

**Japan Studies 2**  
**Seminar in Special Education: Portrayal of Individuals with**  
**Exceptionalities in Japanese Popular Culture**  
**Fall 2019**

Instructor: Linda Oshita, Ph.D.

Contact information: lindao@hawaii.edu

Class meeting times: Tuesdays from 2:40pm – 4:10pm and Fridays from 1:00pm – 2:30pm

Class location: To be determined

Office location: TBD

Office hours: TBD

**Course Description:** This course will give students a basic foundation for understanding the current issues that individuals with exceptionalities face in modern Japanese society. Through their analysis of the portrayal of individuals with exceptionalities in Japanese folklore and modern popular Japanese culture, students will learn about the connection between culture and the way people with exceptionalities are viewed/portrayed/treated in a given culture. Students will learn to critically analyze the portrayal of individuals with exceptionalities in Japanese folklore and popular media, such as *manga* (Japanese comics), best selling books, anime (animated films), and television dramas. Students will apply their knowledge to critically analyze their own perceptions and beliefs about people with exceptionalities through their own cultural lens.

**Course Format:** Lecture/discussion

**Credits:** Three (3) credits

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

In this course, students will learn to:

1. Understand the connection between culture and the social construct of exceptionalities
2. Analyze the portrayal of individuals with exceptionalities in Japanese folklore and popular media, (e.g., *manga*) and the impact of these portrayals on people with exceptionalities
3. Analyze their own perceptions and beliefs about people with exceptionalities through their own cultural lens
4. Communicate (orally and in writing) their analyses, viewpoints to others
5. Communicate appropriately with diverse individuals and groups
6. Develop an increased capacity to analyze issues with an appreciation for disparate viewpoints

**Required Texts and Readings**

Inoue, Takehiro. (2008). *Real volume 1: VIZ signature edition*. San Francisco: VIZ Media, LLC (English-translated version)

Inoue, Takehiro. (2008). *Real volume 2: VIZ signature edition*. San Francisco: VIZ Media, LLC (English-translated version)

Tobe, Keiko. (2007). *With the light: Raising an autistic child volume I*. New York: Yen Press.  
(English-translated version)

Additional readings (electronic) to be provided by the instructor

## **Course Requirements and Assignments**

### **Attendance**

Students are required to attend all scheduled class sessions. Students are required to attend classes on time and stay for the entire class. Unexcused absences in excess of one week's worth of instruction (e.g., more than 2 classes) will result in a 10-point deduction from the final grade (e.g., one letter grade).

### **Participation and in-class activities (25 points)**

Part of the scheduled class sessions will be devoted to in-class activities and discussion that are connected to the course readings. Student participation in these activities and discussions are critical to the learning process. To make the most of our time together in class, students are expected to read the assignments prior to class. See attached participation rubric below.

Participation rubric	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
	Student: -was punctual; -well prepared; -showed active interest in class proceedings and in mastering course material	Student: -was punctual; -satisfactorily prepared; -displayed adequate interest in class proceedings and in master course material	Student: -was late; -left early; -did not attend class; -was not prepared; -was disruptive/disrespectful; -showed little/no interest in class proceedings and in mastering course material

### **Reaction papers (5 papers @ 5 points each for a total of 25 points)**

Write a 3-page reaction paper (computer generated, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12-point font) on what you learned about the following readings/assignments: (1) Cultural attitudes interview; (2) Japanese mythology and folktales; (3) With the Light; (4) Real; (5) No One's Perfect.

In your reaction papers, answer the following questions:

- 1) What struck you as interesting or notable about the assignment/reading. Why?
- 2) What were your thoughts/previously held notions about this topic?
- 3) How is this in alignment with or different from your current understanding of the topic?
- 4) Have you changed your view about this topic? Why or why not?

