WI/Japanese 421 (Japanese Composition) • Course Syllabus  Fall 2015

COURSE DESCRIPTION

WI/Japanese 421 (3 credits) is a writing intensive Japanese composition course designed for students who have already been exposed to authentic written Japanese materials in upper-level language courses. Writing exercises will involve both paper-and-pencil and computer/Web-based writing. During the first half of the semester, writing exercises will focus on spontaneous reactions to and comments on both authentic reading materials and the spoken text of television dramas, news broadcasts, and documentary films. The latter half of the semester will focus on the process of preparing a final research paper. The class meets three times a week (MWF), and regular attendance is expected. Classes will be conducted as much as possible in Japanese, and students will be expected to participate in in-depth discussions on the reading and video viewing assignments. Students will be assigned to read materials on various topics available through the Internet and view video materials outside the classroom.

Prerequisite: Satisfactory completion of Japanese 402 with a C or better, or "CR", or qualification by a placement test. All students with prior background taking language courses in the UH Manoa program for the first time and students returning from an exchange program in Japan, with the exceptions noted below, must take a regularly scheduled placement test. For continuing UHM students, a grade of C or better, or "CR" in the prerequisite course is required for continuation. To arrange for a placement test, please contact Mr. Todd Ashida, the undergraduate academic advisor, in Moore Hall 378 (tashida@hawaii.edu).

Taking the placement test is optional for students who have already earned prerequisite college credits for Japanese language at one of the UH campuses, including community colleges, or in the Konan or Obirin study abroad programs, with a grade of ‘C’ or better, or ‘CR.’ However, the placement test is strongly recommended if you are interested in taking advanced courses (300-400 level), if there has been a gap since your last language class, or if you would like a firmer sense of your proper placement.

This course is intended for both bi-lingual and non bi-lingual students, but not for native Japanese students.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will:

1) demonstrate ability to comprehend and explain, narrate, summarize, and give their own opinions, orally and in writing in Japanese, of the main ideas of a selected spoken text from contemporary media and written text, both formal and informal, on a range of topics.

2) be able to compare and contrast the spoken and written Japanese texts, and support the ideas expressed or present counter arguments with supporting data.

3) demonstrate ability to: a) read and comprehend secondary sources in Japanese, b) research appropriate secondary sources in Japanese using bibliographic research tools, and c) incorporate those secondary sources into analyses through citations and footnotes.

4) develop their knowledge of vocabulary on a variety of topics, idiomatic expressions, set phrases, kanji, grammar, and expressive techniques in writing.

5) be able to write an academic research paper and curriculum vitae (履歴書) in Japanese.

6) be able to handle both formal and informal personal correspondence in Japanese, using appropriate conventions.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

The readings will enhance students' analytical abilities by improving comprehension of written materials on various topics and the observation of exemplary writing samples. It will also help students to explore their own creative writing in Japanese. Before doing the writing assignments, students will be assigned to read authentic materials on various topics in various
written styles, with the aid of dictionaries. Students are encouraged to read as many Japanese materials as possible. The more students read about a topic, the easier it will be for them to write about it and find new writing ideas. Moreover, students will be expected to go to the computer lab to complete the reading and writing assignments.

**VIEWING ASSIGNMENTS**
Students will be expected to work independently with the assigned audio-visual materials on DVD at the Mac Lab (Moore 153) of the Language Learning Center. The selected videos will help students understand contemporary events and issues through a Japanese perspective.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

**Journal Writing:** Students will be asked to keep a journal of at least two entries per week in which they write at least one page (on every other line), using kanji. Students may write about their personal experiences, reactions to current events, or their impressions about the reading or video viewing assignments. Journals must be turned in their every Monday. The instructor will write comments on and reactions to each journal entry, and the journals will serve as the main interactive link between the student and the instructor. Students will submit journals for the first ten weeks of the course until they begin preparing their final research paper.

**Reaction Papers:** Students will be assigned to write three reaction papers on select topics covered in the video or reading materials. The reaction papers must be 2-3 pages in length and may be typewritten or handwritten on Japanese manuscript paper. Study sheets will be provided on the reading or video materials, and students will be given opportunities to discuss the material in small groups during class. In preparing their papers, students will first submit an outline to the instructor, and then a first draft to the members of the class. After receiving peer feedback, students will make revisions and submit a second draft to the instructor at the next class meeting along with a summary of its content. The instructor will then provide written comments and suggestions for improvement on the second draft. Students will revise their writing again, and then submit a final version to the instructor. Consultation with the instructor on the revisions will be offered as necessary. The final version, which should show significant improvement, will be returned with a grade.

