

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

University of Montana Course Syllabi

Open Educational Resources (OER)

---

Spring 2-1-2018

### JPNS 312.01: Japanese Literature Medieval to Modern

Robert James Tuck

*University of Montana, Missoula*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

#### Recommended Citation

Tuck, Robert James, "JPNS 312.01: Japanese Literature Medieval to Modern" (2018). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 7835.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/7835>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Open Educational Resources (OER) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana Course Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@mso.umt.edu](mailto:scholarworks@mso.umt.edu).

## JPNS 312 Japanese Literature from Medieval to Modern

### Ghosts, Monsters, and Legends of Japan

Spring 2018

#### Course Information

- Course Meets: 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday
- In: LA 203
- Course Instructor: Robert Tuck ([robert.tuck@mso.umt.edu](mailto:robert.tuck@mso.umt.edu))
- Instructor's Office: LA 318
- Student hours: 10 a.m. to 12 noon, Monday and Friday, and by appointment

#### Course Description

This course comprises a survey of Japanese literature and culture from the early medieval period to the present day. Its focus is on myths, legends, and folklore, particularly folklore that deals with the supernatural or the uncanny. Through close reading of both primary and secondary texts, students will gain an appreciation for how and why societies (including, but not limited to Japan) create monsters and legends in response to specific currents of politics, gender, social pressures, and trauma.

This course is also designated as an Advanced Writing Course under the UM Gen Ed rubric. As a result, a substantial portion of the course is designated to drafting, polishing, and re-drafting student writing, with a view to improving students' abilities to gather and synthesize information, to write clearly and coherently, and to respond to constructive feedback from peers and the instructor.

#### Learning Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Consider the cultural, political, and literary significance of differing forms of Japanese folklore and legends
- Discuss critical theories of the significance of depictions of the supernatural, the monstrous, and the creation of heroes and legends
- Explore the connections among discourses of gender, social class, and national identity in forms of Japanese popular culture
- Consider how myths, monsters, and legends change over time and across different media, particularly oral tales, picture scrolls, and modern film

- Improve their writing skills by producing three 5-7 page papers during the semester, working with their peers and the instructor to polish and refine their work

## Course Prerequisites

The course has no formal pre-reqs. However, as it is an Advanced Writing Course under Gen Ed, it is strongly recommended that students have passed WRIT 101 and an appropriate Intermediate Writing course. If you are unsure if you meet this requirement, come and talk to me before we get under way.

Though it may be helpful with films in particular, Japanese language ability is not required. All readings and course materials will be available in English or with English subtitles (in the case of films and anime).

## Course Materials and Film Viewing Information

There is no assigned textbook for this course – all readings will be posted in scanned form to the Moodle site. We also cover a number of films during the semester; see below for information on viewing the films in question.

Note that we do not use class time to show movies. You are expected to watch them outside of class, as part of the assigned material for each class session. Most of the films in the class are available via at least one out of Netflix (NF), Amazon Prime Video (APV), FilmStruck (FS), YouTube (YT), Google Play (GP) or similar services. Some require you to purchase the film (these are marked with a \$, and are usually \$5 or less for a short-term rental). If possible, I suggest watch together with classmates and share the cost.

FilmStruck has the Criterion Collection, which includes most of the films to be shown during the first half of the course, and so is particularly useful, especially as you can get a 14-day free trial. Film availability is marked on the syllabus below; if you find another (legitimate) way to watch a film, let me know.

For films marked [DVD], this means that I have the DVD for the film and can set up a viewing session outside of class. This may be particularly useful for hard-to-find films.

A few comments on film services and media:

- Films available for free on YouTube are very unreliable. Films may disappear without warning, and a general search for films on YouTube often produces versions that have been significantly edited from the original in an attempt to avoid copyright claims. I do not recommend YouTube as a way to watch films for this class, except - YouTube does have a paid service which is entirely reliable, much higher quality, and can be useful.
- Netflix has many of the films assigned for the class, though on DVD only. If you intend to use Netflix, you will have to request the DVDs several days in advance to give them time to arrive – and some DVDs may have limited availability. Plan ahead.

