Paper Assignment 1: Tokugawa Culture

Due: Thursday, Sept. 29
- Hard copy due in class with the grading sheet on the reverse attached
- Electronic Copy submitted to the D2L Dropbox (Use Microsoft DOC or DOCX, WordPerfect, PostScript, PDF, HTML, RTF or Plain text format).

Length: 4 to 6 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). Your paper should develop a thesis and defend it by pointing out similarities and/or differences between the culture of samurai and other members of society.

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 Japanesenesess.” (Japan: A Modern History, p. 104)

There are no right or wrong answers to this topic. The content grade of your paper will be based upon how well you formulate a thesis and defend it with evidence from Musui’s Story, other assigned readings and class lectures. Effective papers will provide: 1) a thesis that is defended with specific 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.

Evaluation: 80% of the grade will be based on content. Grades of A will be awarded to papers that demonstrate persuasive argumentation defending a thesis and an excellent understanding of Tokugawa Japan based upon Musui’s Story, other readings and lectures.

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

Understanding of Tokugawa Japan: ___Excellent ___Good ___Fair ___Poor

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 (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