History of the Samurai
HIST 3313 001, Fall 2020, MW 1–2:15, LAN 142

Philip E. Catton, Liberal Arts North 361
Contact Information: E-mail – pcatton@sfasu.edu; Tel. 468-2387
Office hours: Virtual Hours, TR, 8 – 10:30 am; or by appointment

COVID-19 Mask Policy
Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.


Course Description
Examines the origins, evolution, and values of Japan’s warrior class from the 600’s to modern times. The course will trace the emergence of the samurai, their rise to the status of a ruling elite, their dissolution in the 1800’s, and the various modern reincarnations of samurai values.

Texts and Materials
There are 3 types of texts and materials:

(1) The following books are required reading and can be purchased at the bookstores:

- Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Hideyoshi*
- Donald Keene (tr.), *Chūshingura*
- Yukio Mishima, *Patriotism*

(2) Besides the books, I will provide you with additional materials (articles, documents, and visual sources). Hard copies of most of these materials will be handed out in class and electronic copies can be found on the Brightspace course site or the internet. The materials for each class session are listed on the course calendar. Because we will discuss, in class, the materials assigned for that particular day, you should read or review the relevant assignments before coming to that class meeting. Your familiarity with the materials will also be tested on the midterm and final exams. Please keep up
with the assignments and bring the reading materials to class, so that we can all refer to them during our discussions.

(3) You will be responsible for watching two films during the semester (*The Last Samurai* and *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*). You may have to rent the films, at a modest cost, on the internet.

**Course Requirements**

**Class Participation**
Class periods will consist of lecture interspersed with discussion. Because the class will involve significant discussion, you should actively participate; indeed, the success of the class discussions depends upon your conscientious preparation and participation. I appreciate, though, that some students feel more comfortable than others about talking in class. I don’t want to penalize those who prepare thoroughly but don’t always show it in class. Consequently, you will find in the “Discussions” section of the Brightspace course site (under “Course Tools”) a discussion forum. Here, you may post your thoughts on the discussion materials, additional thoughts following our in-class discussion, and reply to any of your classmates’ postings. To receive credit, however, you must post on a topic before the start of the next class period (for example, if you want to post about the materials that we will discuss in class on Wednesday August 26, you should do so before our next class meeting on Monday August 31). To reflect its importance, class participation will form part of the grade (see under “Grades”).

**Quiz and Exams**
There will be a midterm exam on **October 7** and a final exam on **December 7**. These will be in-class examinations consisting of written answers. The final exam will not be cumulative; it will only deal with material covered after the midterm. In addition, there will be one in-class quiz on **October 21**, which will consist of objective questions based on Donald Keene’s *Chūshingura*. No make-up quizzes or exams will be given unless you make prior arrangements with me to miss the scheduled test. If you miss a test due to an emergency on the day, you will not be allowed to take a make-up unless you can provide me with an appropriate excuse and/or documentation to justify your absence.

**Written Assignments**
There will be two written assignments: (1) Review of Mary Elizabeth Berry’s *Hideyoshi* due on **September 28**; and (2) Critique of the film, *The Last Samurai*, due on **November 11**. Please see the end of the syllabus for further details.

**Course Policies**

*Academic Integrity (Student Academic Dishonesty, Policy 4.1)*
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Academic and professional careers have ended because of dishonesty, especially plagiarism. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, please let me know. In doing so, we can avoid what could be a costly and serious error.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf)

**Attendance**
There will be no grade given for class attendance, but it is most unlikely that you will do well unless you attend regularly. You are responsible for all material covered during class time. Any consequences of absence from class are your responsibility.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Grades**
The grades for the course will be determined as follows: 20% for class participation; 5% for the quiz; 15% for the Review; 20% for the Critique; 20% for the midterm examination; and 20% for the final examination. The grading scale is as follows: A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = 59 or less.
**Withheld Grades (Semester Grades Policy, A-54)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Contact/Communication**
Email is the most convenient and easiest means of contacting me, especially for quick questions. We can also talk after class. I will hold virtual, rather than physical, office hours this semester. These will be on TR, 8-10:30 am. See the “Content” section of the Brightspace course site for how to access my virtual office hours.

**Course Calendar**

**Week 1 (8/24 – 8/26) Course Introduction / Power & Politics in Classical Japan**
- **Reading 8/26**: The Seventeen Article Constitution; The Reform Edict of Taika; and Preface to *Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters)*

**Week 2 (8/31 – 9/2) Rise of the Samurai / Emerging Warrior Culture**
- **Reading 8/31**: Ethan Segal, “The Shōen System”; Plan to Cultivate One Million Chō of New Fields; Land Held for Three Generations or One Generation; Private Ownership of Reclaimed Land; Proscription of Private Ownership of Land; and Edict to Curtail Spread of Shōen
- **Reading 9/2**: Minamoto no Mitsuru and Taira no Yoshifumi: The Duel; Minamoto no Mitsunaka: Warrior’s Conversion; Muraoka no Gorō and Hakamadare: To Know when to be Alert; Taira no Koremochi, AKA General Yogo: ‘Did you bring his head’; Minamoto no Yorinobu