- Students can get a limited-time free membership to Amazon Prime, which may allow you to watch some films listed below as APV for free – please check and let me know.
- You may of course use other internet-based services to watch the films in question, so long as you do so in a way that accords with US copyright law. If you find a film available online in a legitimate venue that I have not mentioned, please let me know and I will pass it on to the rest of the class (after checking it myself).
- One or two of the suggested sources have dubbed rather than subtitled films. I strongly prefer that you watch a subtitled version if at all possible.

With regard to written readings: you are expected to have the class readings to hand for every session. If financially viable, I recommend printing out a hard copy. If not, you may view them on a laptop, tablet, or other device (even your phone, though I really don't recommend trying to read in class on a phone) – but you must have the readings available to you in class.

### Course Structure

Classroom activity is primarily structured around in-class discussion. students are expected to have read all of the materials for each session in advance of class meetings and to be ready to contribute substantially to discussion with the instructor and other class members.

Each student will be expected to give a short presentation introducing the reading(s) for the week once during the semester. This introductory presentation should consist of background information about the author, the reception/critical evaluation of the work, and its overall themes; student presentations should also offer questions to prompt further discussion in class.

### Your Responsibilities

- Be an engaged and thoughtful participant in class discussions. Under normal circumstances, I will expect contributions from everyone in the class, and I will often call on students directly to contribute their thoughts.
- Read and think carefully about ALL of the assigned readings for each session. Reading and writing are two sides of the same coin; to write well, you have to read well too. Each class meeting assumes that you have read everything assigned and will be coming to class prepared to discuss it thoughtfully. If you skip or half-do the readings, you are not pulling your weight.
- Take the time to plan and work on your papers. This is an advanced writing course, and good papers take a lot of time and planning.

### Assessment and Grading:

- |                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| • Attendance:                         | 15% |
| • Presentations:                      | 10% |
| • Contribution to in-class discussion | 30% |
| • Paper #1                            | 15% |
| • Paper #2                            | 15% |

- Paper #3 15%

### Grade Distribution

A: 93-100 A-: 90-92 B+: 87-89 B: 83-86 B-: 80-82 C+: 77-79 C: 73-76 C-: 70-72 D+: 67-69  
D: 63-66 D-: 60-62 F: below 60

### Academic Honesty

All students are required to abide by the rules of academic honesty as outlined in the [U of M Student Conduct code](#).

In particular, note that plagiarism (that is, submission of work that contains other people's ideas without proper acknowledgement of sources) is a serious breach of academic honesty and will result in severe penalties. When you submit written work in this class, it is understood to be your own work; you must, therefore, make it very clear when you are quoting from or using someone else's work. It is essential to cite your sources in full; in this class, papers lacking appropriate citations will be returned ungraded and the student required to re-do the work. For help with citations, see the [Mansfield Library's guide](#).

Double submission (submitting written work that has been or will be submitted for another class, without the explicit permission of both instructors) is not permitted and will result in a zero for the assignment at the very least.

If you are at all unsure about any aspect of the student conduct code, please discuss it with the course instructor. Note also that it is the responsibility of the individual student to read and understand the appropriate sections of the code.

### Disabilities

Students with a disability should contact me privately to discuss any specific modifications you wish to request. Please be advised I may request that you provide a letter from Disability Services for Students verifying your right to reasonable modifications. If you have not yet contacted Disability Services, located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so in order to verify your disability and to coordinate your reasonable modifications. For more information, visit the Disability Services [website](#).

### Course Schedule (subject to change, with notice)

#### Week 1

#### What are "Monsters" and Where do they Come From?

- Tuesday, 01/23      Introductory session – course structure, overview, and expectations

## Part I – Ghosts and Monsters of Premodern Japan

- Thursday, 01/25      Theoretical Readings on “Monsters” and the Other:
  - Cohen, “Monster Culture – Seven Theses” in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*
  - Sigmund Freud, “The Uncanny”
  - Zakiya Hanafi, “The Origins of Monsters” in *The Monster in the Machine*
  - **(As Case Study):** “The Reed-Choked House” (*Asaji ga yado*) from Ueda Akinari, *Tales of Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu Monogatari, 1776)*

### Week 2

- Tuesday, 01/30      **STUDY DAY (PROF. TUCK AWAY ON BUSINESS)**
- Thurs, 02/01      *Setсуwa* Literature and Its Religious Context
  - Tales from the:
    - *Nihon ryōiki* (c. 822 CE)
    - *Konjaku monogatari* (around 1120 CE)
    - *Uji shūi monogatari* (early 13<sup>th</sup> century)
  - Osterman Li, *Ambiguous Bodies: Reading the Grotesque in Japanese Setсуwa Tales*

