This is a survey course on Japanese history. It begins, chronologically, with the emergence of Jomon culture (ca. 8,000 B.C.) and ends with the Tokugawa Period (1600-1867). We shall not be concerned in this course with Japan after Tokugawa, though certain themes may be pursued through later years if doing so helps to clarify or refine them.

The literature on periodization is voluminous, and much of it is tendentious, ideologically biased or silly. Yet some tentative breakdown is necessary. I propose the following:

I. Japan Before the Coming of Buddhism.
II. Nara and Heian Periods. 700-1100 A.D.
III. Kamakura to the Warring State Period. 1185-1600 A.D.
IV Tokugawa, 1600-1867.

A major theme of this course is the problem of “cultural borrowing.” Throughout, we shall explore whether Japan has been largely distinctive in its historical evolution until the mid-19th century, or whether it should be seen as part of a larger East Asian Confucian civilization. Students are urged to approach this problem from any of a number of different perspectives: religious life, land system, armed dissidence, literary genres, etc. Whatever the perspective, this main theme should remain paramount.

Requirements include:

• Writing a one-paragraph comment on the weekly principal reading for discussion (not from Totman, Japan Before Perry). Do so for weeks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 11. These one paragraph comments are due in class on Thursdays;

• Preparing DI sheets which are due in class on Thursdays. Do so for weeks 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 11.

Each DI (which stands for Discussion initiation) sheet is to be typewritten on one 8 1/2” x 11” piece of paper and should contain the following:

— the student’s name;
— the date;
— the student’s title for the week’s discussion;
— the student’s choice of one quotation from the week’s assigned reading for discussion;
— the student’s formulation of one question for the week’s discussion.

Each DI sheet is due in class on Thursday of the week for which the readings are assigned. Late DI sheets will not be accepted.
• Completing two special writing assignments. Instructions to be announced later.

• Participating in discussions in class on Thursdays;

Each student’s grade will be based on the performance of four kinds of assignments with roughly equal weight given to each:
   35% on comments and the DI sheets,
   35% on the two special writing assignments, and
   30% on attendance and classroom discussion.

Texts: (● available at the College bookstore)

• Conrad Totman, Japan before Perry (University of California Berkley, 1981)

   Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. deBary and Donald Keene, eds., Sources of Japanese Tradition
   (NY: Columbia University Press, 1958)


   H. Paul Varley, Samurai. (Dell, 1970)

   Noel Perrin, Giving Up The Gun: Japan's Reversion to the Sword, 1543-1879
   (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1980)

• Ihara Saikaku, Five Women Who Loved Love, Amorous Tales from 17th Century Japan
   (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1956)


   David Lu, Japan, A Documentary History (NY: Sharpe, 1997)

• Shusaku Endo, Silence (NY: Taplinger, 1980)

Sessions
Week I

TH  Aug 30  Introduction to the course

Week II

T  Sep 4  Earliest Record of Japan.
   Video:  Japan, The Living Tradition

TH  Sep 6  The Buddhist Conquest
   Readings:
   Japan before Perry, “Preface,” “Chapter 1”.
   Selections of the Kojiki, in Japan: A Documentary History, pp. 4-11.

Week III

T  Sep 11  The Chinese Influence.

TH  Sep 13  Nara Culture
   Readings:
   Japan before Perry, pp. 42-63.
   Selections from the Man’yoshu, in Anthology of Japanese Literature, pp. 33-53.
   “Buddhism as Protector of the Nation,” in Documentary History, pp. 46-50.
   Japan before Perry, pp. 18-41.

Week IV

T  Sep 18  Heian and Its Culture

TH  Sep 20  Growth of Indigenous Institutions.
   Readings:

Week V

T  Sep 25  Reading:
   The World of the Shining Prince, pp. 89-250.

TH  Sep 27  Video: Japan, The Living Tradition.

Week VI

TH Oct 4  Samurai.

Readings:
H. Paul Varley, Samurai, pp. 47-125.
Japan before Perry, pp. 70-132.

Week VII

T Oct 9  Buddhism in Medieval Japan.

TH Oct 11  Medieval Culture.

Readings:
“The Account of My Hut,” in Anthology, pp. 197-212.
“Tales from the Uji Collection,” in Anthology, pp. 213-223.

Week VIII

T Oct 16  First Contact with the West

TH Oct. 18  Kwaidan (film)

Fall Recess—October 20 through 28

Week IX

(No Class)

T Oct 30 and

TH Nov 1  Due date: Nov 5, 4:30 p.m., Academic Support Office, Mears Cottage

Week X

T Nov 6  Reunification and the Tokugawa Order.

TH Nov 8  Tokugawa Society.

Readings:
Japan Before Perry, pp. 133-164.

Week XI

T Nov 13  Economic Growth in Tokugawa.
TH Nov 15  Samurai Culture.

**Readings:**
“Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy” in *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, pp. 335-368.

**Week XII**

T Nov 20  (No class). Begin reading Ihara Saikaku, *Five Women Who Loved Love*

**Week XIII**

T Nov 27  Discussion: *Five Women Who Loved Love*

TH Nov 29  Discussion: *Five Women Who Loved Love*

**Week XIV**

T Dec 4  Discussion: *Silence*

TH Dec 6  Discussion: *Silence*

**Week XV**

T Dec 11  Retrospect

TH Dec 13  Complete Second Special Assignment.
Due Date: Dec. 17, 4:30 p.m., Academic Support Office Mears Cottage