
EDUCATION IN JAPAN: ISSUES OF CULTURE, SOCIAL
STRUCTURE, & WORLDVIEW 2 credits (Fall)

教育を通して日本文化、社会の構造、価値観を考える
2単位(秋学期)

Education in Japan: Learning Culture, Social Structure, & Worldview
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Course Description/Objectives/Teaching Method/Intended Learning Outcome:

Education is an important lens to study Japan, because it is all about learning how to think, behave, and even talk properly, as expected. Education is also the critical site of debate about English as an international language, which propels globalization and is associated with widening economic disparities and the increased presence of ethnic minority groups. Further, education helps us understand issues of family, food, fashion, and ethics, all of which reflect (and construct) Japanese culture.

In general, Japanese education has a bad reputation. Critics point out, for example, that bullying is widespread. Certainly there is a dark side, but there is also a lot to admire and learn from. This course aims to look at Japanese education critically, yet with a multidisciplinary perspective and objective balance, to better understand contemporary social dynamics. Each week, there will be one or two reading assignments (approximately 20 pages) along with short reaction papers, and attention will be given during class to exploring issues pro and con, developing theoretical interpretations, and articulating both personal and academic perspectives.

The class will be conducted entirely in English, and it will be open to students from both Keio and abroad. For international students, the goal is to expand knowledge of Japan in a way that will help negotiate living and working in this country. For Japanese students, the goal is to deepen awareness of one's own culture, and give practice interpreting local customs and worldviews to visitors from abroad.

Course Plan:

- 1 Introductions and overview:
Guidelines, possibilities, key concepts
 - 2 Topic: Diversity, distinctiveness, & social division
Reading: Okano (2009) School Culture
 - 3 Disciplining the child, connecting the community
Reading: Lewis (1995) Roots of Discipline
 - 4 Topic: Schooling selves
Reading: Cave (2016) Autonomy & Independence
 - 5 Topic: Sports, coaching, & discipline
Reading: Miller (2013) Court to Cubicle
 - 6 Topic: Table manners and *obento* politics
Reading: Allison (1991) Lunch-boxes as ideology
 - 7 Topic: Push and pull of globalization
Reading: Burgess *et al* (2013) Motivation to study
 - 8 Topic: Studying English in a third space
Reading: Shea (2017) Orientations
 - 9 Topic: Bullying, marginalization, & pressure to conform
Reading: McDonald & Kawai (2017) *Taibatsu*
 - 10 Topic: Others - Immigrants, foreigners, & returnees
Reading: Kanno (2003) Imagined Communities
 - 11 Independent Reading
(from Supplementary References, Google search, & teacher recommendation)
 - 12 Data Collection, Analysis, & Writing
 - 13 Final Presentations
Final Project Due
- Other There may be other reading/viewing assignments in addition to the ones noted here. In that case, they will be announced in class and posted on <keio.jp> or the Google Classroom webpage.
A list of references, both required and supplementary, will be uploaded to <keio.jp> prior to the first session.

Method of Evaluation:

In-class discussion will be the central component of the course, and everyone is expected to walk in the door prepared to talk about the assigned readings. Class participation counts for 50% of the grade. Writing assignments and group presentations count for 30%, the final project (presentation & paper) 20%. All written work should be 100% one's own words (with full reference and citation), submitted on time, of appropriate length, and on topic. Plagiarism is cheating, and you will make a D if you copy more than 2 words from any source without correct citation, quotation and reference. Late work will be penalized or simply not accepted. About 2 hours of homework (or so) is expected each week. All written assignments (essays, power-points, self-introductions, *etc*) should be submitted via the Google classroom page, which will be made available at the beginning of the semester.

Textbooks:

All reading materials will be distributed by the instructor, placed on reserve in the library, made available on the <keio.jp> website, or uploaded to the Google classroom homepage.

Reference Books:

- DeCoker, G. & Bjork, Christopher. (2013). *Japanese education in an era of globalization. Culture, politics, and equity*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sato, S. & Doerr, N.M. (Eds). (2014). *Rethinking language and culture in Japanese education*. Multilingual Matters.
- Willis, D.B. (2006). Learning culture, learning citizenship: Japanese education and the challenge of multiculturalism. In Lee & Befu (Eds.), *Japan's diversity dilemmas* (pp. 47-74).

Lecturer's Comments to Students:

Because the class is discussion based, which requires preparation and active engagement on the part of every student, enrollment will be limited to 25 students. If more than 25 seek to join, a lottery will be carried out by the IC Office.

Questions/Comments:

There are no set office hours, but students should feel free to contact me anytime by email, speak to me before or after class, or make an appointment. I am happy to talk if there is time available.