**Week 3 (9/7 – 9/9) Genpei War / Atsumori – Noh Theater**
- **Reading: 9/9**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WIYJQHBB0 for a live performance of *Atsumori* (for a PDF download of the play, see http://www.the-noh.com/en/plays/data/program_008.html)

**Week 4 (9/14 – 9/16) Kamakura Shogunate / External & Internal Threats**
• **Reading 9/14:** *Goseibai Shikimoku* – Formulary for the Shogun’s Decision of Lawsuits

• **Reading 9/16:** [http://digital.princeton.edu/mongol-scrolls/](http://digital.princeton.edu/mongol-scrolls/) for Suenaga’s scrolls of the Mongol invasions of Japan

**Week 5 (9/21 – 9/23) Medieval Warrior Culture / Muromachi Shogunate**

• **Reading 9/21:** The Suicide of Nakatoki and His Warriors, in Helen McCullough ed., *The Taiheiki*, 266-70; Hōjō Shigetoki’s instructions to his son

• **Reading 9/23:** Dale Slusser, “The transformation of tea practice in sixteenth-century Japan,” 39-60

**Week 6 (9/28 – 9/30) Sengoku Japan / Sengoku Warfare**

• **Reading 9/28:** Berry, *Hideyoshi*, 1-65 (chs. 1-3)

• **REVIEW DUE 9/28**


**Week 7 (10/5 – 10/7) Three Unifiers**

• **Reading 10/5:** Berry, *Hideyoshi*, 66-241 (chs. 4 – Afterword)

• **October 7:** MIDTERM EXAM

**Week 8 (10/12 – 10/14) Bakuhan System / Taming of the Samurai**

• **Reading 10/12:** Laws of Military Households (*Buke Shohatto*), 1615 & 1635

• **Reading 10/14:** Katsu Kokichi, *Musui’s Story*, ix-xviii, 43-51, 59-60, 71-74, 94-97, 100-11, 144-46, 156-57

**Week 9 (10/19 – 10/21) Tensions in Tokugawa System / Revenge of the 47 Samurai**

• **Reading 10/19:** Yamaga Sokō, *The Way of the Warrior*; Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure* (*Hidden in Leaves*)

• **Reading & Quiz 10/21:** Chūshingura, ALL

**Week 10 (10/26 – 10/28) Samurai Discontent / “Opening” of Japan**

• **Reading 10/26:** Luxurious Living of Samurai; Decline in Samurai Morale; Letter from Tani Tannai; and Statement from Three Village Leaders to a Tokugawa Bannerman
• **Reading 10/28:** Letters from President Fillmore and Commodore Perry to the Emperor of Japan; Tokugawa Nariaki to Bakufu; and Ii Naosuke to Bakufu

**Week 11 (11/2 – 11/4) Meiji Restoration / Meiji Japan**

• **Reading 11/2:** Yoshida Shōin’s Prison Letter; Yoshida Shōin, *On Leadership, On Being Direct, Facing Death, and Selfishness and Heroism*
• **Reading 11/4:** Kido Köin’s Recollection of Return of Feudal Domains; Memorial on the Return of Feudal Domains and Census Registers; Replacing Han with Prefectures – Letter of Kido Köin; Military Conscription Ordinance

**Week 12 (11/9 – 11/11) Samurai in the New Japan / The Last Samurai**

• **Reading 11/9:** *The Autobiography of Shibuzawa Eiichi; The Autobiography of Fukuzawa Yukichi*
• **Reading 11/11:** Film: *The Last Samurai;* Mark Ravina, “The Apocryphal Suicide of Saigō Takamori: Samurai, Seppuku, and the Politics of Legend”; Images of Saigō Takamori on the Brightspace course site
• **CRITIQUE DUE 11/11**

**Week 13 (11/16 – 11/18) Revival or Reinvention of Bushidō / Last Samurai (Take Two)**

• **Reading 11/16:** Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido*, 7-9, 13-19, 76-84, 155-63
• **Reading 11/18:** Karl Friday, “Bushido or Bull? A Medieval Historian’s Perspective on the Imperial Army and the Japanese Warrior Tradition”

THANKSGIVING BREAK

**Week 14 (11/30 – 12/2) Last Samurai (Take Three) / Globalization of the Samurai**

• **Reading 11/30:** Yukio Mishima, *Patriotism, ALL*
• **Reading 12/2:** Film: *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*

**Final Examination: Monday, December 7, 1:30 – 4 PM**
Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes:
The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for all SFA students earning a B.A. degree in History. The SFA History major can:

(1) Interpret the past in context.
(2) Understand the complex nature of the historical record.
(3) Engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis.
(4) Craft historical narrative and argument.
(5) Practice historical thinking as central to engaged citizenship.

This course will focus primarily on PLOs 1-4.

Student Learning Outcomes:
The more specific outcomes for this particular course are as follows. In this class, you will:

(1) Identify and explain the origins, evolution, and values of Japan’s warrior class from the 600’s to modern times.
(2) Critically analyze primary sources, identifying their audience and goals and recognizing both their value and limitations in reconstructing the past.
(3) Evaluate various kinds of secondary sources by crafting organized and effective written analyses.

