

Japanese Culture and Society: Social and Cultural psychology Tutor: Akinobu NAMEDA, Ph.D.

Course description:

This course explores Japanese society and culture by looking at theories and research in social and cultural psychology. We consider and discuss cultural and social issues in Japanese context: work-life balance, family work, career development, and so on. Since we also use knowledge in other academic fields in social sciences to understand social issues, this course is similar to doing sociology through the use of psychology. In this course, we firstly focus on aspects of culture in Japanese people and society, based on the theories and research in cultural psychology. Secondly we examine social issues in Japan, particularly discussing how we can deal with social and cultural problems in our daily life.

Course objectives:

- Students can obtain their understanding of cultural and social issues in Japan.
- Students can make discussions on Japanese culture and society, based on knowledge in social and cultural psychology, and/or other academic fields in social sciences.
- Students can reflect on their own culture and society in looking at culture and social issues in Japanese context.

Schedule:

12:50 – 16:00 on Tuesdays, during 12 Jan – 19 Apr in 2016

	Date	Title	Contents
1	Jan 12	Introduction	Brief summary and descriptions of the course
2	Jan 19	Cultural differences of mind	Cross-cultural psychology, Culture and self, Culture as an institution
3	Jan 26	Culture in minds	Character, Pocket money, Culture as semiotic mediation
4	Feb 2	Is this a cultural phenomenon?	Blood type stereotype in Japanese society
5	Feb 9	Research projects on culture	Photo-voice project

6	Feb 16	Work life balance issues in Japan	Low birthrate, Having children in Japan, Parent's participation in child rearing
7	Feb 23	Family work and family relationships in Japanese context	The share of paid work and household work in family, Communication styles in couples
8	Mar 1	Career development in Japan	How do Japanese people make career development?
9	Mar 8	Quality of life in career development	Successive job support for people with disability
10	Mar 15	Persons on the internet	How do we behave in cyberspace?
11	Mar 22	Disaster prevention in life	How can we deal with difficulties when natural disaster happens?
12	Mar 29	Field-trip (to be arranged)	Field-trip
13	Apr 5	Justice system in life	Sense of fairness, How does false confession happen in interrogation process?
14	Apr 12	Students' Presentations	Students' Presentations
15	Apr 19	Students' Presentations	Students' Presentations

Notes:

The order of the classes is provisional. It may be changed, considering fieldworks and students' presentations.

Key Words:

Japanese society; Culture; Social psychology; Cultural psychology.

Reading List:

- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological review*, 98, 224.
- Valsiner, J. (2007). *Culture in minds and societies: Foundations of cultural psychology*. SAGE Publications.

Evaluating Method:

1. Communication paper in each class and participation in activities in classes (40 %)
2. Term paper (40 %)
3. Presentation (20 %)

Contact Information:

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