Japanese Language and Culture

Course Title	: Japanese Language and Culture
Course Code	: JAP2001
Year of Study	: 2, 3 & 4 in priority (open to Year 1)
Number of Credits/ Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category in Programme	: Free Elective
Recommended	: Cumulative GPA of 2.2
Restriction	: Nil

Course Description

This course is open to those who are interested in learning more about Japanese culture and society. Through this course, students can learn about both traditional and contemporary Japanese society and culture, as well as the deeply ingrained relationship between language and culture.

Aims

The main aims of this course are to:

• Introduce Japanese culture to broaden your understanding of the Japanese workplace;
• Acquire critical thinking abilities while gaining an understanding of Japanese culture;
• Cultivate understanding of the intricate connection between culture and language; and
• Offer you a range of activities that will allow you to experience Japanese culture;

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Investigate and analyse Japan's modern and traditional cultures through a comprehensive presentation, demonstrating critical engagement with cultural themes;
- Explain the foundational elements of the Japanese language, including grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics, and illustrate their significance in communication;
- Describe the historical development and current usage of the Japanese language, and evaluate its evolution within sociocultural contexts;
- Identify the geographical characteristics of Japan and assess how these factors influence cultural practices and language use; and
- Develop critical thinking skills while engaging with Japanese cultures, enabling you to synthesise information and articulate informed perspectives on cultural phenomena.

Indicative Content

A range of self-developed and authentic materials will be used to cater for the needs and interests of the students as well as to maintain a high level of motivation and enjoyment. Activities will be varied and will have traditional as well as contemporary aspects.

Topics will include:

- History and foundations of Japanese language: Linguistic foundations include a unique writing system that reflects centuries of cultural exchange and adaptation.
- Geographical characteristics of Japan: Geographical features, a variety of climates, and frequent natural events that shaped Japanese society.
- Different traditional and contemporary cultural aspects: The coexistence of traditional and contemporary cultural elements in modern Japanese society.
- Trending hobbies in Japan: Popular hobbies in Japan include both traditional activities like ikebana (flower arranging), as well as contemporary pastimes such as gaming, karaoke, and cosplay.
- Food culture in Japan: The emphasis on seasonality, presentation, and fresh ingredients of Japanese cuisine.
- Public events and festivals in Japan: A wide range of public events and traditional festivals (matsuri) throughout the year.

Teaching Method

Students will work on a range of activities either individually or in small groups. After reviewing materials on contemporary Japan issues, group discussions will be conducted to let student express their point of view. The main teaching focus will be on using interactive and learner-centred methods of learning where students are encouraged to use and explore Japanese culture.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes will be assessed in the following ways:

	Assessment Methods			
Learning Outcomes	Quiz1	Quiz2	Presentation	Participation & Discussion
Investigate and analyse Japan's modern and traditional cultures through a comprehensive presentation, demonstrating critical engagement with cultural themes.			✓	✓
Explain the foundational elements of the Japanese language, including grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics, and illustrate their significance in communication.		✓		✓
Describe the historical development and current usage of the Japanese language, and evaluate its evolution within sociocultural contexts.		✓		✓
Identify the geographical characteristics of Japan and assess how these factors influence cultural practices and language	✓			✓

use.				
Develop critical thinking skills while engaging with Japanese cultures, enabling you to synthesise information and articulate informed perspectives on cultural phenomena.			✓	✓

Assessment

The assessment is 100% by continuous assessment. It will follow the regular grading system, i.e. grades A to F. Components of assessment include:

Continuous assessment (100%)

1	Quiz1	20%
2	Quiz2	20%
3	Presentation	40%
4	Participation & Discussion	20%

"Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work."

Assessment	Weight	Details
Quiz1	20%	You are required to identify the significance of the cultural ideas and concepts that were covered in class. Multiple choices will be provided in this section.
Quiz2	20%	You are required to identify the significance of the cultural ideas and concepts that were covered in class. Multiple choices will be provided in this section.
Presentation	40%	Analyze a Japanese animation, comic, game, film, drama, or book of your choosing. For your analysis, you can pick one or two of the areas below. Area of analysis: Religion, Family issue ,Gender issue, Subcultures, and Social stigma, etc.
Participation & Discussion	20%	Throughout the course, active involvement is regularly evaluated. It is expected of students to respond to activities posed by the teacher during class.

Essential readings

Davies, R. J., & Ikeno, O. (2002). The Japanese mind: understanding contemporary Japanese culture. Tuttle Pub.

Recommended/Supplementary Readings

Martinez, D. P. (Ed.). (2007). Modern Japanese culture. Cambridge University Press.
Sugimoto, Y. (2014). An introduction to Japanese society (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

(1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.

(2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is "the presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student's own work". Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

(3) Students are required to submit the final portfolio using Turnitin.

(4) To enhance students' understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course "Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness" is available on https://pla.ln.edu.hk\

(5) Students must adhere to the University's guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents "Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University" and "Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments" can be found here: https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificial-intelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices.

Use of Generative AI

At CEAL we adopt a forward thinking and pragmatic approach to the use of Generative AI by students.

Each assessment will carry guidelines about what type of AI use is acceptable. If you cannot find these, or if they are unclear, please ask your teacher.

