

HIS 344/AAS 344
Modern Japan

Satisfies: SBS+, GLO

Thematic Categories: "Empires, Violence & Global Connections,"
"Arts, Ideas & Culture," "Law, Politics & Social Justice"

Tu/Th: 12:30-1:50pm

Professor Janis Mimura

This course examines Japan's remarkable transformation from a self-sufficient, agrarian, feudal society in the late nineteenth century into a global military and industrial power in the twentieth century. We will consider the trials and tribulations of Japan's rapid modernization, imperial expansion, world war against the Allied powers, and reemergence from total defeat. In doing so, we will inquire into scholarly debates on the nature of Japan's modern state, the role of the emperor, mass society and popular culture, Japanese capitalism, and Japan's conflicted relationship with Asia and the West. Drawing upon a wide range of primary sources, including literature, film, diaries, interviews, and government documents, students will obtain first-hand accounts of the diverse experiences and responses of the people cutting across the lines of gender, class, and ethnicity. Course requirements include two papers and a midterm and final exam.