

Topics in the Political History of Modern Japan

Grading Options

Because SILS does not provide for a specific examination period, the last class session (27 January) is effectively the date of the “examination” and the due date for the submission of reports.

As previously announced, there will not be an in class examination but rather a “take home” examination for those who do not chose to write a research paper or make a presentation. In effect, the “take home” examination is a “research paper” where the instructor rather than the student selects the topics.

You may select from the options below that which you find most congenial.

Content and format
“Research paper” (only) on a topic chosen by the student. No examination. Due 27 January. In this case the “research paper” should be on the order of 10 double-spaced A4 pages or so.
Essay (“take home”) examination (only) where you write on ANY TWO of the questions posed by the instructor. Due 27 January. Each exam response should be on the order of 5 double-spaced A4 pages or so.
NOTE: You may use an “examination question” as a “research paper” topic if you wish.

Examination questions. Write on any **TWO** of these.

- (1) Discuss the utility of “the samurai” or “the lower samurai” as concepts to analyze political change associated with the Meiji Restoration.
- (2) Discuss whether there was a “revolutionary ideology” behind the Meiji Restoration or merely an “ideology for revolution.”
- (3) Discuss the utility of “Confucianism” as a concept for analyzing modern Japanese political history.
- (4) Discuss the utility of “Taisho Democracy” as a concept for analyzing Japanese political history in the early 20th century.
- (5) Discuss the utility of “fascism” as a concept for analyzing political developments in Japan of the 1930s and 1940s.
- (6) The instructor and some of the readings have argued that there is more continuity between 1940s Japan and 1970s Japan than there is between

1930s Japan and 1940s Japan. Discuss the evidence for and against this assertion.

- (7) Maruyama Masao asserted that the support base for “fascism in Japan” was in the old petite bourgeoisie and “pseudo intellectuals” rather than in “true intellectuals” and the modern bourgeoisie (aka salaryman) strata. Analyze the evidence supporting and contradicting Maruyama’s analysis.
- (8) The instructor has asserted that the political history of Japan not just in the 1930s and 1940s but also in the first decades of the postwar era cannot be properly analyzed without an emphasis on Manchuria. Document and analyze the impact of Manchuria on Showa era politics.
- (9) Political change in Japan has been described as “top down” versus “bottom up.” Discuss the degree to which this distinction might be applicable to EITHER (A) the Meiji political reforms or (B) political change 1931-1945.

NOTE: You are free to use one of the above topics as the theme for the option in which you write a longer paper with no “examination.”

Responses to the examination questions should be written like a short research paper. If you cite readings for this course, give a simple note of the form [author, title word, page]. If you use other sources including the Internet, use the same form but also supply a full citation in a “sources consulted” section at the END of your response.

In other words, answers to examination questions and research papers should have the following components:

Cover page

Report text or response to a question

Sources consulted

Each component should begin on a new page. The cover page should have (1) name of course, (2) your name (as used by Waseda), (3) your student number, (4) a title indicating which examination question you are responding to or the subject of your report. It is helpful, but not a

requirement, that each page of the text has your name and student number in the header or the footer.

Unless otherwise agreed upon, your paper or examination should be submitted as a clean copy printed on standard copier paper, A4 size. If for some (agreed upon in advance) reason you submit by email, the file format should be doc, docx, rtf, html, odt, or pdf. The file containing your report should be named as below.

Waseda Your Name Student Number Title Words

For example,

Waseda Earl Kinmonth 99139913 Manchuria in Japanese Politics.rtf

Spaces, hyphens (-), or underscores (_) can be used to separate words in the file name.

NOTE: Electronic submission is only for special circumstances and must be agreed to by the instructor in advance.