

Syllabus — Version 2 (changes from Version 1 are in blue font)

Japan 7A "Introduction to Premodern Japanese Literature and Culture"

Fall 2018

Instructor: John R Wallace

Our class meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:10-Noon for regular session, with three discussion sections falling on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The regular session has TWO classrooms assigned to it:

On Mondays our class meets in **247 Cory Hall**.

On Wednesdays and Fridays our class meets in **110 Barrows Hall**.

Our digital classroom spaces:

- bCourse (if enrolled or waitlisted, you have this URL, you can also ask me to temporarily give you access)
- my public website: Sonic.net @ <http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/>
- our course Google Drive folder(s) @ [J7AFa18 \(G-Drive, shared for viewing\)](#)

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1. Prerequisites

This class has no prerequisites and does not require any prior knowledge of Japan. It does require good English reading skills—the final will be based on medium-length English translation passages of premodern Japanese texts that have not been covered before in class. The test is closed-book and dictionaries will not be allowed.

2. Course content

This semester, we will explore a variety of premodern Japanese texts (poetry and literary prose from the 700s-1700s) by reading them in translation and interpreting them using cultural and historical contextual information plus, as appropriate, schema that have some similarity to what a "model reader" of premodern Japanese might use to connect with the text in some way relevant to him or her.

We will read from major poetry collections, haiku, some of the best-known fiction, literary memoirs and plays. We will discuss most of the following concepts:

- inside-outside / purity-impurity / community membership and use of symbols in achieving membership,
- lyricism and other forms of emotional intelligence,
- *aware* (a type of pathos),
- *mujō* (Buddhist concept of transience), and
- anxiety / faintness.

In addition, we will consider these aesthetic principles: *miyabi*, *yūgen*, and *sabi-wabi*.

The contextual information and schema will be presented as readings or in class as short lectures. Application of these will be practiced by the student via the regular, frequent submission of "readings" (exegesis and interpretation), small group exercises and discussion, and discussion section participation. Feedback is available at all points to help the student understand how well he or she is mastering the assignments' contents. The student's acquisition of contextual information and skill at deploying

schema will be assessed with a final examination that is preceded by an ungraded practice exam. Since the contexts and schema are best used in relation to one another, the grade emphasis is on the final assessment—the point by which the student has all the information and schema available and has fully practiced using them towards sensitive, credible, and hopefully interesting interpretations. However, the many readings, preparation statements for group work, and engagement also contribute to the final grade.

3. Learning objectives

The course is built around this primary learning objective that will be the basis of the final examination which is a significant part of the course grade:

The course allows the student to develop or polish his or her ability to offer sensitive, credible, and hopefully interesting interpretations of premodern passages using—intensively, moderately, lightly, or not at all as the case invites—the interpretation schema and contextual information (historical, literary historical, genre, biographical) presented in class.

By the completion of this course, ...

- All students will have developed a good sense of some of the major eras of Japanese premodern cultural history from the perspective of literature.
- All students will have developed knowledge of several key premodern texts and authors from a variety of genre.
- All students will have become well-informed of some key aesthetic values and other principles key to understanding premodern artistic endeavors.
- All students will have sharpened their interpretive skills.

4. Assessments and their grade weights

This is only the initial table of grade weights. For the correct and up-to-date information, refer to the grade weights table in the course's Google Drive folder.

Initial grade weights (subject to change—it is not unusual for me to rethink grade weights as the class progresses) are as below. Please notice that you will not be well-

positioned to determine your final grade accurately enough for it to be helpful in deciding whether or not to select the Pass / No Pass option. This is particularly true if your concern is about the difference between an "A" and "A-minus." If this is very important to you, this is not the appropriate class for you. You can discuss your grade with me but I, too, will not have enough information.

15% — course content engagement and participation; includes attendance of regular and discussion sections, with extra credit applied to the course grade for perfect on-time, multitask-free attendance of the regular sessions

20% — reading checks and preparations for in-class exercises

15% — "readings"

50% — final, closed-book three-hour exam which will require reading passages in English without the help of dictionaries or other language support documents

Assessments details (subject to change):