### Week 3

- Tues 02/06      *The Demon Shūten Dōji: Buddhism and Visual Culture*
  - Noriko Reider, “Shuten Dōji (Drunken Demon): A Medieval Story of the Carnavalesque and the Rise of Warriors and Fall of Oni” in *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni from Ancient Times to the Present*
  - Kimbrough, Sacred Charnel Visions: “Painting the Dead in Illustrated Scrolls of The Demon Shuten Dōji” in *Japanese Visual Culture: Performance, Media, and Text*
  - Exercise: locating images of Shuten Dōji *emaki*
- Thurs 02/08      **STUDY DAY (PROF TUCK AWAY ON BUSINESS)**

### Week 4

- Tues 02/13      *Tales of Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu monogatari): The Chrysanthemum Vow, A Reed-Choked House,*

*A Serpent's Lust, The Cauldron of Kibitsu, The Blue Hood, The Carp of My Dreams*

- Washburn, "Ghost-writers and Literary Haunts"
- Reider, "The Emergence of *Kaidan shū*" *Asian Folklore Studies*

- Thurs 02/15 [FILM] Mizoguchi Kenji, dir. *Ugetsu* (1953) (FS; FBL; NF (DVD only))

## Week 5

- Tues 02/20 Yotsuya Ghost Story (*Yotsuya kaidan*, 1825) & [FILM] Tokaido Yotsuya Kaidan (1959) (FS, YT)
  - Shimazaki, "The End of the 'World'" *Monumenta Nipponica*
- Thurs 02/22 The Adventures of Shidōken (*Fūryū Shidoken*), Rootless Weeds (*Nenashigusa*)
  - Excerpts from Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*
  - Moerman, "Demonology and Eroticism" *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*
  - Yonemoto, "Imagining Japan, Inventing the World" in *Mapping Early Modern Japan*

**By 5 p.m. Thurs 02/22: Email your paper draft to your two peer readers, so they have time to look it over before our in-class workshop.**

## Part II – Ghosts and Monsters of Modern Japan

### Week 6

- Tues 02/27 **Paper Workshop Session #1 – peer readings & critique, consultations**
- Thurs 03/01 Kaidan Botan Dōrō (from Lafcadio Hearn's translation, *In Ghostly Japan*), and [FILM] Yamamoto Satsuo, dir. *Peony Lantern Ghost Story*, 1968 ([DVD])

***PAPER #1 DUE TO PROF TUCK VIA EMAIL BY 5 P.M. (3/01)***

## Week 7

- Tues 03/06 Izumi Kyōka, *The Holy Man of Mt. Kōya (Kōya Hijiri)*
  - Nakamura, “Introduction” and “The Invisible Monster” in *Monstrous Bodies*
  - Napier, “The Avenger and the Oasis” in *The Fantastic in Modern Japanese Literature*
- Thurs 03/08 [FILM] Shindō Kanetō, dir., *Onibaba* (1964) (FS, NF (DVD), YT)
  - Kapur, “The Return of History as Horror: Onibaba and the Atomic Bomb” in *Horror International*
  - McDonald, “Eros, Politics, and Folk Religion: Kanetō Shindō’s *Onibaba*” in *Reading a Japanese Film*

## Week 8

- Tues 03/13 [FILM] Shinō Kanetō, dir., *Kuroneko* (1968) (FS, NF (DVD))
  - Zvika Serper, “Shindō Kaneto's films *Kuroneko* and *Onibaba*: traditional and innovative manifestations of demonic embodiments,” *Japan Forum*
- Thurs 03/15 [FILM] Honda Ishirō, dir., *Godzilla* (1954) (FS – search for “Godzilla”), APV (\$), GP (\$), YT (\$)) and Anno & Higuchi, dirs., *Shin Godzilla* (2016) (APV (\$), GP (\$), YT (\$))
  - Anna Fifield, “The new Godzilla film imagines a strong Japan pushing back against the U.S.” *Washington Post*, September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016
  - Ollie Barder, “‘Godzilla Resurgence’ Review: Surprisingly Good And Very Much Classic Gainax” *Forbes.com*, August 16<sup>th</sup> 2016

