

# Introduction to Japanese Economy

Japan studies (Spring 2020)

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## **1. Course Overview**

This course aims to provide students with instructive knowledge of Japanese economy. Four topics i.e., i) history of Japanese economy, ii) cultural economy including manga and animation, iii) transportation system and industry and iv) economic geography will be offered. Students will gain an understanding of characteristics and individuality Japanese economy.

## **2. Learning Goals**

You understand i) how Japanese economy developed and succeeded after the World War II, ii) what are weak points of Japanese economy and how to overcome them, iii) the structure of land use in Japan from the view point of transportation system and industrial location.

## **3. Main Topics**

### (1) History of Japanese economy

Japanese modern economy started 150 years ago when Japan opened its door to foreign countries. Rapid economic growth after WW II is remarkable and Japan became the second largest country in the world. However, after the economic bubble, it has been suffered from long depression.

What were key factors of the rapid economic growth? How to regrowth Japanese economy again?

### (2) Tourism industry

Japanese government tries to grow tourism industry and implements “Visit Japan Campaign”. These efforts are successful and the number of foreign visitors to Japan increased rapidly from six million in 2011 to 31 million in 2018. In particular, tourists are rushing to Kansai, which has many World Heritage sites.

Why foreign tourists come to Japan? How does the growth of tourism industry affect Japanese economy?

### (3) Transportation system of Japan

The Shinkansen was built in 1964 as the world's first high speed railway. The

network of Shinkansen has expanded to connect most of Japanese major cities. Highway network of 8,775km has been constructed, which enables efficient cargo transportation. Sea and air transportation are also necessary for international trade and travel since Japan is an island country.

What are characteristics of transportation in Japan? What problem does the transportation system have?

#### (4) Economic geography of Japan

Economic activities agglomerate at Tokyo, the capital city of Japan. Local core cities such as Sapporo, Sendai, Hiroshima and Fukuoka attract companies and grow as center of each area. On the other hand, rural areas suffer from decrease in population and industrial decline.

Is the location pattern of economic activities economically efficient? If it is needed to revitalize local economy, what kind of policies is effective?

### **4. Required Materials**

Nothing. The instructor hands out slides before the classes. You need to print them out bring them.

### **5. Plan of Each Lesson**

This class consists of lecture part by the instructor about 60 min and group discussion and small presentation by students about 30 min. In lecture part, the instructor teach “today’s topic” and give questions to students. Students discuss the given questions with their classmates. Then, students shortly present the result of their discussion.

At the end of this course, students are required to make a group presentation. Each student chooses a theme from the four topics of this course. Presentation groups will be made with students who choose the same theme.

### **6. Grading**

Attendance and participation 50%

Mid-term Exam 25%

Final Exam 25%

## 7. Lessons Plan

	Day	Topic
Topic 1: History of Japanese economy		
1	1.16	Pre-modern period (~1868)
2	1.20	The industrial revolution (1868~1945)
3	1.23	The rapid economic growth, Japan as number one (1945~1985)
4	1.27	The bubble economy (1985~1990)
5	2.10	The long depression period (1990~2012)
6	2.13	Abenomics and revival of Japanese economy (2012-2019)
Topic 2: Japanese tourism industry		
7	2.17	Visit Japan campaign (Strategies to promote Japan)
8	2.20	Tourism and Economy of Kansai
9	2.27	Tourism and local economy
10	3.2	How to make Japan more attractive?
Exam 1		
11	3.12	Mid-term exam
Topic 3: Transportation system of Japan		
12	3.16	Railways
13	3.23	Road transportation
14	3.26	Air transportation
15	3.30	Marine transportation
Topic 4: Economic geography of Japan		
16	4.2	Location pattern of cities
17	4.6	Economic agglomeration
18	4.9	Urban area
19	4.13	Rural area
20	4.16	Population movement
21	4.20	Regional revitalization policies
Presentations and review		
22	4.23	Preparation for the presentations
23	4.27	Presentation 1
24	5.7	Presentation 2 and review
Exam 2		
25	5.11	Final exam