

Keio University Syllabus and Timetable

GENDER, CULTURE AND MODERNITY IN INTERWAR JAPAN

Subtitle	Gender, Culture and Modernity in Interwar Japan
Lecturer(s)	NOTTER, DAVID M.
Credit(s)	2
Academic Year/Semester	2026 Spring
Day/Period	Tue.5
Campus	Mita
Classroom	467
Class Format	Face-to-face classes (conducted mainly in-person)
Registration Number	28921
Faculty/Graduate School	INTERNATIONAL CENTER
Year Level	2, 3, 4
Grade Type	S, A, B, C, D
Course Description	A course to aim to study on the new 'modern' forms of social life that define this interwar period and examine in particular the new lifestyles, the new ideals of home and family life, as well as new gender roles and new cultural forms.
K-Number	CIN-CO-00153-212-08

[▼ Detail](#)
Course Contents/Objectives/Teaching Method/Intended Learning Outcome

While the history of Japan as a modern nation begins in the Meiji period, much of what we recognize as typical of modern life in Japan as we know it begins in the Taisho period, or more generally what is known as the interwar period, which extends into the early years of the Showa era. In this class we will examine in detail several aspects of this new 'modern life' with particular attention given to the new social roles, new gender roles, new lifestyles, and new forms of culture that emerged among the new middle class. This class will be conducted as a lecture course. Topics to be covered include: the emergence of the modern family among the new middle class; the emergence of the ideal of the 'love marriage' and new forms of courtship; new ideals of and debates over womanhood as voiced by influential female intellectuals such as Yosano Akiko; new social roles and new occupations for women; the 'modern girl' as 'moga' and new categories of female deviance; the new media for women; the emergence of the salaryman and the ideology of careerism; the emergence of the modern housewife and new notions of motherhood and child-rearing; the Taisho-era transformation in school culture at the elite higher schools for girls; and the expansion of education for women and the culture of cultivation at the new higher schools for women.

Course Taught by Faculty Member with Professional Experience

Not applicable

Active Learning Methods [Description](#)

Not applicable

Preparatory Study

Advanced preparation will not be necessary to take this course.

Course Plan

Lesson 1

Session 1: Introduction to the Course, distribution of official syllabus

Lesson 2

From traditional patriarchal household as ie to the modern family as katei

Lesson 3

Session 3: The emergence of the salaryman

Lesson 4

Session 4: The ideology of Careerism

Lesson 5

Session 5: The emergence of the modern housewife

Lesson 6

Session 6: New ideals of motherhood

Lesson 7

Session 7: The good-wife-wise-mother ideology

Lesson 8

Session 8: The modern girl as 'moga'

Lesson 9

Session 9: New periodicals for women such as the Housewife's Companion

Lesson 10

Session 10: Debates among influential Taisho-era female intellectuals such as Yosano Akiko and Hiratsuka Raicho

Lesson 11

Session 11: The emergence of the ideal of marrying for love and the spread of the ideology of romantic love

Lesson 12

Session 12: Meiji-era Civilization of Character vs. Taisho-era Culture of Personality

Lesson 13

Session 13: School Culture at the elite Higher Schools for boys

Lesson 14

Session 14: The expansion of education for women, and school culture at the higher school for girls

Other

Review

Method of Evaluation

Evaluation will be based on open-note quizzes at the end of each lecture, as well as a writing assignment.

Generative AI Policy for Classes

The use of generative AI will not be allowed.

Textbooks

There will not be a text book for the class, but reading will be assigned.