian course. For example, in the 2018 course “Women in Asia,” which will be cross-listed in the history department and in women’s and gender studies program, I look forward to apply films and literary works to help students analyze Japanese women’s agency and rights. Starting with discussing the different versions of the legend regarding Izanagi and Izanami, I will follow the chronological order to discuss women in myths, history, and in art forms throughout history—ancient Japan, the Heian court, the three Shogunates, the pre-WWII periods, the post-WWII period, and the Lost Decades.