Course Description:

Japan is often imagined as a homogeneous nation. Not only are many of its citizens convinced of this charade, but most of the world as well. In 1980, the government even submitted a report to the UN stating that there were no ethnic, linguistic, or religious minorities in Japan. This of course, conveniently overlooked the resident Korean community, former outcaste Burakumin, aboriginal Ainu, nascent gay and lesbian activists, among others. Building pressure for many decades, minority politics have burst on the scene in the past several years, shattering the seemingly calm veneer of Japanese society.

This course examines minority politics in Japan from two related perspectives. The first, asks a structural question: What historical, social, or cultural constraints have led to the particular social protest forms and types of minority identity we see in Japan today? The second, comparative frame is more introspective: How does exploring the Japanese case help us to understand identity politics in the U.S. as being the result of similar but differing factors? We will be borrowing from contemporary sociological, linguistic, and anthropological theory in order to answer these questions, and others that will arise in the course of our investigations.

Course Requirements:

An introductory Japan Studies course is recommended but not required. You can either approach this class as an Anthropology course on identity politics and modern social movement theory; or as an Asian studies course on the modern history of Japan. Grading will be based on class participation, attendance at film showings and guest lectures, and a final term paper, which will require outside research on your part.
Assignments:

• Course participation: As a member of a class, you will be expected to participate fully each week. That means doing the readings and coming to class prepared to discuss the material. You certainly aren’t expected to have any answers or come to any earthshattering conclusions, but the material should be bringing up questions and creating links and networks of queries in your mind to other topics. 10%

• Position Papers: You will be assigned to write three short (5-7 page) position papers during the course of the semester. Details will be provided before they are due, but in general you will be expected to integrate the readings to formulate a cogent argument. No outside research is expected, although you are welcome to bring in external material. 30%

• Final Integrative Research Paper: At the end of the semester, you’ll be expected to hand in a 15-20 page integrative research paper. Integrative research means that you will be expected to integrate knowledge that you learned in this class with outside library research. You are encouraged to look at your short position papers and use them as scaffolding in building your argument. A full bibliography is required. 40%

• Pop Quizzes. Random short-answer and multiple-choice quizzes through the semester. There are no make-ups for pop-quizzes but the lowest score will be dropped when averaging them. 20%

Required Books (Available at Labyrinth Bookstore):

• Izumo, Marou and Claire Maree (2000). Love upon the chopping board. North Melbourne, Vic.: Spinifex. $14.95
Reading Schedule

Introduction to Minorities in Japan
Week 1.0: January 17 (Wednesday)
- Hand out syllabi
- Course requirements and workload
- Q&A

Week 1.5: Jan 19 (Friday): Introduction to Japan’s Minorities

The ‘Native’ Japanese: Ainu
Week 2.0: Jan 22 (Mon)

Week 2.3: Jan 24 (Wed)

The Native American Case
Week 3.0: Jan 29
**Burakumin: Separate and Equal? Equal and Equal?**  
**Week 3.3 Jan 31 (Wed)**  

**Week 4.0 Feb 5**  

**Week 4.3 Feb 7**  

**Week 5.0 (Feb 12)**  
**Position Paper #1 Due: Ainu, Burakumin, and Race**
Koreans in Japan

Week 5.0: Feb 12


Week 5.3: Feb 14


Brazil Nikkeijin

Week 6.0: Feb 19


Week 6.3: Feb 21


**Introduction to Japanese Sexuality**

**Week 7.0: Feb 26**

**Week 7.3: Feb 28**
Movie: *Osaka Story*

**Week 8.0 (Mar 5)**
- **Position Paper #2 Due: Koreans and Nikkeijin**

**Research Paper Topics**
**Week 8.0: Mar 5**
Discussion

**Week 8.3: Mar 7**
Discussion

**SPRING BREAK (March 10-24)**
Read over break: *Male Homosexuality in Modern Japan.***

**Week 9.0**
- **Research Paper Proposals and List of Resources Due**

**Week 9.0 (Mar 26)**
- Lunsing, Wim Marinus. Lesbian and gay movements: between hard and soft, In *Soziale

Women’s Sexuality
Week 9.3: Mar 28


Week 10.0: April 2

• Izumo, Marou and Claire Maree (2000). Love upon the chopping board. North Melbourne, Vic.: Spinifex. $14.95

Week 10.3: April 4


Week 11.0 (Apr 10)

Position Paper #3 Due: Sexuality and Genders
Filipinas in Japan
Week 11.0: April 9

Psychiatric Disabilities in Japan
Week 12.0: April 16
Bethel: Community and Schizophrenia in Northern Japan.

Final Presentations
Week 13.0 (Apr 23)
Final Presentations

Week 13.3 (Apr 25)
Final Presentations

May 8th 9am
Integrative Research Papers Due (12-15 pages)

END OF THE SEMESTER
HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER BREAK