Reaction paper rubric	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Concept	All criteria in Acceptable plus: -discussion/analysis integrates various concepts, elements that contributes to a deeper analysis/insight into this topic	Paper clearly describes: -interesting/notable feature and reason why it is notable; -description of previously held notion; -description of similarity/difference between previously held notion and current understanding; -description of changed viewpoint OR discussion of why viewpoint has not changed	Paper does not address or only partially addresses: -interesting/notable feature and reason why it is notable; -description of previously held notion; -description of similarity/difference between previously held notion and current understanding; -description of changed viewpoint OR discussion of why viewpoint has not changed
Writing mechanics	All criteria in Acceptable plus: -cites <u>specific</u> examples from the text, readings	Paper is -organized, easy to read -contains little/no grammatical/spelling errors -within specified guidelines (page limit, formatting) -cites general examples from the text, readings	Paper is: -unorganized, difficult to read -contains grammatical /spelling errors -not within specified guidelines (page limit, formatting) -does not cite examples

### Student-led discussions (20 points)

Find and bring to class an example of how people with exceptionalities are portrayed in popular Japanese media and a similar medium from your home country. (e.g., a Japanese ad for a snack food that prominently displays a person with exceptionalities and an American ad for a power drink that features a person with exceptionalities). Your “find” could be a print ad, flyer, book, manga, magazine, online post, etc. You will lead the class discussion on what you found in relation to what we are learning in class. Some discussion questions to consider are:

- 1) What do you feel is the intention of the people who developed this? What do you think they wanted the consumer to think/feel/know about people with exceptionalities?
- 2) What is your interpretation of their message? Why?
- 3) Is this message good, bad, neutral? For whom?
- 4) How is this message similar/different to a similar medium you found from your home culture?
- 5) How would you (re)design this? Why? What would you do and how is it similar/different to what has been done?

Student-led discussion rubric	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Concept and discussion	<p>All criteria in Acceptable <u>plus</u>:</p> <p>-Discussion leader engaged the group in thought-provoking discussion/engaging activity relevant to the topic</p>	<p>Discussion leader:</p> <p>-used open-ended questions to generate discussion</p> <p>-encouraged participants to engage in discussion</p> <p>-encouraged participants to discuss different viewpoints</p> <p>-used medium that meet the assignment criteria and appropriate for this assignment</p>	<p>Discussion leader:</p> <p>-did not use open-ended questions to generate discussion</p> <p>-did not attempt to engage others in discussion</p> <p>-did not encourage/support participants to share different viewpoints</p> <p>-featured medium did not meet assignment criteria and/or were inappropriate for this assignment</p>

### Final paper (30 points total)

Choose **one** of the following:

1) Watch a Japanese drama or anime series (in its entirety)

**OR**

2) Read a book or manga (English-translated version or original Japanese version IF you are able to read it independently) that features a character(s) with exceptionalities.

**\*\* Be sure to get instructor's approval of your drama/anime/book/manga selection before proceeding with this assignment!**

-Write a critical analysis paper (5-7 pages) about your chosen medium from the perspective of the theories we are learning. Integrate the concepts we have learned throughout this semester to critically analyze the portrayal of the character(s) with exceptionalities. To help organize and guide your writing, I have included questions/prompts for you to consider as you write your paper:

- 1) Introduce and summarize the storyline of your selected drama/anime/book/manga.
- 2) Give an overview of the theories and concepts we learned this semester that you will discuss in your analysis of your selected medium.
- 3) Give a detailed description of the character's disability.
- 4) Provide a description of how the character(s) with exceptionalities is/are portrayed in the storyline.
- 5) Which theory/theories best support your interpretation of this portrayal? Be sure to cite examples to bolster your argument.
- 6) Does Japanese culture play a role in this portrayal? If so, how?
- 7) How is this portrayal of exceptionalities similar or different to your own culture?
- 8) What does this portrayal tell you about the way individuals with exceptionalities are portrayed/viewed in Japanese culture? How do you know this?

Critical analysis paper rubric	Exemplary	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Concept	All criteria in Acceptable plus: -discussion/analysis integrates various concepts, elements that contributes to a deeper analysis/insight into this topic	-Selected medium is appropriate for this paper  Paper clearly describes: -storyline -character's disability -theory and concepts used in the analysis -discussion of analysis from theoretical and cultural standpoint -comparison of Japanese and home culture perspective	-Selected medium is not appropriate for this paper  Paper is lacking one or more of the following elements: -storyline -character's disability -theory and concepts used in the analysis -discussion of analysis from theoretical and cultural standpoint -comparison of Japanese and home culture perspective
Writing mechanics	All criteria in Acceptable plus: -cites <u>specific</u> examples from the text, readings	Paper is -organized, easy to read -contains little/no grammatical/spelling errors -within specified guidelines (page limit, formatting) -cites general examples from the text, readings	Paper is: -unorganized, difficult to read -contains grammatical /spelling errors -not within specified guidelines (page limit, formatting) -does not cite examples

