Syllabus

SOCIETY AND FAMILY IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN - 46411

Last update 14-07-2015

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator:

Coordinator Email:

Coordinator Office Hours:

Teaching Staff: Helena Grinshpun
Course/Module description:
The course examines the dynamic realities of Japanese society by focusing on issues of family and social structure. The first part deals with a number of general socio-cultural factors such as national identity and theories of "self"; class and status; language and patterns of social communication in Japan. The second part focuses on the institute of Japanese family and on the transformation it has been undergoing in the last decades. We touch upon the issues of marriage and parenthood, women's changing roles, body aesthetic and food. Finally, we discuss the recent social challenges facing the Japanese society, mainly those related to youth issues and marginal groups.

Course/Module aims:
The aim of the course is to provide the students with knowledge and tools for comprehending the contemporary Japanese society, and to help develop a critical perspective on the various expressions of culture.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
The students will acquire knowledge on the social and cultural reality of contemporary Japan and get exposed to academic and intellectual subjects which will assist them in pursuing studies in their fields.

Attendance requirements(%):
100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: The students are required to read the relevant material before each class. Apart from the reading assignments, the students will be asked to relate to additional material, such as video clips, street signs, newspaper articles, commercials etc.

Course/Module Content:
Topics:
1. Japan in anthropological perspective: stereotypes, characteristics, and trends
2. Models for understanding the Japanese society: theories and metaphors
3. Japan- a middle-class society or a "gap society"?
4. Class, urbanity, and residential patterns in Japan
5. Childhood, education and socialization in Japan
7. Family, motherhood and women's images in a historical perspective
8. Food and gender
9. Body and aesthetics
10. The Japanese youth: between conformity and resistance
11. Social challenges and problems

Required Reading:
Takami Kuwayama (2004), "Ethnographic reading in reverse", in Native Anthropology, pp. 87-114.


Asada Akira (1989) "Infantile capitalism and Japan's postmodernism: A fairy tale", in Postmodernism and Japan, pp. 273-279.

David Chiavacci (2008), "From class struggle to general middle-class society to divided society: Societal models of inequality in postwar Japan", in Social Science Japan Journal Vol. 11 (1) pp 5-27.


Ekaterina Hertog (2008), "The worst abuse against a child is the absence of a parent: How Japanese unwed mothers evaluate their decision to have a child outside wedlock", in Japan Forum, pp. 193-217.


Laura Spielvogel (2003), "Young, proportionate, leggy, and thin", in Working out in Japan, pp. 142-173.


Tom Gill (2012), "Failed manhood on the streets of urban Japan: The meanings of self-reliance for homeless men", Japan Focus

Additional Reading Material:
Additional material will be determined during the course

Course/Module evaluation:
End of year written/oral examination 90 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 0 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 10 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

Additional information: