East Asian Languages and Literatures (EALL) 272 Syllabus 

Spring 2015

Instructor: Chris Smith
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Email: cssmit@hawaii.edu (best contact method)
Office Hours: Monday 2:30-3:30 or by appointment (Skype appointments possible in the evenings)
Alternate class meeting location: The outside tables in front of Paradise Palms

Course Description

EALL 272 is a survey of modern Japanese literature, from the mid-19th century to present, focusing on prose fiction, but also including some poetry and drama. All works are read in English translation.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

1) Students will be able to analyze major works of modern Japanese literature.
2) Students will be able to identify and describe major authors and their important biographical details.
3) Students will be able to explain general historical trends and the ways they affect Japanese literature throughout the modern era.
4) Students will be able to describe major trends and schools of Japanese literature.
5) Students will be able to write persuasively about Japanese literature.

Textbooks and Other Materials

There are eight books required for this course. They are on sale at the UH bookstore:


Additional materials will be uploaded to Laulima. Laulima can be accessed through MyUH or at laulima.hawaii.edu.

**If I need to contact you individually or as a class about assignments, class cancellations, due date changes, etc., I will do it through Laulima. Make sure Laulima sends email to an account you check. By default it sends email to your hawaii.edu account, but you can change that in My Workspace -> Account. You are responsible for communication transmitted this way.
Grading
Grades will be assessed according to the following breakdown. See below for descriptions:

Student presentation – 10%
Class Participation – 10%
Blog Comments – 5%
Blog Posts – 15%
One 6-page essay – 25%
Midterm – 15%
Final – 20%

Absences
An absence will, of course, result in a zero for your participation grade for that day. There will be no makeups for missed exams without a valid, documented excuse (i.e., a doctor's note).

In the case of extended absence due to medical problems, family tragedy, etc., I am willing to work with you to help you make up missed classes and work and to get you back on track. However, please contact me early, before the amount of missed work becomes insurmountable. I do NOT give incompletes.

Late Work
Late blog posts will be marked down. Late blog comments will not be accepted. Essays are due one hour before class on the due date. Late essays will be marked down one letter grade for every day late. All assignments must be completed to pass the class.

Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty, either in the form of cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any proven instances can result in an automatic grade of "F" for the course and WILL result in a referral to the Office of Student Affairs.

Additional Information
Cell phones and other mobile devices should be silenced or turned off during class. You can use laptops in class for reading PDFs or taking notes, but please refrain from activities that will distract your classmates.

If you have a disability with related academic access needs, you are encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program, Student Services Center, Room 013, (V/T) 956-7511. KOKUA is our campus program that serves students with disabilities.

No animals are allowed in the classroom except service animals approved by the KOKUA Program.
Course Philosophy

When we talk about literature (or movies, TV shows, or other kinds of narratives) with our friends or on blogs, internet forums, etc., we take the perspective of a reviewer. We are concerned with evaluating a work: is it good or bad? Did we like it or not? Did it make us happy or depressed? Would we recommend it to our friends? In this class, however, we need to shift our perspective to that of the scholar. We’re not interested in reviewing the works in this class (after all, books have made it onto our reading because thousands or millions of people have thought they were good, sometimes for generations). What we’re interested in here is analysis: we’re trying to find something below the surface of a text, something that is not immediately obvious. We’re trying to dig a little deeper to find hidden themes, symbols, and reflections of the history of and philosophy of the time works were written.

And keep in mind that this literature was written in a very tumultuous period. There was rapid modernization, reformation of society, war, defeat, and many other upheavals. Since literature is how society processes its crises and problems, don’t expect these texts to have happy endings. This literature will probably not make you feel warm and happy, but it will (hopefully) entertain you in the sense that it will engage you emotionally and intellectually.

Assignments

Class Blog

Please visit uheall272s2015.wordpress.com and follow the directions on the “Welcome to the Blog” post. Once you register and send me your username, I will add you as a blog author and assign you to a team.

For each class session, the team assigned in the class schedule will prepare a blog post 500-750 words (about 2-3 double spaced pages) long about the assigned reading(s), responding to the prompt I will assign. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage critical analysis. Your posts should convince your readers (me and your classmates) of some analysis of the text. Find something interesting; a hidden theme, reflection of historical circumstance, psychological insight, etc, and convince us that it is there. These posts should NOT be a book report or a plot summary (we’ve already read it, thank you) or a reaction paper.

The post should be online by 11:59pm two days before the assigned class. So a post about the readings for a Monday class should be online Saturday at 11:59pm, for a Wednesday class it should be online Monday at 11:59pm, for a Friday class it should be online Wednesday at 11:59pm.

