ANT 184/WGS 135: Contemporary Japanese Society  
Winter 2009  
CDEA/WAC  
(M-W-F 11:45 to 12:50pm in SSCI 014)

Professor Jennifer Milioto Matsue  
Office Location: TMC 208  
Office Hours: Mon/Weds 2:30-4:00pm, and by appointment  
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Course Overview:  
This course draws on the central concepts of Cultural Anthropology, broadly defined as the study of human behavior in cross-cultural comparison, while providing an introduction to Contemporary Japanese Society. Reading selections include a memoir, ethnographies based on communities in Japan, and supplemental selections that provide additional information on contemporary Japanese society. You will explore such topics as the dangers of “ethnocentrism,” the cultural construction of sexuality and gender, and the significance of social systems in the context of Japan, in turn considering how these concepts can be viewed comparatively in many cultures, including your own. Through the reading assignments, class discussion, and individual research – you will gain familiarity with the field of Cultural Anthropology, its major components, and the practice of researchers, while also increasing your knowledge of contemporary Japan.

Required Texts: (Available for purchase at the campus bookstore or on reserve.)


Additional reading materials may be placed on reserve or distributed in class.

In-class expectations: Students are expected to complete reading assignments as indicated in the schedule AND be prepared to discuss them in class. Students are also required to submit three questions/comments on the reading for the day (no late submissions) and complete four short position papers on the reading. Other requirements include a final proposal and paper on some aspect of contemporary Japanese society, with selected presentations.

Evaluation:  
Grading will be based on the following assignments:  
Four Position Papers (10pts each, 3-5pgs) - 40pts  
Ten Sets of Comments/Questions on Reading (1pt each) - 10pts
(Select from any readings except those marked with "**")

Final Paper (10-12 pgs)/Proposal - 30 pts
Class Participation - 20 pts


Regular attendance AND participation are both absolutely necessary to successfully complete this course. Greater than three absences will result in a deduction of a full letter grade from the final course grade. Greater than six absences will result in failure of the course.

All assignments must be submitted by the dates and times as indicated. Any late work will be penalized with a full grade deduction per each day late. **All assignments must be completed to pass the course.**

Please note that any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak to me by the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Dean of Students may be consulted to verify the documentation of the disability.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**
1/5 Mon – Introduction to the course
1/7 Wed – Brief overview of Japanese history and geography
1/9 Fri – Japanland (vii-78)

**Week 2**
1/12 Mon – Japanland (79-152)

<Required Film Viewing – *Lost in Translation* – Tuesday, January 13th, TMC - Emerson Hall, 7pm>

1/14 Wed – Japanland (153-231)
1/16 Fri – Japanland (232-307)

**Week 3**
1/19 Mon – **Position Paper #1 Due In Class – Hardcopy Only!!**
1/21 Wed – **Understanding Japanese Society (1-81)**
1/23 Fri – **Understanding Japanese Society (82-163)**

**Week 4**
1/26 Mon – **Understanding Japanese Society (164-253)**
1/28 Wed – **Final Project Proposal Due In Class – Hardcopy Only!!**
1/30 Fri – An Anthropologist in Japan (1-42)

**Week 5**
2/2 Mon – An Anthropologist in Japan (43-80)
2/4 Wed – An Anthropologist in Japan (81-118)
2/6 Fri – An Anthropologist in Japan (119-155)
Week 6
2/9 Mon – Position Paper #2 Due In Class – Hardcopy Only!!
2/11 Wed – Film Viewing – Rural Japan and “Red Persimmons”
2/13 Fri – Village Japan (7-32)

Week 7
2/16 Mon – Village Japan (33-84)
2/18 Wed – Village Japan (85-161)
2/20 Fri – Village Japan (162-230)

Week 8
2/23 Mon – Position Paper #3 Due In Class – Hardcopy Only!!
2/25 Wed – Takarazuka (1-46)
2/27 Fri – Class Canceled

Week 9
Mon – Takarazuka (47-88)
Wed – Takarazuka (89-138)
Fri – Takarazuka (139-208)

Week 10
Mon – Position Paper #4 Due In Class – Hardcopy Only!!
Wed – Selected Final Presentations
Fri – Selected Final Presentations

Final Paper due by NOON on Thursday, March 19th – Hardcopy Only!!