

Japan Film and Culture
Conducted in English
No prior film experience or knowledge of Japanese or Japanese film is required

Location: Tokyo, Japan
Dates: January 1 - 24
Host: The Academy at Magic Hour
Credits: 3.0

Description:

In this series lecture seminar, you will explore the film world of Japan. Your course director and key lecturer is Mr. Tsukasa Ariyoshi. As President of Magic Hour Inc., Mr. Ariyoshi has over forty-five years of experience as a film producer, buyer, distributor, and promoter. Course highlights include a personalized tour of Toho Film Studio (the studio that produced Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* and Ishiro Honda's *Godzilla*) with a lecture from the former President of Toho Studio. You will receive lectures from Japanese film professionals on Japanese film history, anime, and avant-garde film. You will have a Q&A with principal Japanese producers, directors, and/or actors. Past lecturers have included award-winning Japanese soundtrack composers, film editors, screenwriters, and special effects and Foley artists, who introduce you to their creative process live in the classroom. By course end, you will have gained a healthy sense of the professionalism, dedication, and skill that characterizes the Japanese film industry.

Your course begins at a seaside retreat in Kyonan, Chiba, and includes survival Japanese, a visit to the largest sitting Buddha in Japan, mochi-making and fan-making for the New Year, and more. In Tokyo, you will visit Studio Ghibli, wear kimonos while exploring Asakusa and the Senso-ji Temple (Tokyo's "old" town), and have a program dinner.

Requirements include:

A) **Detailed Journal:**

- i. For note-taking during lectures and films, generating questions, observations, responses as well as ideation/formulation for your group project. (15% of your grade)
- ii. You will be given three Japanese films to watch before your arrival in Japan. For each film, write a plot summary, detailed analysis, and your overall response to and review of the film. See assignment sheet for details. Due by your arrival in Japan (submitted as screenshots in a pdf). (15% of your grade)

B) **Active Participation:** Motivation, enthusiasm, exemplary behavior, and looking out for your peers for the duration of the course. (20% of your grade)

C) **Group Project:** Your team will be assigned a contemporary Japanese independent film to promote in New York. To make this simulation more realistic and relevant, Magic Hour is typically in charge of promoting this film to a Japanese audience, which proves an interesting cultural comparison between the Japanese and American sensibilities. Your team will "package" the film for promotion in a New York theater. Your team will present their promotion strategy to a panel of film professionals presided over by Mr.

Ariyoshi. Your goal is to convince this panel how and why your promotion plan for the film will succeed with a New York audience (presentation time: 20-25 minutes). All materials will be collected and assessed. **No background in marketing and media is required.** Some of the most successful promotion proposals in past programs have come from students with no or little experience in these fields. (30% of your grade)

- D) **Final Reflective Essay:** In a six-to-eight-page typed, double-spaced essay, offer an in-depth reflection on the film course, your impressions of Japanese film in general, and your thoughts about your total in-country experience. In the spirit of the film genre, you may write this essay in the form of a minimum ten-page film script, following proper film formatting rules. For the truly bold, you may shoot this as a minimum ten-minute short film. (20% of your grade)

**Ultimately, the journal and final reflective piece are not only for your grade, but also serve as literal mementos of your immersion experience.

Required Materials:

Course handouts

Journal