

History 3604G

Tokugawa Japan: Samurai, Peasants, Townsfolk, and Outsiders

Winter 2025

Instructor: **Dr. Carl Young**

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Office Hours: **Wednesdays 10 AM-11 AM, Thursdays 11 AM-noon, or by appointment**

This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

Course Description

This course will investigate Japan's historical development during the Tokugawa shogunate between 1600 and 1868. Themes will include social and political structures, intellectual and cultural developments, commerce and urbanization, and Tokugawa Japan's relations with other countries.

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 History course at the 2200-level or above.

Antirequisite(s): The former History 3603E.

Course Syllabus

The Tokugawa military regime was the last and longest lasting of the military governments which ruled Japan. After more than a century of civil war, the victorious Tokugawa family inaugurated political, economic, and social structures that brought stability to Japan, leading to a period of general peace that lasted more than 250 years. The Tokugawa government restricted contact with the outside world, although there was limited trade and cultural contact. There was a flourishing domestic trade and commercial sector and this, along with Tokugawa government policies that encouraged the growth of cities, led to the flourishing of urban culture. The population of Tokugawa cities were mainly made up of samurai (members of the governing military class), artisans, and merchants. The vast majority of the Japanese population were still peasant agriculturalists and they also played a valuable role in Tokugawa society. By the early 1800's, growing social and economic contradictions in the Tokugawa system led to increasing opposition. The growing threat from more technologically developed Western nations accentuated the Tokugawa regime's problems and it was finally overthrown in 1868 by opponents from the lower ranks of the samurai class.

The purpose of the course will be to investigate developments in Tokugawa Japan from 1600 to 1868. Topics will include the structure of Tokugawa government, economy, and society; life and

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culture in the cities and countryside; contacts with the outside world; and the reasons for the decline of the Tokugawa system in the early 19th century.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- assess the interaction between political, social, economic, cultural, and international factors in the development of Tokugawa Japan
- explain the characteristics of Tokugawa government and society and their impact on Japan's culture, economy, and way of life
- Analyze primary and secondary sources on select topics in the history of Tokugawa Japan between 1600 and 1868 through both oral discussion and written work
- Present findings and views from readings through oral presentations
- Synthesise primary and secondary sources to produce a research paper

Methods of Evaluation

Term Paper (around 15 pages)	30%
3 Article Analyses (4-6 pages: 15% each)	45%
1 Oral Presentation	10%
Discussion Participation	<u>15%</u>
	100%

The term paper will be a research paper on a topic of your choice in the history of Tokugawa Japan between 1600 and 1868. Suggested topics will be handed out early in the beginning of the semester. The suggested length of the papers will be approximately 15 pages. The paper will due on **March 20**.

The three article/document analyses will be based around the readings for each class. During the semester, students will choose any **3** of the articles or documents assigned and write a 3-6 page paper each on the articles. These papers are **due on the day of the relevant seminar in which the particular reading is assigned. This assignment will not normally be accepted late. The 1st article analysis, on readings between Jan. 16 and Feb. 6, must be done by Feb. 6. The 2nd article analysis, on readings between Feb. 13 and March 6, must be done by March 6. The 3rd article analysis, on readings between March 13 and April 3, must be done by April 3.** This assignment is more than merely a summary. The main purpose of the paper is to bring forth the main issues of the article or series of documents, discuss how the author(s) bring forth their point of view, and also analyze the effectiveness of the readings in conveying information and opinion, as well as their contribution to the topic under discussion in the particular seminar.

Students will also be required to do **1** oral presentation in the course of the semester. These will be based on the articles and documents assigned as readings for the seminar. A sign-up sheet will be passed around in the beginning of the semester. This will involve a brief 10-15 minute

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presentation on the reading in question, which will include a brief summary of the reading and the launching of questions for discussion

This is a seminar course and the success of the seminar depends a lot on keeping up with the readings, attendance in class, and participation in discussion. It is for this reason that 15% of the course mark depends on seminar participation. Roll will be taken in each class and students will be given marks for participation in the discussions. For each class, students will be marked on a scale of 1 to 5 for each class and at the end of the semester, the marks will be added together to give an overall participation mark.

If you should have any questions pertaining to the structure or content of the course, please do not hesitate to contact me during my office hours, or by phone or e-mail to make an appointment.

