IDS 2935: The Anim(e)ted World: Exploring Global Issues Through Anime

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Student Hours: W Period 5 (11:45am-12:35pm) or by appointment
Gen Ed Designations: Humanities (H), International (N), Writing Requirement (WR)

Course Description

This course uses the medium of Japanese animation (anime) to explore social, political, cultural, and economic issues of global relevance today. The premise of this course is that pop culture can treat serious topics and address real issues and challenges facing the world. We will examine anime containing commentary and critique relevant to some of the most pressing modern concerns. Students will both examine various contemporary issues through a close reading of anime texts, and develop skills to analyze pop culture. This is not a survey course of anime or Japanese visual culture, but a course which uses pop texts to discuss a variety of relevant topics. Throughout this course students will confront issues of identity, the environment, gender, capitalism, surveillance, war, power, and other themes through the lens of the humanities. The course will consider how pop cultural texts participate in the conversation on what makes a fair and just society, how we know truth, and how we can even manage conflicts between individuals and groups to form a society in the first place, especially in the face of changing technologies. The focus will be on the operation of power in society in its various forms. The course will examine the relationship between power and knowledge; the power to surveil and know; the relationship between power, security, and terror; society's power to accept and exclude; the power of capital; and the potential for opposition to power. Students will examine how texts produced in the particular social, political, and cultural environment of Japan can have global relevance through today's increasingly interconnected world and comment on issues of relevance to their own lives. At the same time students will learn critical humanities methodologies and—most crucially—how to employ those methodologies to confront the pop cultural texts they consume. Students will also learn some of the tropes and conventions of anime and how they affect its portrayal of social reality. All readings / viewings are in English.

Course Delivery

This course is a highly discussion-based class designed to encourage interaction between students and between students and the instructor, foster analytical thinking, and the exchange of ideas about texts. Discussion leaders will present their ideas about fictional texts, which will then serve as a launching point for class discussion. Students will discuss texts in small groups, then use the small group discussion as a launching point for a class discussion lead by the instructor. Students are encouraged to not only

discuss their personal reaction to the texts, but also their ideas about a given text's commentary on the social and political issues each unit addresses and how these issues relate to their own lives. There is no lecture, but critical concepts and terms may be highlighted by the instructor during class discussion. On days where a critical reading is assigned, students will discuss their interpretation of the reading and relate it to society or contemporary issues.

Textbooks and Other Materials

There are no textbooks that need to be purchased. However, you may need to purchase access to one or more streaming services. Some films will be available on reserve at Library West, and additional materials will be made available on Canvas.

Class Policies

Absences

There will be no makeups for missed exams without a valid, documented excuse (e.g., a doctor's note, jury summons, etc.). You are allowed three unexcused absences without question. After that, each additional unexcused absence will result in a 1% drop in your final grade. An unexcused absence will, of course, result in a zero for your class participation grade for that day.

Late Work

The essay is due at the assigned time and date. Late essays will be marked down 10% for every 24 hours late (i.e., if an essay is due at 11:55 P.M. on Monday, submissions between 11:56 P.M. Monday and 11:55 P.M. Tuesday will be marked down 10%, submissions between 11:56 P.M. Tuesday and 11:55 P.M. Wednesday will be marked down 20%, and so on).

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, either in the form of cheating or plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any proven instances may result in an automatic grade of "E" for the entire course and WILL result in referral to the Dean of Students Office.

Examine the UF honor code at https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code/: particularly the following:

> On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:
>
> "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."
>
> VIOLATIONS OF THE STUDENT HONOR CODE.
>
> E. Plagiarism. A Student must not represent as the Student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.

2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.

3. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.

4. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

To avoid common issues remember: <u>when in doubt, cite.</u>

- <u>Words</u> taken verbatim from another source, whether a whole paragraph, a sentence, or part of a sentence, must be placed in quotes and cited. Changing a few words here and there does <u>not</u> make it your original work.
- If you take an <u>idea</u> from another source, you should acknowledge your borrowing in the text of the essay and provide a citation.

Evaluation of Grades

Grades will be assessed according to the following breakdown. See below for descriptions:

Discussion Leader Presentation - 15%
Class Participation - 10%
Blog - 10%
SwampCon Participation and Post- 5%
Final Essay - 20%
  In-class essay prep activities – 5%
Midterm - 15%
Final - 20%

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69

D	63-66
D-	60-62
E	0-59

More information on grades and grading policies can be found here:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Assignments

Discussion Leader Group Presentation

Some days (those not marked N/A on the course schedule) will have student discussion leaders. Sign up for a day to be a discussion leader by visiting People->Discussion Leaders in Canvas. You will team up with one or two other students to give a 10-12 minute presentation. Your presentation should focus your classmates' attention on specific features of the day's text(s) that are interesting and the class might talk about. Point out key features, either visual or narrative; identify key plot or character development moments; compare and contrast to earlier works; relate it to readings; show us anything you found surprising or interesting. Your presentation should <u>NOT</u> contain plot summary, <u>we have all just watched the work and know the plot</u>. Instead try to **particularly** reflect on how the viewings address not only issues in Japan but issues relevant globally, and to your own life and experience as well. You should prepare a visual aid to help present your ideas (i.e., Powerpoint). After this quick presentation, you should be prepared to lead the class in a discussion, so your last slide should consist of 2-3 <u>discussion questions</u> about the text that can serve to spark class discussion. Each person should participate more or less equally in the preparation and presentation, and the same grade will be assigned to the whole group.

Class Participation

Since a major aspect of this course is class and group discussion, you should be prepared to participate in these discussions each class day. This means you should have read the assigned reading, viewed the assigned film, and thought about them. You need to actively engage with your classmates, contribute your own original ideas, discuss classmates' ideas, and have a positive impact on the class discussion. Discussions should focus not only on your reaction to the text, but also analyze how the text relates to your own life and to the pressing issues of our day.

Blog

You will be required to maintain a blog on tumblr.com and write a post before each class session. For each day's reading(s) and viewing(s), you should jot down about 300 words, or a long paragraph (you can certainly write more, but it is not expected). Try to particularly reflect on:
- How the viewings address not only issues in Japan but issues relevant globally.
- How the viewings relate (or not) to your own life and experience.
- Connections between the assigned academic readings and the viewings, if relevant.

Also include at least one relevant image. You should publish a blog post every day *before* class, by midnight the night before. This is a learning tool that will help you reflect upon the readings. You should also post a comment on at least one classmate's blog before class each day, due before class. This will become a journal of your thoughts. At the end of the course, you will have an opportunity to reflect on how your thoughts about anime and media have changed over the semester.

This assignment is graded on completion. As long as you post something of the required length that engages with the text thoughtfully according to the above criteria, and post it on time, you get 100%. Note that this is your own blog that belongs to you: you can keep using it after this class, and you can certainly post other things to it besides class stuff. Just make sure your classmates can find the class posts and that the material is appropriate for class!

See my blog, prof-csmith.tumblr.com, for instructions on getting started. You should create your blog and submit the URL (i.e., the address username.tumblr.com) by Friday January 10. The graded posts will begin with the reading on Wednesday January 12 (so the first post is due, to avoid confusion, by 11:59pm on Tuesday January 11).

SwampCon Participation and Post

As the experiential learning component of the course, students will attend the SwampCon anime convention in March. You will then be required to write a longer (~600 words) blog post about your experience, situating it within our class discussion about youth culture, fandom, and cultural identity formation. Attendance at the con is required, but students with documented extenuating circumstances should consult with me about possible alternatives.

Final Essay

There will be one 2,000-word essay. This is a <u>persuasive</u> essay that presents a thesis and defends it by citing from the readings or viewings. For this essay at least two secondary scholarly sources are required. Scholarly sources are books from academic presses or articles from academic journals. Encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines, personal websites, and organizational websites are <u>not</u> scholarly sources. Neither are unpublished theses or papers, although exceptions are possible. You should cite other scholars *making an argument that supports your argument*, not random or well-known facts.

The goal of this paper is to give you a high degree of freedom to explore topics and works that interest you, using the knowledge and analytical skills you have learned in class. You should pick your own work of Japanese anime and develop your own thesis about it. Keep in mind, however, that the main grading criteria are: a) is your thesis strong? and b) do you successfully persuade your reader of your thesis? You must prove a strong thesis that *analyzes* the text and uncovers something new about it. Keep that in mind as you think about what you want to write about. Your essay topic is free, but should be in line

with the theme of the class; it should investigate a work of anime in terms of how it comments on or depicts contemporary issues of power, society, gender, economics, politics, etc., that are globally relevant not only in Japan but also in the US and other countries as well.

Use the Chicago Manual of Style as a style reference. Use Chicago-style citations in footnotes (NOT author-date), including page numbers.

Essay Prep Activities

This class is designed with first-year students in mind. Therefore, there will be three class days set aside for preparing for the essay (noted on the class schedule), with the goal of introducing students to the expectations and practices of college writing. Coming to class and participating in the activities (by having drafts prepared or reviewing your peers' essays) is required, but your grade is based on your participation rather than the content of your drafts.

- **Day 1: Essay Introduction and brainstorming session**
  The expectations and themes of the essay will be introduced in class. Students will work together in pairs or groups to brainstorm ideas about texts they want to work with, themes they want to investigate, and possible theses.
- **Day 2: Working thesis and essay outline due**
  On this day students should have a rough, working thesis statement and an outline of the essay. Students will bring these to class and share with their peers for constructive commentary and collaboration. You may go back and refine your thesis after input from other students, so you don't need a final, perfect thesis statement yet, but it should be enough to work an essay around. The essay outline should contain a brief summary of each paragraph you plan to write. Each paragraph outline should contain: what point you will make with that paragraph, how that point supports your thesis, what evidence you will bring in to support that point, and what secondary sources (if applicable) you will bring in to support your argument.
- **Day 3: Discovery draft of essay due - peer review**
  On this day students will have completed a "discovery draft." A discovery draft is a rough, freewriting draft that helps you focus your ideas and discover new possibilities and issues through the process of writing. Often we have a good idea for an essay in our heads, but the process of putting those ideas into actual words and structured sentences shows us that there might be unanticipated issues or different possibilities. You don't have to have everything pinned down perfectly or cited meticulously, but you should have attempted to structure all the paragraphs you planned in your outline. Students will bring these drafts to class and review each other's drafts to provide constructive commentary.

Exams

The midterm and final exams will be taken in class, closed book and closed notes. The final will be cumulative.

UF Policies

Attendance

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Accommodations

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information see http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc.

Resources Available for Students

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

U Matter, We Care: umatter@ufl.edu; 392-1575
Counseling and Wellness Center: https://counseling.ufl.edu/ ; 392-1575
Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center; 392-1161
University Police Department: http://www.police.ufl.edu/ ; 392-1111 (911 for emergencies)

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

E-learning technical support: Learningsupport@ufl.edu; https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml ; 352-392-4357 (opt. 2)
Career Resource Center: Reitz Union; http://www.crc.ufl.edu/ ; 392-1601
Library Support: http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask
Teaching Center: Broward Hall; 392-2010 or 392-6420
Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall; http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ ; 846-1138

Quest and Gen Ed Descriptions

Gen Ed Description:

This course fulfills Gen Ed requirements for Humanities (H), International (I), and Writing (W) (2,000 words). A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Humanities (H)

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOs

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used.

- Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives.

- Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.

International (N)

International courses promote the development of students' global and intercultural awareness. Students examine the cultural, economic, geographic, historical, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world, and thereby comprehend

the trends, challenges, and opportunities that affect communities around the world. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political, and/or social systems and beliefs mediate their own and other people's understanding of an increasingly connected world.

International SLOs

- Identify, describe, and explain the historical, cultural, economic, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world.

- Analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political, and/or social systems and beliefs mediate understandings of an increasingly connected contemporary world.

Quest 1 Description:

Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations of essential questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society a fair one? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or to the natural world? To grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self- reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students apply approaches from the humanities to mine works for evidence, create arguments, and articulate ideas.

Course Goals

Overall Quest Program Goal

Through a shared, sequential combination of learning and engagement in Arts and Humanities and Natural or Social Sciences courses, and the application of that learning to practical experiences, students will gain a greater sense of who they are in the world and how to respond effectively to essential and pressing questions they will face in their lives.

Quest 1 Program Goal

Grounded in the modes of inquiry and expression characteristic of the arts and humanities, Quest 1 courses invite students to explore essential questions that transcend the boundaries of any one discipline—the kinds of complex and open-ended questions they will face as critical, creative, and thoughtful adults navigating a complex and interconnected world.

Course Objectives

This course:

- Identifies and describes theories and methodologies used in humanities disciplines to examine how pop cultural products address various social, political, economic, and cultural issues relevant globally, including postmodernism, Anthropocene theory, subcultural studies, historicization, and others.
- Develops student ability to argue persuasively about their own ideas about pop cultural texts both orally through class discussion, and in writing through blog posts and an essay.
- Analyzes and evaluates essential global issues through analysis of pop culture that grapples with fundamental questions about present-day society.
- Connects course content with students' own lives and media consumption habits as they gain the skills to critically analyze pop culture and media generally outside of the classroom.

Quest 1 Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).
- Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).
- Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).
- Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).

SLOs for this course:

By the conclusion of the course, it is expected that students will be able to:

- Identify and describe theories and methodologies used in humanities disciplines to examine how pop cultural products address various social, political, economic, and cultural issues relevant globally, including postmodernism, Anthropocene theory, subcultural studies, historicization, and others. Students will examine these theories in secondary source readings and learn how to apply them to the primary source texts in class discussion.
- Develop and present persuasively their own ideas about pop cultural texts, both orally through class discussion, and in writing through blog posts and an essay.
- Analyze and evaluate essential global issues through analysis of pop culture that grapples with fundamental questions about present-day society. Students will learn to critically view and analyze pop texts through guided class discussion and critical writing.
- Connect course content with their own lives and media consumption habits to critically analyze the pop culture and media they are already consuming outside of the classroom.

- Understand the global political, social, and economic forces that operate internationally and affect people's lives in Japan as well as the US.

Writing Requirement

This course is a Writing Requirement (WR) 2000 course. There will be one 2,000-word final essay.

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

The instructor will provide feedback on the final essay with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, organization, etc. The largest component of the essay grade is an evaluation of whether the essay successfully conveys in writing an argument that is provable, well-organized, and persuasive. See below assignment description for details.

Use the Chicago Manual of Style as a style reference. Use Chicago-style citations in footnotes (NOT author-date), including page numbers.

The UF Writing Studio (http://www.writing.ufl.edu/) is a resource run by the university to guide students through the academic writing process.