The course examines political life in contemporary Japan by exploring the interactions of political parties, bureaucracy, and interest groups and the ongoing transformation of the Japanese political system. Attention is also given to Japan’s political economy and Japan’s relations with the United States.

Requirements

1. **Examinations:** There will be a midterm and a final examination. The midterm will be an in-class examination and will contain several short essay questions, from which students will select two. The midterm will be on **Tuesday, November 4**. The final exam will be an in-class examination as well. You will be asked to answer two essay questions. The final is on **Tuesday, December 9, at 6 p.m.**

2. **Book Review:** Each student is required to write a book review on a book (list of possible books will be distributed to students later). The review should be analytical in nature, five to seven pages in length, and is due on **Tuesday, November 18**.

3. **Class Presentation:** Each student is required to make one class presentation on one of the chapters from the assigned readings. The presentation should be about 10 minutes in length and should summarize the major points of the chapter. A handout is suggested. Your presentation will be graded.

4. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend classes regularly.

**Required Books** The following books are available for purchase at the OSU Book Store.

Marsaru Kohno, *Japan’s Postwar Party Politics* (1997)
These English-language sites provide news coverage on Japan:

www.japantimes.com  
www.newsonjapan.com  
http://home.kyodo.co.jp

Japan’s most widely-read newspaper (which also has the largest circulation of any newspaper in the world) is the conservative *Yomiuri Shimbun*. For English-language translations of *Yomiuri* news articles and opinion pieces go to:

http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/index-e.htm

Japan’s second-largest newspaper by circulation is the left-of-center *Asahi Shimbun*. For English-language translations of the newspaper’s articles and op-ed pieces go to:

http://www.asahi.com/english/english.html

Duke University maintains a collection of links that provide information on almost any Japan-related subject:


**Final Grade**

Class Participation = 10%  
Midterm = 20%  
Book Review = 30%  
Final = 40%  
100%

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities.
Course Outline

Week 1 (9/30 & 10/2)

Course Introduction
Meiji Restoration and Early Democracy

Tipton, Chapters 1-6

Week 2 (10/7 & 9)

The Occupation

Tipton, Chapters 7-9
Kohno, Chapter 3
Schlesinger, Chapters 1-2
10/5 (TR), in-class video: “Reinventing Japan,” 60 minutes

Week 3 (10/14 & 10/16)

The Japanese Political System and Party System

Tipton, Chapter 10
Kohno, Chapters 1-2 & 4

Week 4 (10/21 & 23)

The Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)

Kohno, Chapters 5-6
Schlesinger, Chapters 3-9 & 11-19

Week 5 (10/28 & 30)

The Opposition Parties

Kohno, Chapter 7
Schlesinger, Chapter 10

Week 6 (11/4 & 11/6)

The Political Economy of Japan

Tipton, Chapter 11 (Additional readings will be assigned.)
Week 7 (11/11 & 13)

The Bubble Economy, Bursting the Bubble, and Recession


Tipton, Chapter 12
11/21 (T), in-class video: “The Japanese Economic Bubble,” 60 minutes

Week 8 (11/18 & 11/20)

The Collapse of the LDP in 1993

Kohno, Chapter 8
Schlesinger, Chapters 20-22, & Conclusion

(11/18, Book Review Due)

Week 9 (11/25 & 11/27)

The “Lost Decade”

Michael J. Green, “The U.S.-Japan Alliance: A Brief Strategic History,” pp. 25-30 (handout)
Takashi Inoguchi, “Can the LDP Survive Globalization?” pp. 45-49 (handout)
Andrew L. Oros, “The Domestic and International Politics of Constitutional Change in Japan,” pp. 39-44 (handout)
Tipton, Chapter 13

(11/27, Thanksgiving holiday)

Week 10 (12/2 & 12/4)

Whither Japan? & Conclusion

Tipton, Chapter 14

(Final exam, Tuesday, December 9, at 6 p.m.)