Absences and Late Assignments

The term paper will be accepted late. However, there will be a penalty of 2% a day that will be applied for every day the assignments are late, including weekends and holidays. The article analyses will not normally be accepted late, since there is flexibility as to when to hand them in. I normally request both an electronic copy of your assignment, submitted on OWL, and a paper copy submitted to myself in class, during my office hours, or through the History department office (please see below). Penalties stop on receipt of the first version (either electronic or paper) that has been received. However, I will normally only start marking your assignment when I have both versions of your assignment. If you have missed class, try and get notes from another member of the class. The Powerpoints for the lectures will also be posted after they have been presented.

If you do hand in your assignment late, please hand in your paper copy to the wooden drop-off box outside the History Department office at Lawson Hall. The staff will pick up the assignment and stamp it with a date and time and put it in my mailbox. This provides greater security and clarity for the handing in of the assignment. Please avoid shoving the paper under my office door if at all possible, because it could get lost.

In case of family emergency, illness, or other circumstances, penalties can be removed from assignments after approval from academic counselling. In these circumstances, please get in contact with your home faculty or college's academic counselling office and submit the required forms and documentation. The office will then get in touch with me and give me recommendations for accommodation.

Students have the right to file **one assignment per course per semester** with academic counselling without supporting documentation. In this case, normally an extension will be given for 2-3 days, after which lateness penalties will begin.

Some students have access to flexibility in assignment deadlines through Accessible Education. This allows for extensions on assignments for a few days without having to go through academic counselling. Please come and consult with me to work out a new assignment deadline if you have this accommodation and you are exercising this option. Flexibility in assignment deadlines does

not mean extending assignment submission over weeks or months. This is to avoid stress in the end of the semester with an accumulation of assignments for submission. If more time is needed than a few days, academic counselling will need to be consulted.

All written work (regardless of accommodations) must be submitted by the end of classes for winter semester, which is **April 4, 2025**. Any petition for extension beyond this date will require approval from the academic counselling office with supporting documentation.

Attendance at the seminar sessions and participating in discussion is an important part of the course. However, if you do miss a seminar class, after advice from academic counselling, I will either request a 1-2 page response paper on the readings for the relevant week to make up for your participation mark for that week or I will waive the participation mark for that week. This flexibility should be the exception rather than the rule for your seminar participation mark.

Please consult the following for more in-depth information on department, faculty, and university policies on absences and late submissions.

- Social Science Academic Counselling on [Absence & Academic Consideration](#)
- the university's policies on [Academic Consideration for Medical Illness](#), and
- the Department of History's own [Undergraduate Policies and Statements](#)).

Course Materials

Wm. Theodore de Bary et al, *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume Two: Part One, 1600 to 1868* (2nd edition), (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006)

Selected readings available on the course OWL site

Course Schedule and Readings

SJT1=Wm. Theodore de Bary et al, *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume Two: Part One, 1600 to 1868* (2nd edition), (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006)

Jan. 9—Introduction

Jan. 16— Setting up the Tokugawa System

“The Tokugawa State” in Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2002), p. 32-62 (available at the course OWL site)

SJT1, p. 7-27 (Chapter 20—“Ieyasu and the Founding of the Tokugawa Shogunate”)

SJT1, p. 125-157 (Chapter 23—“The Evangelic Furnace”)

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Jan. 23— Intellectual Life in Tokugawa Japan

SJT1, p. 28-74 (Chapter 21—“Confucianism in the Early Tokugawa Period”)

SJT1, p. 217-254 (Chapter 25—“Varieties of Neo-Confucian Education”)

“Confucianism as public sphere” in Kiri Paramore, *Japanese Confucianism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 66-93 (available at the course OWL site)

Jan. 30—The Dutch, Western Thought and Tokugawa Japan

“The Shogun’s Loyal Vassals” in Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 95-131 (available at the course OWL site)

SJT1, p. 289-313 (Chapter 27—“Dutch Learning”)

“Translation of Western Languages” in Rebekah Clements, *A Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 141-176 (available at the course OWL site)

Feb. 6—Outsiders: Relations between other East Asians and Tokugawa Japan

“The Contacts” in Marius B. Jansen, *China in the Tokugawa World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 1-51 (available at the course OWL site)

“The Status of Ryukyu and Its Relations with Japan and China” in Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), p. 15-49 (available at the course OWL site)

Nam-lin Hur, “Choson Korean Officials in Early Tokugawa Japan: Ethnic Perceptions in the 1719 Embassy,” *Korea Observer* 38, 3 (Autumn 2007), p. 439-468 (available at the course OWL site)