(part of engagements/participation) Attendance (ATTEND) — This represents a percent of the times when attendance is taken in regular or discussion session. Attendance (whether for the regular session or discussion section) might be tracked by roll call (done out loud or silently) or by in-class submissions. On-time attendance means in the room ready to start at the time your name is called during roll call, or when class officially begins, whichever comes first. Late arrival and early departure (for whatever reason even if you have shared it with me and I have said it is okay to leave early or arrive late) counts as up to 7/10ths of a full attendance point. Multitasking, if observed and even if it is only momentary, is recorded as no more than 5/10ths of a full attendance point and often much less than that. If multitasking is frequent (in regular or discussion section), that student's attendance is no longer tracked. Instead, the attendance grade becomes an automatic "C-minus." *Excused absences are taken out of the grade category calculation. Please do not come to class if you think you are ill with something that is contagious.* Perfect on-time, multitask-free attendance of the regular sessions (more exactly, of the times in regular session when attendance was tracked) earned extra credit applied to the final course grade. The value is .25. One grade step (A- to A, and so on) is approximately .33. Therefore, an additional .25 added to the final grade has a good chance of moving the student up one grade step, but not

necessarily. Perfect attendance will also be part of my considerations when I am trying to determine the A+s of the class, if any.

(15%) Engagement and participation (PART) — Determined through observation by me and the GSI, and perhaps via peer evaluations as well. These points are considered: Did you bring value to group discussion through the sharing of your ideas that are the result of extended thinking? Did you help facilitate the exchange of ideas through asking questions of others, helping to provide welcoming discursive space, and contributing to the management of the practical issues of assignment submission? Did you listen to others in your group? Does your submission easily evidence care and time investment? Were your submissions on time, with attention paid to the details of instructions? Are you maintaining your Timeline (TIMELINE)?

(20%) Preparation: Reading Checks (RC), Preparation Exercises (EX ... PreC), and Preparation Statements (PREP) — Reading checks assess whether you read the assigned material in the way indicated. If there is no special indication, then the default expectation is “with care and thought.” This is defined in Syllabus, Part 2, Key Terms and Concepts. Preparation Exercises ask you to organize in your mind in some way the assigned reading, to facilitate the up-coming discussion in class. Preparation Statements are an answer to this question: “What will you bring of value to the group discussion on X [a topic or primary reading passage] that will happen in-class on Y [a date]?” This question is an elicitation of your ideas about the reading or things you think should be discussed and should rise above the level of basic questions. Preparation Statements might be due either for regular or discussion section sessions. They might be due the night before or upon arrival to the classroom, as you walk through the door. They will not be accepted if you have been in the room even for a brief moment, since the point is to think ahead, not throw together something quickly just before class. *“RC,” “EX...PreC,” and “PREP” cannot be made up. Once the deadline has passed, the opportunity to submit is over.*

(25%) "Readings" (READ) — “Readings” are submitted online, at regular intervals, based on assigned reading of primary texts (read in translation). They will usually have two parts, exegesis and interpretation in your role as a premodern Japanese reader (that is, your decisions in terms of using cultural contexts and schema) and you as you — reacting to the text in whatever way you wish. Both are graded although only the first of these will be assessed in the final exam. *“READ” cannot be made up. Once the deadline has passed, the opportunity to submit is over.*

(50%) Final Exam (FINAL) — As currently planned, this is an in-class, closed-book (but see the end of this paragraph), no devices allowed (including dictionaries) based on reading passages never before seen and asking of you content rich analysis that uses contextual information and schema appropriately. The key word here is "appropriately." Your analysis should be sensitive, credible, and hopefully interesting with the focus on the passage. It is not an opportunity to prove that you know certain schema or can repeat certain information. It is how you *use* these. Given the weight placed on this assessment, there will be an ungraded practice test during the last week of class, with feedback. *While the test is indeed closed book, there is one exception: you will be developing timelines during class and you may use any information you have written onto it. There will be 3-4 such sheets. *The final will NOT be given early for students with early departures. It will be given only once, at the regularly scheduled time slot. Other work cannot be substituted for it.*

Exercises (EX) — Because the class uses an active learning approach, there will be a variety of exercises to complete. Exercises are tracked to help understand the student's engagement but otherwise are not part of the final course grade. Typically, they are just graded complete / incomplete, if graded at all. (Naming of exercises: Because some exercises are meant to be done in class and other exercises are done after class, the best naming scheme ties them to the class session. So, an exercise might be EX180903-InC or EX180903-PostC. The first will be due on Sept 3, obviously, but the second might be due several days later but uses material from Sept 3.) *Exercises cannot be made up.*

Timeline (TIMELINE) — Your Timeline is developed as the course progresses and can be used in your final exam. You should always have it with you. [Now and then I will check your progress in developing your timeline. These checks may or may not be announced.](#) Its quality at that moment of assessment is one of the elements used to determine engagement and participation. [It will also be submitted together with the final exam and will be part of the final exam grade.](#)

The below paragraph is now just for your information.