These essays are group projects, and one grade will be given to the whole group. The division of labor is up to you. However, at the end of the semester everyone will be surveyed on the level of their teammates’ participation. Your grade will be adjusted downward if your teammates indicate you did not put in an equitable amount of effort. I expect you to coordinate and do your group-work like the responsible adults you are, but I reserve the right to adjust teams, grading options, etc., in the case of dysfunctional groups.
I suggest you meet in person, at least in the beginning, to discuss your ideas and work out how to integrate them into a cohesive whole. Remember, you can reserve group study rooms at Hamilton Library.

Posts will be graded on a simple scale:

0 – Did not write the post, or the post is incoherent, slapdash, obviously last minute, etc.

1 – The post is the required length and engages with the text, but it is a plot summary, book review, or purely personal reaction; it doesn’t uncover anything new about the text. And/or there are significant grammatical or compositional problems with the writing.

2 – The post is the required length and analyzes the text to tell us something new about it. The argument is somewhat convincing. Writing is clear, without any glaring errors.

3 – The post provides insightful analysis and is written clearly and grammatically. The argument is very convincing. The argument, if fleshed out, could be used in an essay.

Your classmates will comment on your essays, so read their comments and be prepared to lead the in-class discussion.

Blog Comments

At least two hours before each class, each student not in the day’s assigned blog group (not authors of the post) must post at least one comment on the blog post for the day. The comment can be anything you want to discuss, but they should be substantive, i.e., responding to (and making it clear you have read) both the text itself and the blog post. So comments like "What does this story mean?" "Great post!" or “First!” won’t cut it. But a factual question, an observation about the text, a disagreement with something in the blog post, etc., are all valid. Blog comments will be graded for completion, not content. You can certainly start a back-and-forth discussion, but everyone must comment at least once on each post.

Student presentations

The class schedule lists presentation topics on most class days, mostly on author biographies but with a few other topics thrown in as well. Each student will do one class presentation during the semester. However, each day’s presentation should be done by a member of that day’s blog team. I will not assign presentations to you individually. Each team should divide them up according to their members’ interests, semester schedules, or just a roll of the dice. Remember, each presenter will be a member of that day’s blog team (so that they can use their research to help their team members write a better blog post), but the presentations are individual grades.

Presentations should last 10 minutes and cover the major events in an author’s life, especially those that affected or relate to his or her writing (or for non-author presentations, an overview of the assigned
topic as it relates to the day’s readings). They should also include a visual (Powerpoint) element. See the presentation grading rubric on the next page.

Because the number of students will not line up perfectly with the number of presentations, a few extra presentations at the end of the semester will be available for extra credit. They will be available on a first come first serve basis.

Resources for author biographies:

*Dictionary of Literary Biography (DLB)*, available online from the library (click the Online Databases link)
*Dawn to the West* by Donald Keene, on reserve at Sinclair

**Essay**

The essay should be 6 pages, double spaced, in 12-point type. It should be a persuasive essay that presents a thesis and defends it by citing from the texts. No secondary sources (i.e., articles about the works by critics or scholars) are required. I will have some suggested topics, but you can pursue your own topic if you wish. If you want to write about your own topic you must run it by me first for approval, and hopefully some suggestions.

You will be able to rewrite and resubmit your essay once for an improved grade.

**Exams**

The midterm and final exams will be taken in class, closed book and closed notes. They will consist of passage identification, definition of key terms, and short essay questions. The final will be cumulative.
# Presentation Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Your Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information.</td>
<td>Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around.</td>
<td>Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow.</td>
<td>Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Student does not seem to understand the topic very well. Fails to meet objective of assignment.</td>
<td>Student shows a good understanding of parts of the topic. Knowledgeable but fails to meet objective of assignment.</td>
<td>Student shows a good understanding of the topic. Knowledgeable and somewhat meets objective of assignment.</td>
<td>Student shows a full understanding of the topic. Meets objective of assignment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Aids</strong></td>
<td>Student uses superfluous visual aids or no visual aids.</td>
<td>Student occasionally uses visual aids that rarely support the presentation.</td>
<td>Student’s visual aids relate to the presentation.</td>
<td>Student’s visual aids explain and reinforce the presentation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
<td>Student makes no eye contact and only reads from notes. Student mumbles or speaks too quietly for audience in the back of class to hear.</td>
<td>Student occasionally uses eye contact, but still reads mostly from notes. Student’s voice is low and audience members have difficulty hearing.</td>
<td>Student maintains eye contact most of the time but frequently returns to notes. Student’s voice is clear and Most audience members can hear.</td>
<td>Student maintains eye contact with audience, seldom returning to notes. Student uses a clear voice and all audience members can hear.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td>Too long or too short; five or more minutes above or below the allotted time.</td>
<td>Within four minutes of allotted time.</td>
<td>Within three minutes of allotted time.</td>
<td>Within two minutes of allotted time.</td>
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<td><strong>Total Points:</strong></td>
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<td>A= 20-18</td>
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<td>B= 15-17</td>
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<td>C= 12-14</td>
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<td>D= 10-11</td>
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<td>F= 5-9</td>
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