If there is a question over the inappropriate use of GenAI ("authorship") we will carry out an investigation. If you are found to, on the balance of probabilities, have used Gen AI inappropriately, you will be asked to rewrite and resubmit. There will also be a cap on your grade

More information can be found at: CEAL Gen AI Policy for students.pdf

Marking Grid - JAP2XXX Quiz 1

Grade	Criteria
Excellent (100-90marks)	・ Answers all or almost all questions correctly. ・ Accurately identifies all or almost all key geographical features of Japan. ・ Almost no mistakes; responses show thorough preparation and insight.
Good (89-80marks)	・ Answers most questions correctly. ・ Correctly identifies most geographical features. ・ Only a small number of mistakes; knowledge is solid overall.
Satisfactory (79-60marks)	・ Answers some questions correctly, but has several mistakes. ・ Answers show basic recognition of major geographical features, but may confuse less prominent ones. ・ Several incorrect answers; demonstrates partial but limited grasp.
Needs Improvement (59-40marks)	・ Answers few questions correctly. ・ Identifies only a few geographical features correctly. ・ Frequent mistakes and unclear or inconsistent answers.
Unsatisfactory (40-0marks)	・ Most answers are incorrect or missing. ・ Fails to identify key geographical characteristics. ・ Almost entirely incorrect; shows no meaningful understanding of the quiz topics.

Marking Grid - JAP2XXX Quiz 2

Grade	Criteria
Excellent (100-90marks)	・ Answers all or almost all questions correctly. ・ Clearly demonstrates in-depth knowledge of foundational language elements, history, and sociocultural influences. ・ Almost no mistakes; responses show thorough preparation and insight.
Good (89-80marks)	・ Answers most questions correctly. ・ Shows solid grasp of knowledge of foundational language elements, history, and sociocultural influences. ・ Only a small number of mistakes; knowledge is solid overall.
Satisfactory (79-60marks)	・ Answers some questions correctly, but has several mistakes. ・ Demonstrates basic knowledge; may miss subtler aspects or mix up some foundational elements and historical details. ・ Several incorrect answers; demonstrates partial but limited grasp.
Needs Improvement (59-40marks)	・ Answers few questions correctly. ・ Limited grasp of Japanese language structure, history, or sociocultural context. ・ Frequent mistakes and unclear or inconsistent answers.
Unsatisfactory (40-0marks)	・ Most answers are incorrect or missing. ・ Shows little to no knowledge of language fundamentals, history, or their significance.

	• Almost entirely incorrect; shows no meaningful understanding of the quiz topics.

Marking grid – Presentation

Grade	Knowledge	Communication	Visual Aids	Critical thinking
10-9	Shows a thorough comprehension of the subject matter. Relevant references provide strong support for all conclusions and analyses.	An extremely well-planned and structured presentation that covers the subject, extent of study, methodology, findings and analysis, and study constraints presented in an understandable and succinct manner.	Visual aids are used highly effectively to summarize the information presented and/or to highlight important points with instructive examples.	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the rational relationships that exist between concepts and ideas. Demonstrates the capacity for independent and reflective thought.
8-6	Shows a clear comprehension of the subject matter.	A well-structured presentation with a logical flow of concepts.	Visual aids are used largely effectively, demonstrating technological competence and careful planning.	Demonstrates a good understanding of the rational relationships that exist between concepts and ideas.
3-5	Shows a reasonable comprehension of the subject matter.	A rather clear organization with one or two essential components (such as methodology, study scope, etc.) missing.	Visual aids are used inefficiently due to lack of advanced preparation.	Demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the rational relationships that exist between concepts and ideas.
1-2	Shows a little comprehension of the subject matter.	Lacks a distinct organizational framework.	Visual aids are rarely used to assist comprehension in the presentation.	Demonstrates a limited understanding of the rational relationships that exist between concepts and ideas.
0	Show no comprehension of the subject matter	No organizational framework.	Visual aids are not used to assist comprehension in the presentation.	Demonstrates no understanding of the rational relationships that exist between concepts and ideas.

Marking grid – Participation & Discussion

Grade	Criteria
9-10 (Excellent)	• attendance rate is over 95% • always punctual for class • always contribute and actively participate in class activities and discussion
6-8 (Good)	• attendance rate is between 95-70% • usually punctual for class • usually contribute and participate in class activities and discussion
3-5 (Fair)	• attendance rate is between 70-50% • often punctual for class • often contribute and participate in class activities and discussion
1-2 (Pass)	• attendance rate is 40-50% • often late for class • rarely contribute or participate in class activities and discussion
0 (Failure)	• attendance rate is below 40% • Rarely on time for class • No contribution or participation in class activities and discussion

Grading

Your work on this course will be assessed to the following standards:

Grade	**Standard**	**Percentage**	**Grade Points**
A	Excellent	88% < 100%	4.00
A-		80% < 88%	3.67
B+	Good	75% < 80%	3.33
B		70% < 75%	3.00
B-		65% < 70%	2.67
C+	Fair	60% < 65%	2.33
C		55% < 60%	2.00
C-		50% < 55%	1.67
D+	Pass	45% < 50%	1.33
D		40% < 45%	1.00
F	Failure	<40%	0.00