(Currently not used in this course) **Reading/Viewing checks (RVC)** — My classes typically include quizzes at the beginning of class to determine if the student is well prepared for the day, since the active learning environment, to be successful, requires such preparation. However, for this class, this has been set aside. In many cases

whether or not the reading has been done with some care and thought will be evident via other exercises. (It is very likely I will return to using RVC if I feel the class is not going well because of too little preparation.) However, more to the point, if the readings are not done with some thought and care it will be impossible to score a passing grade on the final exam. What this means is that the class, unfortunately, can work for some as a grade trap: readings are put off and ultimately not done and there is no penalty for this until the end, when it is too late to fix the problem. The final is not returned to the student and will be graded only hours before the course grade is submitted to the University. That a student has failed the final due to having not done the reading will only become apparent to the student when he or she sees the final course grade online.

Peer Evaluations (PEEREVAL) — In many of my classes, I use regular submission of peer evaluations for various things: as a way of helping me understand a student's contribution to a group, as a way to signal what I think is valuable for participation in a group, as a way for students to review or explore or celebrate or criticize the contributions of group members, and so on. Peer Evaluation content is always confidential, although I might share generic results when I am sure that doing so does not reveal the identity of any individual. Currently I am undecided as to whether this class will have peer evaluations.

Essays (ESSAY) — This class does not use this type of assignment.

Tests (T) — This class does not have midterm exams.

5. Schedule (initial version)

Our class meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 11:10-Noon for regular session, with three discussion sections falling on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The regular session has TWO classrooms assigned to it: On Mondays our class meets in 247 Cory Hall. On Wednesdays and Fridays our class meets in 110 Barrows Hall.

The below is only the initial schedule. Due to the interactive nature of this active learning class (I watch student progress and adjust as necessary), the schedule is frequently updated. For the correct and up-to-date information, refer to the schedule in our Google Drive folder.

Initial schedule (this will evolve as the class progresses)

Week 1 — Orientation

Weeks 2-13 — *The following is a general prose description. Specifics as to what is expected for each session will be on the J7A Session Details page.* • Texts and specific segments of texts are introduced via their genre, place in literary history, author, and key thematic content. • Relevant cultural contexts are also introduced. • Schema (concepts to be used for understanding the texts) are introduced one-by-one. We progress through these at the pace of approximately two sessions per item. However, the pace will be adjusted as necessary. There are no particular "crunch times" that the student needs to know ahead of time. While the assigned reading will not be even from session to session the differences are not that dramatic. Expect to be reading and submitting something in terms of preparation for almost all sessions (regular and discussion section).

Weeks 14-15 — Review of course content, practice test, feedback on the practice test

RRR Week — Students are preparing for the final exam. Consultation is available but there will be no formal review sessions or presentations.

Final Exams Week — Students take the final at its regularly scheduled time

6. Course materials

There is nothing to purchase for this course. All materials are digital and can be accessed through our bCourse site or our Google Drive folder.

Literary works that receive special focus

- *Kokinshū* (10th c., poem anthology, 31-syllable poems)
- *The Tale of Genji* (10th c., long prose narrative) by Murasaki Shikibu
- haiku (17th c., 17-syllable poems) by Matsuo Bashō
- *Double Suicides at Amijima* (18th c., puppet theater play) by Chikamatsu Monzaemon

Other literary works discussed

- *setsuwa* (various times, local legends)
- *monogatari* (various times, prose narratives)
- kabuki (various times, plays)
- *Man'yōshū* (8th c., poem anthology)
- *nikki* (10th-14th c., diaries, journals and memoirs)
- *Shinkokinshū* (13th c., poem anthology)
- *The Tale of Heike* (14th c., war tale)
- *Izutsu* (15th c., Noh play)
- 17th c. short fiction by Ihara Saikaku
- haiku (18th c., 17-syllable poems) by Yosa Buson
- haiku (18th-19th c., 17-syllable poems) by Kobayashi Issa
- *Oragaharu* (18th c., haibun) by Kobayashi Issa

Aesthetic principles and other cultural concepts

- *ura-omote* ("ulterior-surface"), *uchi-soto* ("inside-outside"), *kegare-hare* ("defiled-pure") as a set of ideas defining groupness, social position, and Shinto attitudes towards purity
- *kokoro* ("spirit", as a basis for nearly all premodern poetry and many other literary texts)
- *miyabi* ("elegance", both as a lifestyle and an underpinning component of many other aesthetic values)
- *aware* ("pathos", as first refined in particular by Murasaki in her *Tale of Genji*)
- *mujō* ("transience", as a mode of literary appreciation and worldview as derived from Buddhism)

- yūgen ("mysterious beauty," associated in particular with the Noh theater) and wabi-sabi ("lonely, rustic beauty", associated especially with the haiku of Basho, and the tea ceremony)
- shame & honor (as aspects of bushi / the warrior's code, and as presented in puppet plays).

