

HIS 350: Modern Japan
Prof. Jonathan Skaff

Paper Assignment 1: Tokugawa Society

Due: Monday, September 26

- Hard copy due in class with the grading sheet on the reverse attached.
- Electronic Copy submitted to the D2L Assignment Folder.

Length: 4 to 7 pages, double-spaced in 12-point font

Topic: Based upon your reading of *Musui's Story*, write a paper in which you discuss whether the samurai of early nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan shared a common cultural identity with other members of society (farmers and townspeople of both genders). Keep in mind that the samurai in *Musui's Story* not only worked for the government, but also pursued professions such as priests, accountants, and thieves. Your paper should develop a thesis and defend it by pointing out similarities and/or differences between the culture of samurai and other status groups in society.

There are no right or wrong answers, but this is a controversial topic. The famous Japanese reformer Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901), who grew up during the late Tokugawa, later wrote that “[t]he millions of Japanese at that time were closed up inside of individual boxes. They were separated from each other by walls with little room to move around. The four-level class structure of warriors, farmers, artisans, and tradesmen froze human relations along prescribed lines.” On the other hand, the modern historian, James L. McClain claims that “important commonalities...bound people together, creating a shared sense of cultural identity and an enduring sense of Japaneseness.” (*Japan: A Modern History*, p. 104)

The content grade of your paper will be based upon on how well you formulate a thesis and defend it with evidence from *Musui's Story*, other assigned readings and class lectures. Additional research in library sources is allowed, but not necessary. **NO INTERNET SITES ARE ALLOWED UNLESS LEHMAN LIBRARY PROVIDES DATABASE LINKS.**

The paper should include citations and a bibliography. History majors should use Chicago A (Turabian notes-bibliography) or Chicago B (Turabian author-date) format. Students who are not history majors have the option of using MLA. **Quotations or ideas** that you take from your sources should be acknowledged with properly formatted citations and bibliography. Failure to acknowledge the source of a quote or an idea is **plagiarism. Flagrant cases of plagiarism may result in a grade of “F” for the class.**

Evaluation: 80% of the grade will be based on content. Grades of A will be awarded to papers that provide: 1) a thesis that is persuasively defended with evidence drawn from *Musui's Story*, 2) solid understanding of Tokugawa Japan derived from lectures and assigned readings, 3) well-crafted writing that clearly transmits ideas, and 4) sharp analysis and argumentation. The other 20% will be based upon grammar and word usage (4%), spelling, capitalization and punctuation (4%), organization (4%), readability (4%), and citations and bibliography in MLA or Chicago A or B format (4%).

Grading sheet (attach to paper)

Name: _____

I. Content (80%)

Defense of thesis with evidence from *Musui's Story*: ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor ___Failing

Understanding of Tokugawa Japan: ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor ___Failing

A=72-80, B=64-71, C=56-63, D=48-55, F=47 or lower _____

II. Writing mechanics (20%)

A=4, B=3.5, C=3, D=2.5, F=2 or lower

Grammar and word usage (4%) _____

Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation (4%) _____

Organization (4%) _____

Readability (4%) _____

Citations and bibliography (Chicago A or B, or MLA, 4%) _____

Total _____

Correction Symbols Used in Grading Paper

agr	wrong agreement (noun-verb or noun-noun)
awk	awkward sentence
cit	citation needed
frag	sentence fragment (usually a sentence that lacks a verb)
org	organization problems
redun	redundant (using different words to say the same thing more than once)
rep	repetitious use of the same word
run-on	run-on sentence
sp	wrong spelling
trans	poor transition (between sentences or paragraphs)
tn	wrong verb tense
unc	unclear phrase, sentence, or paragraph
wf	wrong grammatical form of word
ww	wrong word usage
¶	new paragraph needed