

SUMMER II 2015

Dr. Mark Emerson

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HIST. 5313 (3 units)

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HISTORY OF JAPAN SEMINAR

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

HIST 5313 Reading Seminar on Japanese History: This graduate course is a reading based seminar. We will be exploring the world of Japan especially the modern period. In particular, we will be looking at the birth and development of modern Japan 1900-1985 (and beyond).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments:

Reading/Discussion/Participation in Seminar (40% of final grade).

Bibliographic Review Essay 12-15 pages. This assignment consists of a collective review of the four books for the course. You can evaluate them in your paper one by one or by a theme/topic (s). Compare/Contrast, plus critical review. You also have the option of doing individual critical book reviews, either of 3 books at 4-5 pages each or 4 books at 2-3 pages each (60% of final grade).

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Required Texts:

Text: A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower

Kenneth Henshall

Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion: The Creation of the Soul of Japan (Asia Perspectives: History, Society, and Culture)

Donald Keene

Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan

Herbert P. Bix

The Rising Sun: The Decline and Fall of the Japanese Empire, 1936-1945 (Modern Library War)

John Toland

Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II

John W. Dower

Here are some links; one for suggestions for writing a history book review and another that has links to examples of book reviews:

http://www.libraries.uc.edu/research/subject_resources/history/bookrev.html

<http://apps.carleton.edu/curricular/history/study/criticalbookreview/>

Recommended:

Eat right and exercise. Nap as often as possible.

Guidelines and Responsibilities:

1. The seminar through the internet. It goes without saying that it is almost essential to login several times a week. There is a weekly Discussion Board reading and assignment (found under Discussion Board in Blackboard). You will post your final paper to Blackboard or you can e-mail me an attachment of your paper (memerson@sulross.edu)

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GRADING

A Range = Outstanding. All assignment sections are turned in. Projects reflect thoughtful, analytical thinking and a thorough understanding of historical events and trends. Course participation and professionalism are exceptional.

g B Range = All assignment sections are turned in above average, but not outstanding work. Demonstrates understanding of historical events, but the analytical thinking is weaker than that for an "A".

g C Range = Average. All assignment sections are turned in, but indicate an average understanding of historical events. Work tends to be narrative rather than analytical. There is a need for improvement AND/OR written work is "fair." Course participation or professionalism may need improvement.

g D Range= below average. All assignment sections turned in, but writing is purely narrative, there is no analysis and barely answers the question assigned AND/OR assignments are incomplete, course

participation and professionalism need substantial improvement.

3 F Range= Fail: Assignments are not turned in or are “late without the instructor approval” AND/OR are substantially below average and fails to answer question AND/OR participation and professionalism need substantial improvement. Plagiarizing of course work or other unprofessional behavior will result in disciplinary action.

Grade Scale (Based on percentages)

	87-89 = B	77-79 = C	67-69 = D	0-59 = F
93+ = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	63-66 = D	
90-92 = A	80-82 = B	70-72 = C	60-62 = D	

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

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Week One (July 9-15th)

Discussion Board Assignment One. Read the text. Follow directions under the Discussion Board tab on our course Blackboard site.

Week Two (July 16th-22)

Discussion Board Assignment Two. Read Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay analyzing the text; this is a critical analysis where you discuss strengths and weaknesses and analyze about the author’s thesis and main arguments. You will also write at least Two responses to the essays of other students (agreeing or disagreeing or anything that comes to mind concerning their analysis as long as the discussion is academic and civil).

Week Three (July 23-29)

Discussion Board Assignment Three. Read *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*. Write a 3-5

paragraph essay analyzing the text; this is a critical analysis where you discuss strengths and weaknesses and analyze about the author's thesis and main arguments. You will also write at least Two responses to the essays of other students (agreeing or disagreeing or anything that comes to mind concerning their analysis as long as the discussion is academic and civil).

Week Four (July 30-August 5)

Discussion Board Assignment Four. Read The Rising Sun. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay analyzing the text; this is a critical analysis where you discuss strengths and weaknesses and analyze about the author's thesis and main arguments. You will also write at least Two responses to the essays of other students (agreeing or disagreeing or anything that comes to mind concerning their analysis as long as the discussion is academic and civil).

Week Five (August 6-13)

Discussion Board Assignment Five. Read *Embracing Defeat*. Write a 3-5 paragraph essay analyzing the text; this is a critical analysis where you discuss strengths and weaknesses and analyze about the author's thesis and main arguments. You will also write at least Two responses to the essays of other students (agreeing or disagreeing or anything that comes to mind concerning their analysis as long as the discussion is academic and civil).

FINAL PAPER DUE AUGUST 13th!

******Schedule is subject to change!!! Announcements will be made in class in advance of any changes.***

WRITING THE CRITICAL BOOK REVIEW

Dr. Emerson

Every book makes different demands on the reviewer. No single approach is right for all books. The suggestions that follow are just that; suggestions. Use as many of them as seem pertinent, but remain responsive to the book under consideration.

1. Reading the book

When you read, your critical faculty should be alert, but that doesn't mean you are poised for attack. You can do your best if you read in a spirit that is at once critical and sympathetic.

Read the whole book thoroughly and carefully. Reread what you don't understand. Don't skip forewords, prefaces, and other parts that may not appear integral to the text. What you learn here might help you to understand the book better. If possible, it's best to read the book twice, the first time to get an overview, the second time to test your impressions and gather detailed evidence.

Take notes as you read. The list that follows will give you an idea of what to watch for. Taking notes also helps you stay alert as you read, and gives you the opportunity to mark effective passages for quoting.

2. Questions to ask as you read

What are the author's subject and the broad field into which the work fits?

What approach does the author take to the subject? What is the central thesis? What are the author's assumptions? What methodology is used?

What are the author's primary sources? How comprehensive is the research?

For whom is the book written? Fellow scholars? Non-academics? Is the book appropriate to its audience?

How is the book structured? Is its development orderly and logical? Is it clear?

Is the author's prose readable? Exceptionally good? Does the author have an intrusive style?

Does the book have illustrations? An index? Bibliography? What other features does it have? Are they effective and useful?

How appropriate is the book's title? Does it promise essentially what the book delivers?

Are you aware of factual errors in the book? Oversights? Faulty assumptions?

Why was the book written? Has the author met these objectives?

What is your personal response to the book? Is it satisfying to read? Is it enjoyable? Convincing? Why? If it isn't, why not?

3. Writing the review

Writing a book review is much like writing any other short essay. There is no universal formula, but following a few basic guidelines can simplify the task.

Review your notes and list the points you'd like to make.

Arrange those points in a logical order. Time spent now on organization not only produces a strong, clear structure, but also allows you to concentrate on phrasing during the writing of the first draft. One possible way of setting up the essay is like this:

A brief description of the subject, aim, and scope of the book

An outline of its thesis and its bias

A detailed assessment of the author's main contentions

An evaluation of the book's major strengths and weaknesses

An assessment of the book's place in the literature of its subject

*****Write the review in your own words (do not plagiarize!) and DO NOT just summarize (follow the above instructions!!)**

Write the first draft, not stopping to fine tune the phrasing, but aiming to get onto the paper all that you have to say.

After some time has elapsed, read the draft critically, noting where it is ambiguous, incomplete, or overwritten.

Read the second draft, checking for errors in grammar and punctuation, and making sure that you have said just what you meant.

Type the final draft.

Proofread the typed copy, and correct as necessary to ensure that it is free from errors.

Turn in **on or before** the due date. **DUE AUGUST 13.**

