

COMPARATIVE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL: JAPAN AND THE UNITED STATES

Instructor – William R. Crawley, Ph.D.

Course Description – This course provides a comparative examination of social systems of organization and control in Japan and the United States. Both informal and formal cultural dynamics are explored. To this end, an examination of informal systems includes family, school, and workplace. Moreover, formal systems of control, including police, courts, and correctional subsystems is surveyed. Special emphasis is placed upon historical, philosophical, ideological, and cultural perspectives that make these two civilizations unique and similar to one another.

Japanese Center for Michigan Universities <http://www.isp.msu.edu/JCMU/>

Comparative Social Organization and Control is a course offered through the Japanese Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU), therefore, approximately 80% of the materials read and topics discussed pertain to Japanese history, philosophy, religions, social organization, and culture.

Course Objectives – Upon completion of this course students will (be able to):

1. Recognize various socio-cultural dynamics that influence organizational structures/ processes and generally provide support to informal and formal social controls.
2. Have achieved a fundamental understanding of the historical, philosophical, ideological, and cultural issues that distinctively influence the development of Japanese and U.S. informal and formal systems of control / justice.
3. Possess a basic understanding for the construction of, and reactions to, deviance and crime in each system of justice.
4. Be familiar with the foundations of law upon which the formal justice systems of both nations are based.
5. Understand the roles and functions of the social control agents in a democratic society – how does this philosophy of government manifest itself in Japan and the United States?
6. Compare and contrast Japanese and U.S. justice systems from, 1) an aggregated perspective, and 2) across selected sub-systems (e.g., police, courts, corrections).
7. Have advanced their understanding of the structure and function of criminal justice systems in Japan and the United States.
8. Recognize historical crime trends and contemporary developments as national and international problems (e.g., transnational crimes, organized crime) for both Japan and the United States, to include consideration of ethical dilemmas confronting control practices in each country.
9. Have further developed their writing skills through frequent writing assignments.
10. Have further developed their oral skills through group discussions and class presentations.

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

Benedict, Ruth (2006). *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Leonardsen, Dag (2004). *Japan as a Low-Crime Nation*. Palgrave MacMillan, New York.

Miller, Alan S., and Satoshi Kanazawa (2001). *Order by Accident: The Origins and Consequences of Conformity in Contemporary Japan*. Perseus Publishing. Jackson, TN.

* Supplemental reading / reference materials will be made available to students.

METHOD OF COURSE EVALUATION

Student Journals	40%
Assignment Briefs (5% each)	20%
Final Research Paper (20%) and Presentation (10%)	30%
Participation (proactive and constructive)	<u>10%</u>
	100%

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Student Journals

Throughout the course students will be required to keep a journal that contains 1) reflections on course readings, and 2) individual “in country” social experiences that serve as exemplars of course learning objectives/topics.

Assignment Briefs

Students will serve the class by completing “pop assignments.” These are assignments to provide briefs on issues or topics that emerge as part of class discussion. In most cases these briefs will be self-assigned, with each student completing a minimum of 4 briefs.

Final Research Paper

Each student will, in consultation with the instructor, select a subject informed by the course reading and lecture topics to explore via a final research paper. Specifics of this assignment (e.g., length, format, sources) will be discussed and agreed upon by the instructor and course members. Subsequent to completion of one’s final research paper, each student will provide a presentation of their topic, to include a visual display to be exhibited at the JCMU.

Japanese Center for Michigan Universities (JCMU) Fall 2009 Schedule

Sep 4	Fri	Classes Begin
Sep 21	Mon	National Holiday
Sep 22	Tues	National Holiday
Sep 23	Wed	National Holiday
Oct 12	Mon	National Holiday
Nov 3	Tues	National Holiday
Nov 13	Fri	Fall Break
Nov 23	Mon	National Holiday
Dec 16	Wed	Final Exam

COURSE UNITS AND SURVEY TOPICS

Unit I – Organization and Control: The Development of Practices and Institutions

Social control refers to social mechanisms that regulate individual and group behavior, leading to conformity and compliances to the rule of a given society or social group. Many mechanisms of social control are cross-cultural, if only in the control mechanisms used to prevent the establishment of chaos or anomie. Some theorists, such as Emile Durkheim, refer to this form of control as regulation. Sociologists identify two basic forms of social controls:

- A) **Informal social control** – internalization of norms and values, and
- B) **Formal social control** – the use of sanctions, which can be either positive (rewards) or negative (punishments).

- 1) Exploring Concepts and Theories

Unit II – Surveying Japanese Society: Informal Organizations and Controls

Informal social control, or the reactions of individuals and groups that bring about conformity to norms and laws, includes peer and community pressure, bystander intervention in a crime, and collective responses such as citizen patrol groups. Informal controls cover a vast array of possible sanctions and tend to differ from individual to individual, group to group, and society to society. Some criminologist, such as Black (1976), held that the agents of the criminal justice system exercise more control when informal social control is weaker.

- 1) History
- 2) Education
- 3) Workplace
- 4) Family & Community
- 5) Gender and Age
- 6) Religion
- 7) Crime

Unit III – Formal Organizations and Social Control Mechanisms/Agents

Formal social control is expressed through laws, rules, and regulations against deviant behavior. It is conducted by government and organizations using social control mechanisms/agents and other formal sanctions (e.g., jail, fines). In democratic societies the goals and mechanisms of formal social control are determined through legislation by elected representatives and thus enjoy a measure of support from the population and voluntary compliance.

- 8) Law
- 9) Politics
- 10) Criminal Justice System and Sub-Systems
 - a) Police
 - b) Courts
 - c) Corrections
 - d) Juvenile Justice

Unit IV – Contemporary Challenges to Democratic Societies

- 11) Selected Student Topics of Interest (e.g., Final Research Paper/Presentation)