## Week 9

- Tues 03/20 [FILM] Miyazaki, dir., *Mononoke hime* (1997) ([DVD])
  - Essays from Denison and Pallant, eds., *Princess Mononoke: Understanding Studio Ghibli's Monster Princess*
- Thurs 03/22 **STUDY DAY (PROF TUCK AWAY ON BUSINESS)**

## Week 10

## SPRING BREAK

- Tues 03/27 **NO CLASS**
- Thurs 03/29 **NO CLASS**



## Week 11

- Tues 04/03 [Film] Hideo Nakata, dir., *Ringu* (1998) ([DVD], NF (DVD), YT) & Nakata, *Dark Water* (2002) (APV (free), NF (DVD), GP (\$), YT (\$))
  - McRoy, “Ghosts of the Present, Spectres of the Past: The *Kaidan* and the Haunted Family in the Cinema of Nakata Hideo and Shimizu Takashi” in *Nightmare Japan*
  - Eric K.W. Yu, “A Traditional Vengeful Ghost or the Machine in a Ghost?: Narrative Dynamics, Horror Effects, and the Posthuman in *Ringu*” in *Fear Itself: Reasoning the Unreasonable*
  
- Thurs 04/05 “Kuchisake onna” & [FILM] Takashi Shimizu, dir., *Ju-on* (2002) (APV, NF (DVD), GP(\$), YT (\$))
  - “The Question of the Slit-Mouthed Woman: Contemporary Legend, the Beauty Industry, and Women’s Weekly Magazines in Japan.” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*.

**By 5 p.m. Thurs Email your paper draft to your two peer readers, so they have time to look it over before our in-class workshop.**

## Part III – Legends of Japan

### Week 12

- Tues 04/10 **Paper Workshop Session #2 – peer readings & critique, consultations**
- Thurs 04/12 The Legend of the 47 Ronin
  - Kanadehon Chūshingura
  - Hobsbawm, “Introduction” and “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914” in *The Invention of Tradition*
  - Smith, “The Capacity of *Chūshingura*” *Monumenta Nipponica*

**PAPER #2 DUE TO PROF TUCK VIA EMAIL BY 5 P.M. (4/12)**

### Week 13

- Tues 04/17 The Legend of the 47 Rōnin, continued
  - Smith, “The Trouble with Terasaka: The Forty-Seventh Rōnin and the Chūshingura Imagination” *Japan Review*

- [FILM] Genroku Chūshingura (1941) (YT)
- Assignment – Chushingura in Japanese & Western pop culture?
- Thurs 04/19      The Legend of “Bushidō”
  - Nitobe Inazō, *Bushidō* (1899)
  - G. Cameron Hurst, “Death and Loyalty: The Bushidō Ideal” *Philosophy East and West*
  - Karl Friday, “Bushidō or Bull?” *The History Teacher*
  - Thought experiment – what does “Bushido” mean to modern-day Americans or Japanese?

## Week 14

- Tues 04/24      The Legend of Sugawara no Michizane and the god Tenjin
  - Excerpts from the *Ōkagami* (12<sup>th</sup> Century)
  - Jones, trans. *Sugawara and the Secrets of Calligraphy* (first performed 1746)
  - Robert Tuck, “Poets, Paragons, and Literary Politics: Sugawara no Michizane in Imperial Japan” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*,
- Thurs 04/26      The Legend of Minamoto no Yoshitsune
  - Jones, trans., Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees
  - Suematsu Kenchō, “The Identity of the Great Conqueror Genghis Khan with the Japanese Hero Yoshitsuné: An Historical Thesis” (1879)

## Week 15

- Tues 05/01      The Legend of Ninja: Seriously, what’s up with Ninjas?
  - Turnbull, “Ninja: AD 1460-1650”
  - Levy, “Ninja: The Shadow Warriors”
  - Thought experiment: find two “ninja”-related sources, one written and one visual (film/anime, etc). Bring them to class and we’ll discuss and think them through.
- Thurs 05/03      **Paper Workshop Session #3 – peer readings & critique, consultations**

***PAPER #3 DUE TO PROF TUCK VIA EMAIL BY 5 P.M. (5/11)***

THERE IS **NO** FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE.