Course Description: This course covers Japan’s economic organization, structure and performance from the early 1600’s to the present, focusing primarily on the postwar period. Students will learn about the historical foundations of Japan’s postwar economic growth and about Japanese government policies that have fostered or hindered that growth. We will discuss various aspects of the Japanese economy, including international trade and industrial policies, labor markets, business organizations and relationships, and households, to see in what ways Japan’s economy is similar or dissimilar to other industrialized economies. The objective of this course is to provide students with the tools and knowledge needed to evaluate Japan’s economic performance over time and its changing role in the world economy. With increasing public interest in international economic events, it is vital that students gain an understanding of both economic theory and institutional similarities and differences across countries so that they can discern fact from fiction in coverage of international economic issues in the popular press and political arenas. As a writing-intensive class, the objective of this course is to help you improve your writing, especially analytical writing in which you use economic tools to examine a particular issue.

Prerequisites: Students should have completed Econ. 120 or 130.


Course Requirements and Evaluation Procedures: Learning is not a passive process so students are expected to take an active approach to class meetings by arriving prepared to ask and answer questions, having read the assigned textbook chapter(s) and coursepack readings prior to class. Students also should read (or at least skim) a national newspaper, such as the New York Times or Wall Street Journal, every day, paying particular attention to Japan-related articles. Japan economy news also can be found online at the English language editions of Japanese newspapers such as the Asahi Shimbun, Japan Times, Nikkei, or Yomiuri Shimbun.

Grades will be determined by your performance on two exams, three short papers and class participation. Final grades for the course will use the +/- grading option. Please be aware that no “extra credit” assignments will be given near the end of the term to make up for missed work earlier in the term. Therefore, make sure to meet all assignment deadlines.
Exam 1: 25% of your grade  
Exam 2: 25% of your grade

The dates for the two exams are shown in the attached class schedule. Please arrange your schedules now so that you can attend both exam times as no alternative times will be offered except in extraordinary cases. Excuses for pre-arranged absences from exams will be accepted only in real cases of illness or non-health emergency (with appropriate verification). Exams generally will consist of a mixture of identification, short answer and essay questions.

Papers: 40% of your grade

1. Short Papers
Students must write three short (4-5 page) papers on assigned topics during the term. The paper topics and corresponding due dates are attached to this syllabus. The papers ask you to use economic analysis to support an argument (e.g., “Joining a keiretsu group makes sense for my company because…”). The papers are designed to give you practice at writing analytically and persuasively using economics.

The papers will be graded both on what you have to say and how you say it. Careful proofreading is required for all papers. To pass this class, students must hand in all three papers. A strict policy of down-grading late papers will be followed: 25% off for a paper received within 24 hours of the due time; 50% off for a paper received 24-48 hours after the due time; 75% for a paper received more than 48 hours late.

After grading the first of these papers, I will ask each of you to schedule a short meeting (10-15 min.) with me to review my comments and answer any questions that you may have. Additional (optional) meetings on other writing assignments can be scheduled as needed.

To make it easier for me and for your peers to read your papers and write comments in the margins as needed, please double-space every writing assignment and use margins of 1-1.25 inches. Please hand in one copy of your paper with a cover page giving your name, and a second copy of your paper with no cover page (i.e., no name attached). I will use numbers to identify the papers, then distribute a copy to one of your peers for comments.

2. Reports on Others’ Writings
Students will be asked to submit 1-2 page writing analyses several times during the semester. These will involve analyzing papers written by professional economists and by your peers. Through these reports you will learn to identify the different “parts” involved in economics writing. You also will practice providing constructive criticism to others on their writing.

3. Informal Writing
There will be several chances during the semester to complete in-class writing assignments. The purpose of these is to give you additional practice in writing with a time constraint. These will take the form of responses to a video presentation or in-class discussion/debate. These will not be graded for spelling and grammatical accuracy, but will be marked “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”. Completion of at least 50% of these in-class writing tasks is expected. Students who fail to meet this requirement due to poor class attendance will be asked to submit an additional piece of formal writing to compensate.

Please get an early start on your writing assignments so that you can take advantage of office hours to seek assistance if needed. Upon request, I will make appointments to see students
outside of office hours for additional help on their writing or with questions from the lectures or readings. If you prefer or need additional help with your writing, the Manoa Writing Program has advice for student writers on its website: www.hawaii.edu/uhtmwrite. The Writing Workshop offers free consultation to students who make an appointment by calling the English Department at 956-7619.

**Class Participation: 10% of your grade**

As mentioned above, students are expected to come to class having actively read the assigned materials. By "active reading" I mean taking notes on important points or confusing points while reading. These notes will enable you to review your own notes on chapter highlights for the exams rather than trying to "cram" by rereading everything just prior to the exam. Active reading also will prepare you to ask and answer questions in class, and to benefit from others' questions. In addition, specific discussion questions or debate preparation will be assigned periodically and your preparation for and participation in the planned discussions will be noted. I consider classroom participation to be crucial for your success in this course and will reward your efforts to be a good listener and prepared discussant accordingly.

Students who may need special consideration because of any sort of disability should make an appointment with me during the first two weeks of the term.

Be advised that all UH policies and procedures concerning academic honesty apply to this course. I will ask for the maximum penalty for any student caught cheating or engaging in other unethical behavior (e.g., plagiarism).

The course reading list and schedule will be provided on the first day of class.