Explanation of credit hours awarded for course:
This is an upper-level history course. Upper-level lecture courses in history meet for 2,250 minutes (37.5 hours), including examination times, during the course of a semester. Students typically have weekly reading assignments from a combination of textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, primary document collections, and supplemental materials (biographies, historical novels, memoirs, etc.). The level of reading is more advanced than that required in lower-level surveys, and the number of pages that students are required to read is generally higher. Typical upper-level courses require students to take 2-3 essay exams per semester, in addition to the final exam, which is also generally a written exam. In addition, out-of-class writing assignments (book reviews, biographical sketches, research papers, etc.) are typically required in upper-level courses. Course instructors are required to hold regular scheduled office hours to make themselves available to consult with students as needed. Combined, studying for exams, doing the required reading, completing writing assignments, and consulting with course instructors average two hours of work outside the classroom for every hour spent in the classroom.
Written Assignments

Review
You will write a review of Mary Elizabeth Berry’s *Hideyoshi*. The purpose of a review is to inform a potential reader about a book’s contents and value – and ultimately whether the prospective reader should bother investing their time and money in it. Writing a review is an art because you don’t have many words with which to play. Consequently, the reviewer must be succinct (to the point) but at the same time offer a lively and informative description and analysis. Thus, this exercise will develop your skills in digesting a substantial amount of reading, identifying a book’s thesis and arguments, and expressing your thoughts in a clear, incisive, and engaging manner.

Your review should begin by indicating the subject of the book and briefly summarizing its main argument(s). You should then comment on its strengths and weaknesses – in other words, evaluate the contents of the book and discuss the objections, agreements, and questions that flow from your reading and mulling over of the work. You will want to comment on the persuasiveness of the book’s thesis and arguments. You may also want to highlight certain parts of the book that you found particularly interesting or dissatisfying. You may want to comment as well on the writing style – something that can make or break a reader’s perception of a book. It is not necessary to touch on every aspect of the work under review. Indeed, it is likely that you will do better to pick a limited number of issues or ideas on which to concentrate your effort. After all, you do not have many words with which to work.

You do not need to do any additional research for this exercise, but I have no objection to you doing so or to you drawing on other reviews of the book that may have appeared in scholarly journals, etc. If you do use additional sources, please cite them in footnotes – as you would if you were using these sources to write a research paper. I am most interested, though, in your response to the work you are reviewing.

Your review should be approximately 750 words, typed and double-spaced (12-point type; 1 inch margins). **Due on September 28** (see “Submission” below).

Critique
You will write a critique of the film, *The Last Samurai*. A critique does not have to be critical, in the negative sense of that word (although it can be). Rather, your task is to assess or evaluate the movie. Consider your piece the sort that would appear in the *New York Times Magazine*. In other words, your review should be written for someone who may have no detailed knowledge about the topic, but who is interested in what one can learn (or not) from this particular movie and, in general, from historical films. This exercise will enable you to apply your knowledge of the samurai and Japanese history to an evaluation of a source – in this case a movie – and to express your thoughts clearly in writing.
You should analyze the film primarily as a work of history, not a work of art; I wouldn’t object to some relevant commentary on the film as a visual spectacle, but I don’t want extended discussion of cinematography or camera angles. You can decide the criteria for evaluation, but you might consider the following issues (these are only suggestions and are, by no means, exhaustive). How does the film relate to the period of history in which it is set and is it an accurate portrayal of events? How does it depict the samurai, is the depiction accurate, and what might that tell us about the portrayal of samurai in popular culture? What are the responsibilities of an historical film to get right the historical facts? What, if anything, can a film tell us about the past that the written word cannot?

Although the knowledge and information derived from our class will hopefully provide you with a good foundation, I want you to conduct additional reading and research for the critique. The class preparation materials for our meeting on November 11 should prove useful (Mark Ravina’s article and the images of Saigō Takamori on the Brightspace course site). For questions about the nature of historical films and the responsibilities of an historical film to get right the historical facts, you may also find the following article valuable: Robert Rosenstone, “JFK: Historical Fact/Historical Film,” American Historical Review, April 1992, pp.506-11. These are just suggested starting points for additional research – I would like to see at least half-a-dozen sources used for the critique.

Your critique should be approximately 1500 words, typed and double-spaced (12-point type; 1 inch margins). The paper should include the proper citation of sources and a bibliography. As a guide, see the Chicago Manual of Style – there are several copies of this work available in the Library, including at the Reference Desk. Due on November 11 (see “Submission” below).

Submission
In addition to providing me with a hard-copy of the paper, you must also submit an electronic one to an anti-plagiarism website – turnitin.com. If you have never used turnitin.com, you will first need to register as a user. On the main page, click on “create account” at the top right. You will need the class ID (25907055) and course enrolment key (Samurai). You will also be asked for your email address, and you will choose a user password. When you are ready to submit your paper, follow the instructions to upload it.