Sony, Toshiba, Nintendo, Toyota, … Japanese products dominate in many areas of the global economy. When the US defeated Japan in WWII, no one predicted that Japan, a tiny island country off the Korean Peninsula, would become such an economic success story. Japan’s so-called economic miracle was also characterized by unprecedented political stability. The Liberal Democratic Party ruled postwar Japan almost uninterruptedly. This course, while focusing on Japan’s experience, also discusses broader issues such as different models of capitalist democracy, effects of electoral systems, etc.

No prior knowledge of Japan is required; you only need to be sufficiently imaginative and curious about other countries. You will be amazed by how much you will learn about the US through studying Japan.

There will be two film showings. One is a documentary on the US Occupation of Japan after World War II (Occupied Japan). The other is a documentary on Japanese politics (Campaign).

Requirements:
Regular class/section participation is expected. In addition, there will be a mid-term exam (in class), one quiz (in class), and a final paper. The final paper is a position paper not to exceed 10 pages in length (regular margins, double-spaced, 12pt in font). Detailed instructions for how to write a position paper and a list of possible topics will be provided in class. A short (one page) outline of the final paper is due on Nov 19 (Thurs). The paper itself is due on Dec 7 (Mon). Late papers will be downgraded by half a letter grade for every day late, unless you have a documented emergency. Papers will not be accepted after 12 noon on Dec 11 (Fri). (Please consult the College’s policy on plagiarism.)

Grading:
Class & section participation (20%); mid-term (35%); quiz (10%); final paper (35%).

How to Get the Course Materials:

Required books are available for purchase at the Coop:


J. Mark Ramseyer and Frances Rosenbluth, Japan’s Political Marketplace (Harvard University Press 1993).
Chalmers Johnson, The MITI and the Japanese Miracle (Stanford 1982)

Course Packs are available at Gnomon Copy. (The course pack includes all readings other than the required books and articles that are available online—they are marked with an asterisk below.)

All the books and the course pack are on reserve at Lamont Library.

*** Please note: the first meeting of this class will be Tuesday, Sept 8. We will schedule a make-up session for the missed Sept 3rd meeting

Week 1 (Sept 8) Introduction


Week 2 (Sept 10-17): A VERY brief Historical Background: Industrialization and Democratization from Above


Week 3 (Sept 22-24) Japan’s Economic Miracle and the Industrial Policy Debate

Chalmers Johnson, *The MITI and the Japanese Miracle*, Chs 1, 6, 7 & 9. (No need to worry about Japanese names and historical facts. Just focus on the concept of industrial policy and how it works.)


Recommended:


Week 4 (Sept 29-Oct 1) Is Japan a Different Kind of Market Economy?


* Steven Reed, “Making Sense of Permanent Employment” in Making Common Sense of Japan.


Week 5 (Oct 6-8) Is Japan a Different Kind of Democracy? The LDP’s One-Party Dominance

* Ramseyer and Rosenbluth, Japan’s Political Marketplace, Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5.

* T.J. Pempel, Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes, introduction and conclusion.

Recommended:


Week 6 (Oct 13-15) Public Policy Making in Japan: Who Runs the Show?


*Chalmers Johnson, Japan Who Governs, Ch 6.


Estevez-Abe, *Welfare and Capitalism in Postwar Japan*, section on bureaucracy [To be distributed electronically]

**Week 7 (Oct 20-22) Redistributive/Distributive Politics under the LDP Rule: Who Benefited Most?**


**At least pick two readings from the following list:**


**Week 8 (Oct 27) Why was the LDP Regime So Robust?**


*T.J.Pempel, Policy and Politics in *Japan: Creative Conservativism*, introduction.


**Oct 29 (Thurs) Mid-term (in class)**

**Week 9 (Nov 3-5) Pressures for Change: The Bursting of the Bubble, Fiscal Deficits, Political Apathy, and the End of the Cold War**


Week 10 (Nov 10-12) Political Reforms in the 1990s


Week 11 (Nov 17-19) Has Japanese Politics Changed?

Nov 19 (Thurs): Short 1-page Summaries of Position Papers Due in Class

** Week 11 and Week 13 will have more readings than usual. This is because these readings are meant to help you write your final paper. No need to read them all before the lecture. However, you will want to read them for your final paper. **


Margarita Estevez-Abe and Takako Hikotani, “Japan’s New Extrovert Leaders,” working paper.[to be circulated in class]

Frances Rosenbluth et al. “Japan’s New Nationalism: The International and Domestic Politics of an Assertive Foreign Policy.” [to be circulated in class]

Week 12 (Nov 24) Guest Lecture on the Aug 30 General Elections

Readings to be assigned.

Week 13 (Dec 1) Has the Japanese Model of Welfare Capitalism Changed?

“Sayonara Salaryman,” *The Economist*, January 3, 2008. [To be circulated in class]


Dec 3 (Thurs) in-class Quiz

Dec 7 (Monday) Position Papers Du