**Curriculum vitae:** There is a specific way of writing a curriculum vitae in Japanese. Students will learn how to write about themselves in a humble way that is required in Japanese society. Students will submit the final version, which will be returned with a grade.

**Other assignments:** Students are encouraged to participate in discussions on material covered in class, and will be occasionally asked to write spontaneous reactions to the material during class in the regular classroom or computer lab. During these writing exercises in class, the instructor will offer individual assistance and will later provide written comments on subsequent revisions. Also, students are encouraged to utilize e-mail in the computer lab or at home in order to communicate with each other and comment on each other's work. Students will also be assigned to write informal and formal letters and memos, descriptions, and compositions outside of class. Periodic, short quizzes on kanji and grammar will also be given.

**MIDTERM PROJECT**
Students are required to write a factual report on an assigned topic from the reading or video materials. The length will be 3-4 pages, and the procedures in preparing the project will be the same as the reaction papers.

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER**
Students are required to write a final research paper of about 12 pages typewritten using kanji, including source references, and with illustrations and charts where necessary. Students may select a topic that is related to their area of study or personal interest, and source materials may
be either in English or in Japanese. At a conference with the instructor on the tenth week, students will be asked to identify their topics and source materials. Once the research topic is determined, students will start researching at the library or on the Internet, and must submit an outline to the instructor. Then, students will prepare a first draft by the beginning of November. Following the same procedures as the reaction papers, students will revise and hand in a final draft along with a self-assessment form by the end of November. Based on the instructor's corrections and comments on the final draft, a finalized research paper in polished form must be submitted to the instructor on the last day of instruction.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

*Note: Various files will be uploaded to Laulima. You will be notified via e-mail when a new file is uploaded so please check your e-mail on a regular basis.

**RECOMMENDED DICTIONARIES AND KANJI BOOK**

Dictionaries:


**RECOMMENDED OTHER REFERENCE MATERIALS:**

It is strongly recommended that the students have the following grammar dictionaries.

**GRADING:** Final course grades will be based on the results of the following:

- Journal writing ............................................. 15%
- Three reaction papers .................................... 20%
- Midterm project ........................................... 10%
- Final research paper ..................................... 30%
- Curriculum vitae ......................................... 5%
- Other assignment (incl. mini quizzes) ............... 10%
- Attendance and participation ........................... 10%

A+=97~100%    B+=87~89%    C+=77~79%    D+=67~69%    F=59% & below
A  =93~96%    B  =83~86%    C  =73~76%    D  =63~66%    CR=at least 73%
A- =90~92%    B- =80~82%    C- =70~72%    D- =60~62%    NC=below 73%
**Note 1:** Assignments must be handed in on the due date to be graded. **Late assignments will NOT be accepted** unless you have a valid, documented excuse.

**Note 2:** Regular attendance is required. Because class discussions comprise an important portion of the course, students with more than TWO unexcused absences in the semester should expect to have their course grade lowered by one letter grade. In the case of absences, as general policy, absolutely **NO make-up work** will be given without a valid documented excuse.

**Note 3:** Your writing is expected to be wholly your own. Anytime you quote or paraphrase the words or thinking of another writer, you are obliged to give credit to that author in your paper. Instances of plagiarism are unacceptable in academic work. If you cite authors without crediting them, you will receive a failing grade for the work in question.

**Other Information:**
Students will be held to the highest standards of conduct. For details see:

If you have certain needs (i.e. assistance with physical and/or learning disabilities) related to your full participation in class, you are encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program, Student Services Center, Room 013; (V/T) 956-7511. KOKUA is our campus program offering disability access services.

Please visit the homepage of the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures for more information on course offerings and degrees and the certificate in Japanese:
http://www.hawaii.edu/eall

Students who may be eligible for back credits for previous Japanese language study should see the UH Manoa back credit policy at <http://www.hawaii.edu/gened/HSL/Guidelines2010.pdf>.

FYI: Useful on-line resources
http://language.tiu.ac.jp
http://www.alc.co.jp/
http://dictionary.goo.ne.jp/
http://jisho.org/
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page