



Broad College of Business MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Marketing

MKT 393: Business and Culture in Japan Study Abroad Program
Spring 2019 Syllabus

Instructors

Instructor
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Instructor Introduction:

Dr. Singer has taught the Business and Culture in Japan Program since 2013. She is the Assistant Director of the International Business Center and the Director of Education Abroad at the Eli Broad College of Business.

Course Information

Course Description and Overview:

This course is, first and foremost, a key component of a larger study abroad experience. It will form the basis of much of your understanding and learning with Japan, providing you with the background knowledge and context to derive the most benefit from your in-country experience.

This course is designed to provide you with a general understanding of global business topics, international and cross-cultural study of business decisions, enterprises, markets, and institutions. It covers functional aspects of business operations that any organization tackles internationally. We will cover such key topics as globalization, urbanization, and demographics with especial attention to how these trends are impacting the Japanese business environment.

The course is a hybrid of in-class lectures and in-country site visits. The in-class material, assigned readings, and in-country material are all required to succeed in the course and have been designed for students to gain a deeper understanding of the unique culture and history of Japan and how this culture impacts the art and practice of conducting business in Japan.

Textbook & Course Materials:

1. Students should purchase the coursepack for this program from Dollar Bill Copying at <https://www.dollarbillcopying.com/BUSINESS-AND-CULTURE-IN-JAPAN-P2868.aspx>. (The cost for the print version is approximately \$40. Students may elect a digital version in addition to the print version for an additional fee.)
2. *Flyboys: A True Story of Courage* by James Bradley. ISBN-13: 978-0316159432. (I recommend purchasing this book from Amazon where it is currently available new for less than \$15 or used for less than \$5, including shipping.)
3. Students will choose **ONE** of the following to read and review (all available from Amazon):
 - *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy* by Pietra Rivoli (2nd edition) ISBN-13: 978-1118950142
 - *Borderless Economies: Chinese Sea Turtles, Indian Fridges and the New Fruits of Global Capitalism* by Robert Guest ISBN-13: 978-0230342019
 - *The Sushi Economy: Globalization and the Making of a Modern Delicacy* by Sasha Issenberg ISBN-13: 978-1592403639

Course Objectives:

This course will allow students to gain a special understanding of business practices in Japan, including implications of culture, supply chains, strategy, and other aspects of the business environment.

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the foundation concepts and overall environment of international business.
- Articulate the opportunities and challenges of entering and operating in international markets.
- Understand the relationship between Japan's island geography, its homogeneous population, and its unique culture.
- Discuss the overall business environment in Japan today, including such areas as trade, demographics, and workplace attitudes.
- Appreciate the tension between adherents of traditional cultural viewpoints and a new generation of Japanese who profess alternative definitions of success and fulfillment.

Course objectives will be met through active and engaged participation, throughout the program, as well as the thoughtful completion of all course readings, assignments, and projects. This program includes no quizzes or examinations, but requires careful reflection of readings, lectures, and professional visits in the completion of course requirements.

Students will meet the course objectives through the following actions:

- Attending all class sessions and activities, in East Lansing and in Tokyo.
- Completing all assigned readings prior to class, and all assignments by the due date.
- Participate in classroom discussions and actively engage with all professional visits in Japan.

Course Outline/Schedule

The table below describes the weekly activities including date, topic, readings, activities, and due date. The first column describes the week. The second column describes the topic. The third column describes the readings. The fourth column describes any assignments that are due. **All readings must be completed prior to class.**

Please note that site visits are subject to change based on the availability of our partners in Japan.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
February 6 6:30-9:00pm	Introduction and program information Lecture Topic: Globalization	Coursepack readings	
February 13 6:30-8:30pm	Understanding Culture	Coursepack readings	
February 20 6:30-8:30	Legacy of World War II and Post-War Economic Growth	<i>Flyboys</i> : Chapters 2, 6, 8, 10; and pages 269-277; 289-290; 296-299 (Note: Page numbers from hard copy of <i>Flyboys</i> . If using an electronic or paperback version, please see me for possible pagination discrepancies.)	Personal Cultural Profile
February 25 6:30-8:30	The Japanese Business Environment Today	Coursepack readings	
March 1	Depart for Japan!		
March 2	Arrive in Japan		Optional: Extra Credit (may submit electronically)
March 3	Cultural Visit: Nikko		
March 4	Business Visits		
March 5	Business Visits		
March 6	Morning Business Visit Cultural Visit: Tokyo Tower Afternoon free		HBS Case Summary (may submit electronically)
March 7	Business Visits		
March 8	Business Visits Cultural Visit: Edo-Tokyo Museum		
March 9	Cultural Visit to Narita Temple Afternoon: Depart for U.S. (Arrive same day)		
March 15			Due by 5:00pm: 1) Book Report 2) Corporate Site Visit Summary

Grading Policy

Important note on grades: You must complete the Office of Education Abroad online orientation prior to 11:59pm on 2/21/19. Failure to do so will result in an automatic half-point reduction in the final grade (i.e., 4.0 to 3.5).