Support material

A variety of secondary sources are assigned or their content shared.

7. Contacting me / meeting with me

My office is 5110 Dwinelle Hall.

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu. Please do not message me either using my private account or via bCourse. Please use email.

My office hours, and any last-minute changes to them or special signup requirements, are listed at my public website Sonic.net @ <http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/>.

8. Announcements and finding out what to do

Information about class activity (what to do, due dates, grading explanations, test information, etc.) will come to you through four channels:

- in-class announcements
- bCourse announcements (arrives to you as an email notice and remains accessible on the bCourse site)
- postings to Session Details page (must remember to manually visit Sonic.net)
- bCourse assignment pages (creation notices and grade releases arrive to you as an email notice and remains accessible on the bCourse site, due date can appear on your calendar if you coordinate it with bCourse and remains on the bCourse site as "syllabus" and "calendar")

Because, as an active learning classroom, we are already very busy with activities, and because I think all of you are good readers, I rarely make announcements in class.

Instead, send out announcements via bCourse and expect you to read them. I like to be helpful. If I have made an announcement it is almost certainly because I have thought, "If the students know this, it helps them with their grade." **Set the frequency of your bCourse notifications for "Announcement" to "✓ Notify me right away" by going to bCourse Account (the very top, left-hand tab) > Notifications**

Details about what you should do before and after class, and what we will do in class will be on the Sonic.net Session Details page. I will not expect you to be responsible for anything posted less than 24 hours before class would begin. I DO expect you to be responsible for everything else.

In most cases, assignments will have a bCourse page, in which case they will automatically generate a due date on your calendar.

9. "How do I know what to do for each class session?"

The information is on the course Sonic.net Session Details page @ <http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/> .

10. List of key things to remember that help with your grade

The below is also on Sonic.net for quick reference.

- Online course digital spaces:
 1. bCourse (if enrolled or waitlisted, you have this URL, you can also ask me to temporarily give you access)
 2. my public website: Sonic.net @ <http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/>
 3. our course Google Drive folder(s) @ [J7AFa18 \(G-Drive, shared for viewing\)](#)
- Please email me. Please don't message me either through bCourse or otherwise.
- Devices cannot be used during class.
- Multitasking, even once, will affect the final course grade, sometimes dramatically, always at least one grade step.

- This is an active learning class: Review here what that means for this course.
- My deadlines are bright lines—they are specific moments in time **without a grace period**. Late submissions are not accepted. Very few of my assignments or assessments can be made up.
- Allow extra time to submit through the bCourse since it is not reliable. Remember that if bCourse displays the deadline as "2AM," the submission portal locks at exactly 2:00AM, not 2:00:01AM. If the submission is via Google Forms, past due submissions are ignored.
- Regular, on-time attendance is important for the course grade.
- The final will be given at the designated time. I won't accommodate other dates.
- Travel plans are made by your choice. I won't make accommodations for missed classes due to travel-related issues when planned, although I might consider accommodation for unforeseen difficulties.
- Read all announcements promptly. They are usually time sensitive.
- To know how to prepare for class and what we will do in each session, go to the Class Session Details web page. You are responsible for being informed. Ask questions when you are unsure.
- I care a great deal about academic integrity.
- Academic dishonesty is penalized starting with the first event. **There are no redo opportunities given**. Explanations are expected but the penalty will not change.
- Integrity: Keep in mind the "context is king rule" which is **always** relevant, not just for essays and such—do not use someone else's work in a way that context would suggest to me (or any reader) that it is your work. When in doubt, cite your work.
- Integrity: The "over the shoulder rule" rule—when you use a source, the author (if she or he could see what you are writing) would judge that your use is a fair and accurate representation of what she or he wrote.
- All reading is to be done "with some thought and care."
- Following instructions improves scores.

- The time it seems you have invested in something is considered when grading.
- Credibility is always a grading point. Use sources with critical awareness, make plausible claims, submit work that seems to have been thoughtfully constructed.