*******Last chance to hand in 1st Article Analysis—Feb. 6*******

Feb. 13—Samurai Values and Lifestyles in Tokugawa Japan

SJT1, p. 353-393 (Chapter 29—“The Way of the Warrior II”)

“Life in the Capital” in Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), p. 172-204 (available at the course OWL site)

Constantine Vaporis, “Samurai and Merchant in mid-Tokugawa Japan: Tani Tannai’s Record of Daily Necessities, 1748-54”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 60:1 (June 2000), p. 205-227 (available at the course WebCT site)

Feb. 15-23—Winter Reading Week—No class

Feb. 27—Rural Life in Tokugawa Japan

“A Record of How the Four Orders of People in Mimasaka Ran Riot” in Anne Walthall, *Peasant Uprisings in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 77-118 (available at the course OWL site)

“Sericulture and Village Economy in Shindatsu” in Stephen Vlastos, *Peasant Protests and Uprising in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), p. 92-113 (available at the course OWL site)

“The Farmer-Merchant: Bokushi’s Rural Business” in Takeshi Moriyama, *Crossing Boundaries in Tokugawa Society: Suzuki Bokushi, A Rural Elite Commoner* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2013), p. 53-89 (available at the course OWL site)

March 6—Cities in Tokugawa Japan

“Urban Sanitation and Physical Well-being” in Susan B. Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), p. 104-128 (available at the course OWL site)

Gerald Groemer, “The Creation of the Edo Outcaste Order”, *The Journal of Japanese Studies* Vol. 27, No.2 (Summer 2001), p. 263-293 (available at the course OWL site)

Maren Ehlers, “Benevolence, Charity, and Duty: Urban Relief and Domain Society during the Tenmei Famine”, *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 69, No. 1 (2014), p. 55-101 (available at the course OWL site)

********Last chance to hand in 2nd Article Analysis—March 6********

March 13—Urban Culture in Tokugawa Japan

C. Andrew Gerstle, “The Culture of Play: Kabuki and the Production of Texts”, *Oral Tradition* 20:2 (2005), p. 188-216 (available at the course OWL site)

W. Puck Brecher, “Down and Out in Negishi: Reclusion and Struggle in an Edo Suburb”, *Journal of Japanese Studies* 35:1 (2008), p. 1-35 (available at the course OWL site)

SJT1, p. 255-288 (Chapter 26—“Popular Instruction”)

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March 20—Gender and Sexuality in Tokugawa Japan (those who sign up for presentations on March 20 will get a 1 week extension on their term paper)

“Tokugawa Homosexual Culture” in Gary P. Leupp, *Male Colors: The Construction of Homosexuality in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), p. 94-144 (**this reading contains explicit and graphic material that could be disturbing to some readers**) (available at the course OWL site)

“Marriage” in Marcia Yonemoto, *The Problem of Women in Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2016), p. 93-122 (available at the course OWL site)

“Creating ‘Prostitutes’: Benevolence, Profit and the Construction of a Gendered Order” in Amy Stanley, *Selling Women: Prostitution, Markets, and the Household in Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), p. 45-71 (available at the course OWL site)

*******Term Paper due—March 20*******

March 27—Decline of the Tokugawa

“The Worst of Times” in Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 504-539 (available at the course OWL site)

SJT1, p. 518-565 (Chapter 34—“The Debate over Seclusion and Restoration”)

“The Style and Substance of Treaty Making” in Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 11-33 (available at the course OWL site)

April 3—Revolutionary Restoration and the Legacy of Tokugawa Japan

“To Shoulder the Burdens of the Realm: The Destruction of the Shogunate” in Mark Ravina, *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battle of Saigo Takamori* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2004), p. 107-149 (available at the course OWL site)

*******Last chance hand in 3rd Article Analysis—April 3*******

Additional Statements

Communication policies: E-mail is generally the easiest way to contact me for short questions. I will endeavour to answer within the day, although there may be delays on weekends and holidays in particular. You can also ask short questions during the class lecture breaks. For longer enquiries, please drop by during my office hours at my office. If you are unable to come to my normal office hours, please contact me to set up an alternative appointment, either in person or through Zoom. For general class announcements, I use the “Announcements” feature on OWL, so please check frequently on OWL to keep track of latest class developments.

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Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):

You may not make any use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, for any assignments in this course.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.