Unless otherwise discussed in class, all assignments are to be typed, double-spaced, with font no larger than 12-pt, and 1-inch margins. *No late work will be accepted.*

Grade Dissemination:

Pre-departure assignments will be returned at the class meeting following the due date. In Japan, I will do my best to grade and return all assignments within 24-48 hours of the due date. Final assignments will be evaluated and grades, for these assignments and final grades, emailed to each student by March 25. Students may contact Dr. Singer to discuss grades on any assignment at any point during the program.

Graded Course Activities:

The table below describes the graded course activities including points and activity description. The first column includes the points or possible, and the second column includes a description for each activity.

Percentage of Final Grade	Total Points Possible	Description
15	30	<p>Personal Cultural Profile. Complete all <i>Cultural Analysis Toolkit</i> self-assessments (Behaviors & Attitudes section) and write 3-4 pages on what this tells you about yourself, what you expect to encounter in Japan based on your previous knowledge, what you've heard about the country, any readings you've done for class, etc. and in what ways you expect to be most similar to or different from Japanese culture. <u>Be sure to discuss all eight dimensions in the paper.</u></p>
15	30	<p>HBS Case Preparation. Students will prepare a 3 page summary of the case, the major issues, and how they would have approached or solved the problems presented in each case. A few questions that you can consider in writing your analysis are suggested below. You are welcome to take your analysis in other or different directions; these questions may help you to think about the case in the context of international business and cultural difference. We will discuss the case and your analysis in class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why has TOTO had so much trouble getting its bidet-toilets adopted in the U.S.? How is the U.S. context different from Japan? • What should TOTO do to get more adoption of the bidet-toilet in the U.S.? • Given the huge success selling regular toilets in the U.S., should TOTO just stop trying for bidet-toilets? Why or why not? How realistic do you think it is for the company to stop trying? <p>Given what you now know about the Washlet, and assuming you were in the market for a new toilet, how likely would you be to purchase a Washlet? Why or why not?</p>
20	40	<p>Book Report. This should be a thoughtful discussion of the contents of a book, and the strengths and limitations of the author's arguments. The analysis should reflect your capacity as a reader to critically evaluate a book's contents. The report should be three to five pages in length; the analysis and evaluation section should be the longest part of your report.</p> <p>Organizing the Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INTRODUCTION: In no more than two paragraphs, summarize the contents of the book. What topics did the book cover? What were the main themes of the book? • ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION: Describe the author's purpose in writing the book. What did the author want the reader to learn from reading this book? Did the author succeed? Why or why not? How is this book connected to the themes we are discussing in this program? What is the most important thing you learned from this book? Why? In what way, if any, did this book reflect what you experienced in Japan (this can be in terms of either business or cultural practices)? • CONCLUSION: How did this book further your learning about international business? Was it interesting and/or convincing? Is this a book you would recommend to other students? Why or why not?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITATION: Cite the book in APA format at the end of your report. The exact format you should use is as follows: Author, A. A. (Year of publication). Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle. Location: Publisher. <p>Note: Each student may choose from one of the three books under bullet 3 of the Textbook & Course Materials section of this syllabus.</p>
25	50	<p>Corporate Site Visits Summary. For this summary, you will need to select six of the corporate site visits from our time in Japan and prepare a paper (6-8 pages) comparing and contrasting what you learned at a particular site visit with what you learned at other site visits in Japan, as well as your learnings from lectures and readings. This summary is a way for students to tie their learning at all of the site visits together. The following questions are examples of the questions you may wish to consider when preparing the summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the practices of the company fit with your understanding of international business/marketing practices as described by our guest lecturers or the course readings? • In what ways do the company's practices seem to fit with particular elements of Japanese culture? • In what ways do their practices differ from elements of Japanese culture? <p>Students may find it helpful to consult the Cultural Analysis Toolkit, readings, and lecture and visit notes to make observations and answer these questions.</p>
25	50	<p>Attendance, Participation, and Compoment. Participation is extremely important. Attendance at ALL class meetings, cultural activities, and site visits is mandatory as these activities, discussions, and visits provide you the valuable hands-on experience that make study abroad such a valuable education experience. This class will only succeed if everyone actively participates in the discussions. Please see the rubric below for more details on how this grade will be determined.</p>
100	200	
	8	<p>Extra Credit. One extra credit opportunity is available for this program. Students may watch the documentary <i>Jiro Dreams of Sushi</i> and write a 3 page reflection with a focus on Jiro's business practices (or Japanese business practices generally). Reflections may be submitted in hard copy or electronically and are due no later than by 8:00pm Japan time on Saturday, March 2, 2019. Students may earn <u>up to</u> 8 points of extra credit on this assignment.</p>