### Assignments and points summary

Assignment	Points	Due
Attendance*/participation/in class activities	25 points	Throughout the semester
Reaction papers (5 papers @ 5 points each)	25 points	On assigned dates throughout the semester
Student-led discussions	20 points	On assigned dates throughout the semester
Final paper	30 points	End of the semester
Total points	100 points	----

**\*points will be deducted for unexcused absences**

**Grading scale:**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Total points</b>
A+	100-98
A	97-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59 points or lower

**Course schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Topic/In-Class Activities</b>	<b>Class Readings (read the assignments listed below <u>prior</u> to class and be ready to discuss in class)</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
9/13 Friday	1	-Course introduction and expectations -Introduction to Google Classroom -Syllabus scavenger hunt	Course syllabus	----
9/17 Tuesday	2	-Overview of IDEA, ADA -Person first language activity -IRIS Module activity	-Mastropieri and Scruggs Chapter 1 -Terminology handout	----
9/20 Friday	3	-Models of disability -Cultural attitudes towards disabilities	Assigned readings	-----
9/24 Tuesday	4	-Etiquette -Universal Design -Campus walk	Assigned readings	Reaction paper #1 (Cultural attitudes interview write up)
9/27 Friday	5	Japanese mythology and folktales	-Issun-Boshi, the Inch High Samurai, -Momotaro, the Peach Boy -Earless Hoichi	----

10/1 Tuesday	6	What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?	Assigned readings	Reaction paper #2 (folktales & mythology)
10/4 Friday	7	Manga: With the Light	With the Light: Reading tips Cultural notes Birth/Infancy Episodes 1,2, & 3	
10/8 Tuesday	8	Manga: With the Light	With the Light: Preschool Years Episodes 1, 2, & 3	----
10/11 Friday	----	Study Tour: No class	Study Tour	Study Tour
10/15 Tuesday	9	Manga: With the Light	With the Light: Early Elementary Years Episodes 1, 2, & 3	----
10/18 Friday	10	Manga: With the Light	With the Light: Early Elementary Years Episodes 4, 5, & 6	----
10/22 Tuesday	----	Holiday: No Class Emperor Enthronement Day	Holiday	Holiday
10/25 Friday	11	Manga: With the Light wrap up	Assigned readings	Reaction paper #3 (reaction to With the Light)
10/29 Tuesday	12	Student-led discussion Midterm check	Assigned readings	Student presentation(s)
11/1 Friday	13	More manga: Real Vol 1	Real Vol 1: 1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> (pgs. 4-126)	---
11/5 Tuesday	14	More manga: Real Vol 1	Real Vol 1: 4 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> (pgs. 127-222)	---
11/8 Friday	15	More manga: Real Vol 2	Real Vol 2: 7 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup> (pgs. 4-104)	---
11/12 Tuesday	16	More manga: Real Vol 2	Real Vol 2: 10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> (pgs. 107-210)	---
11/15 Friday	17	More manga: Real wrap up	Assigned readings	Reaction paper #4 (reaction to Real Vol 1 & 2)
11/19 Tuesday	18	Student-led discussion	Assigned readings	---
11/22 Friday	19	Popular best selling book: No One's Perfect	-Prologue -Takagi-sensei -The Oto-Chan Rules	---

			-The Super Kickboard	
11/26 Tuesday	20	Book: No One's Perfect	-Yatchan -The Love Letter -American Travel Notes -Snowy Day	----
11/29 Friday	21	Student-led discussion	Assigned readings	-Reaction paper #5 (reaction to No One's Perfect) -Student presentations
12/3 Tuesday	22	Print/electronic media	Assigned readings	Final paper draft due
12/6 Friday	23	Print/electronic media	Assigned readings	----
12/10 Tuesday	24	Print/electronic media		----
12/13 Tuesday	25	Course wrap up		Final paper due