JAPANESE ANIME AND POPULAR CULTURE
ACADEMIC COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE:
Japanese Anime and Popular Culture

COURSE LEVELS:
Classes are taught and conducted in English. No Japanese language level is required.

CREDITS:
The course meets for a minimum of 45 hours per two week period. Students receive 4 Oberlin University credits and a Certificate of Completion for passing with a minimum grade of a D.

DESCRIPTION:
This course is a survey of Japanese popular culture with particular topics covered as anime manga, fashion, music, art, and food. Part of the course will focus on Japanese animation within a historic and popular cultural perspective. Both anime and manga will be examined with particular emphasis on the art, culture and national and international popularity.

MEETING TIMES:
45 Hours
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday (days may vary based on activity schedule)
Periods: 1 – 4 (periods and times may vary based on activity schedule)

COURSE OBJECTIVES/ OUTCOMES:
By the end of the session, students should be able:
1) Have a better understanding about Japanese culture through popular culture themes.
2) Be able to connect popular cultural themes to Japanese ways of thought, perception, ideals, history, and behavior.
3) Understand more about the popular anime works and develop a critical analysis of material and its authors.
4) Understand the historic themes of anime and magna and how they tie into Japanese culture.
5) Develop presentation skills through discussion and in class assignments.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:
Lecture, experiential (fieldwork or study tour), participatory (dialogical, reciprocal learning), inquiry (research & inquiry, cooperative group, engage by generating questions), critical thinking and constructive thinking (analyzing and examining media, multiple alternative culture), creative future thinking (action agenda, root cause, exchange ideas).

TEXTBOOK(S) AND/OR CLASS MATERIALS:
The instructor will provide class materials.

GRADING, CERTIFICATE, GRADING PLAN & EVALUATION:
All students will get a grade for this academic course. You will also get a Certificate of Completion at the end of the course. Students who do not pass with a letter grade of D or above will not be awarded a Certificate of Completion.

Grading Scale:
90-100 = A   80-89 = B   79-70 = C   60-69 = D   59 and below = F

Breakdown:
● Class Participation: 25%
● Attendance: 25%
● Assignments: 20%
● Final Project: 30%

COURSE POLICIES:
It is required for students to attend all classes and come to class on time. Students should refrain from using cell phones while in class and eating during class times.

STUDENT CONDUCT:
Students are expected to conduct themselves well in the class. Disciplinary action may be taken for but not limited to dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism.

COURSE CONTENT & SCHEDULE

Lectures & discussion content:
History, discussion, analysis of Japanese popular media – selected manga, anime, and television drama as well as pop music, theatre and live-action film. Historical development of manga and anime and their relationship with traditional Japanese popular culture. Anime and Manga: history, diverse themes, audience receptions, publishing industry, visual analysis and interpretation, continuations of theme and image and new trends. Rise of modern magna and anime in the postwar period developing for mature audiences and social criticism. Manga and anime related to Japan`s postwar identity. Means of production, distribution, and consumption of magna and anime in Japan. Television dramas and their influence on many current social issues. Popularity of manga, anime and TV dramas abroad and how they influence foreign understandings and attitudes about Japan. Popular culture in relations to social practice such as fandoms and subcultures. Explore fandoms, subculture or cultural categories based on consumption practices such as otaku, dojinshi, j-pop, j-rap, shojo culture, girl and kawaii culture, Harajuku girl, cosplayers, host/hostess, hipster, mori kei, gothic lolita, sweet lolita, punk lolita, wa lolita, Yamamba, Yanki, Rockabilly, Dekora, Kogals, Gyaru, Gyaruo, Visual Kei, even the salaryman and other interesting subcultures and related.

Some of the above are closely related to Japanese popular culture fashion. Subcultures with relations to fads & fashions in Japan, see above, especially related to youth fashion and it`s connection with society trends etc. Discuss historical development of popular cultural industry in Japan with the emergence on "Cool Japan". Japanese Food as part of Japanese preference and national identity, as well as current trends, adaptations, fast foods, and how Japanese foods have been expanded, received and adapted overseas etc. Other aspects of how Japanese food is a part of its unique popular culture. Discuss the global circulation of cultural products to and from Japan. Making sense of the links between popular culture consumption practices and other aspects of social life.

Short-term readings:
Selected readings from a variety of works that give a diverse exposure to different type and themes. Critical analysis.

Day	Period	Content
1	1	Orientation & Introduction to Japanese Culture
	2	Cool Japan: Soft-power in Japanese Popular Culture
	3	Japanese Youth Subcultures
	4	Youth politics in post-3.11 Japan
2	1	Tōei, Tezuka and the Foundations of Postwar Anime
	2	The Yamato Boom and the Birth of the Anime Fan Movement
	3	When Robots Became Real, or the Legacy of Tomino Yoshiyuki
3	1	Field work: Suginami and Ghibli Museums
	2	
	3	
	4	
4	2	The History of Food in Japan
	3	Tokyo's Eating Scene
5	1	Field work
	2	
	3	
	4	
6	1	Edo Period Pop Culture: Ukiyo-e
	2	Brief History of Manga
	3	Field work: Furusato Matsuri
	4	
7	2	Animation Magazines
	3	Current Climate of the Animation Business
8	1	Miyazaki Hayao's Three Princesses
	2	Oshii Mamoru and the Flight from Fans
	3	Anno Hideaki and the Struggle with Fandom
	4	Directions in Televised Anime Today
	5	Field work: Akihabara Walking Tour
9	2	Final Presentations
	3	Final Presentations / Animation Screening (if time allows)