Grade Assignment (Grading Scale):

The table below describes the relationships between final course grade and total points earned. The first column is the final grade. The second column describes the point range associated with that grade.

Grade	Points
4.0	200-180
3.5	179-170
3.0	169-160
2.5	159-150
2.0	149-140
1.5	139-130

Attendance, Participation, and Comportment Rubric:

Excellent (46-50 points)	Good (31-45 points)	Satisfactory (21-30 points)	Unsatisfactory (20-0 points)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attends all program activities. Does not come late or leave early. - Always well prepared for class. It is evident all readings have been completed prior to class. - Exhibits positive attitude toward program activities and participants. - Consistently contributes to class discussions and activities in a meaningful way. - Exhibits proper engagement during all site visits. Takes notes and asks questions as appropriate. - Does not use electronic devices in class or during program activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation is almost as good as a student receiving an excellent but one or two elements are not quite up to excellent level. - For example, a student receiving "good" may miss 1-2 class sessions, arrive late for class or group activities or occasionally not participate actively in discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation is generally similar to one receiving an unsatisfactory rating, but there are one or two elements which are relatively well done. - For example, the student could participate in class activities, but because they arrive late and/or are not fully prepared, they are not able to participate at the same level as a student receiving an excellent or good rating. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Misses more than 3 classes or is habitually late/leaves early. - Usually not prepared for class. Evident that readings have not been completed prior to class. - Exhibits a negative attitude toward course, alumni or hosts, faculty, staff, or fellow students. - Does not contribute to discussions or in-class activities. - Misses ANY site visits in Japan, falls asleep or exhibits rude behavior toward hosts on ANY site visit. This includes using electronic devices (cell phone, ipad, ipod, etc.) during site visits. - Regularly/inappropriately uses electronic devices in class or during program activities.

Other Course Policies

Important Dates to Remember:

February 6 – First day of class

March 1 – Departure for Japan

March 9 – Departure from Japan

March 15 – Final assignments due

The nature of education abroad particularly demands flexibility. To that end, the dates and assignments are tentative, and can be changed at the discretion of the professor or to meet the needs of our corporate and alumni hosts in Japan. All changes will be communicated to students in class or via email, as practicable. Students are responsible for checking email regularly throughout the program, as it will be our primary means of communication outside of class.

Attendance Policy:

You must participate in all required group activities in Japan unless you are ill (for reasons other than a “hangover” due to staying up extremely late or drinking).

Failure to attend any required session will result in the loss of points. Exceptions will be made only in the event of truly extenuating circumstances. If you are ill, contact Dr. Singer as soon as possible.

Site visits: You must take pen-and-paper notes during sessions on campus and during all business and cultural site visits and guest lectures, while on site in Japan. If I see you not taking notes during a guest lecture or a site visit, you will lose participation points. Cell phones or other electronic devices are strictly prohibited and will be confiscated for the duration of the class or visit. Site visits/cultural activities are the most important component of the participation grade. **If you do not consistently and appropriately engaged during site visits, it will not be possible to earn all participation points.**

Tardiness: **You must be on time.** Even if you are only a few minutes late, you will lose points for class participation for each incident. This is particularly important when we are preparing to leave on group transportation while in Japan.

Students’ behavior reflects on Michigan State University. Therefore, **students must behave respectfully toward the host culture, its values, language, beliefs, and customs at all time.** Students must also be properly attired for all site visits. **For professional site visits**, proper, business professional attire for men includes a shirt and tie (jacket optional), dress pants and belt, dress shoes and socks. For women, business professional attire includes dress pants and blouse, skirt and blouse, or nice dress, in any case with dress shoes (nylons/tights optional).

Late Work Policy:

No late work will be accepted.

Academic Honesty:

All students will abide by the Eli Broad College of Business Honor Code. Please go to the following website and read it carefully: <http://broad.msu.edu/undergraduate-honor-code/>.