

Syllabus
Byrne Seminar, Fall 2022

01:090:101:09 “Friendship in Japan: A Cross-Cultural Inquiry”

Time: Wed. 2:00-3:20pm

Dates: Sept. 7-Nov. 9, 2022

Location: Scott Hall-Rm. 121

Instructor: Paul G. Schalow, Professor of Japanese Literature

Office: Scott Hall Rm. 330

Office hours: Wed. 4-5pm or by appointment

E-mail: schalow@rutgers.edu

Seminar Description

Friendship can be understood as the human need to appreciate and be appreciated by another person. At first glance, it seems a natural and unproblematic part of the human experience, but when dealing with friendship across cultures, the concept of friendship becomes surprisingly complex.

Drawing on Japanese pop culture, cinema, and textual representations of friendship, this seminar will explore themes such as friendship’s universality versus cultural specificity, its relationship to romance, and the impact of age, status, ethnicity, gender, and species on configurations of friendship.

In class discussion, students will have a chance to draw on their own experience of friendship and share their knowledge of how friendship is represented in other literary and cinematic traditions.

Assignments

Seven written assignments are due as indicated in the schedule below; six reflection papers may be written jointly with a small group (2-3 students) or individually; final paper must be your own work and written individually.

Grading

This is a 1-credit seminar. Students taking the seminar receive Credit/No-Credit as their final grade. Two unexcused absences and missed assignments will result in “No Credit.”

- Presentations, reflection papers, and participation 70% (7x10pts)
- Final paper 30%

Films

Dersu Uzala: The Hunter dir. Akira Kurosawa, 1980 (142 mins.)

Empire of the Sun dir. Steven Spielberg, 1987 (152 mins.)

The Longest Night in Shanghai dir. Yibai Zhang, 2007 (110 mins.)

Okoge dir. Takehiro Nakajima, 1993 (120 mins.)
Jules and Jim dir. Francois Truffaut, 1962 (105 mins.)

Required Texts

Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro* ISBN 978-1774-6424-50
Yoshimoto Banana, *Kitchen* ISBN 978-0671-8801-87

Masking policy

In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the University community, masks must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks must be worn during class meetings; any student not wearing a mask will be asked to leave. Masks should conform to CDC guidelines and should completely cover the nose and mouth. Check the Rutgers Covid website for updates about Rutgers' COVID-19 policies: <https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/>

Academic integrity policy

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. For details about consequences of such violations, see <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Absence policy

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Disability services

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>

Seminar Schedule

- Sept 7 Wed Introduction to the seminar: philosophical perspectives on friendship. PDF Sandra Lynch, "Aristotle and Derrida on friendship" (*Contretemps* 3, July 2002).
- 14 Assignment #1 (10 students): Introduce to the class a favorite film, anime, manga, or text on friendship (approximately 5-10 minutes) and submit 1-page summary/outline.
- 21 Assignment #2: View film *Dersu Uzala* and submit 1-page reflection paper on the distinction between *friendship* and *camaraderie*, or the *basis of cross-cultural* friendships.
- 28 Assignment #1 (10 students): Introduce to the class a favorite film, anime, manga, or text on friendship (approximately 5-10 minutes) and submit 1-page summary/outline.
- Oct. 5 Assignment #3: Read Natsume Soseki's *Kokoro* and submit 1-page reflection paper on *cross-generational* or *same-gender* friendships.
- 12 Assignment #4: View film *Empire of the Sun* OR *The Longest Night in Shanghai* and submit 1-page reflection paper on the distinction between *non-utilitarian (selfless)* and *utilitarian (selfish)* friendships, or the *basis of cross-cultural* friendships.
- 19 Assignment #5: Read Yoshimoto Banana's *Kitchen* and submit 1-page reflection paper on *cross-generational friendships*, *same-gender vs. other-gender* friendships, or *friendship as a form of family*.
- 26 Assignment #6: View film *Okoge* OR *Jules and Jim* and submit 1-page reflection paper on *friendship as a form of family*.
- Nov 2 Assignment #7 (10 students): Prepare final paper (approx. 1,000 words) on a topic covered in the seminar and present your ideas (5-10 minutes) to the class.
- 9 Assignment #7 (10 students): Prepare final paper (approx. 1,000 words) on a topic covered in the seminar and present your ideas (5-10 minutes) to the class.