

**Early Modern Japanese Paintings and Woodblock Prints**  
Art 375

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Course meetings: Tuesdays from 11-12:15 PM  
Location: 285 NFAC

**Course Description**

This course focuses on the Japanese woodblock prints and paintings from the seventeenth through the nineteenth century in the style called “*ukiyo-e*” (“images of the floating world”). For most of the course we will be concerned with issues surrounding *ukiyo-e* and its print culture during the Edo, or Tokugawa, period (1615-1868).

Ukiyo-e is a specific artistic genre that occupies a distinct position in Japanese art history for the ways in which it is directly and deeply connected to popular culture of the day. Thus, one of our main considerations will be how the prints and paintings convey related cultural values. We will also take into account issues surrounding the status of the “artist,” the value of the print in a literate society, and the visual representation of human beauty and the seen world. The goal is that as students come to understand more about this so-called “floating world” and its denizens, they learn about the major producers, types and styles of prints, and they develop their connoisseurship skills through close study of actual and reproduced images. By the end of the semester, students should be able to articulate an understanding of prints and print history in the Japanese context.

**The primary academic goal for Art 375 is to provide the student with an educated basis for responding to early modern Japanese prints.**

**Course Objectives**

1. Identify significant works of modern Japanese art.
2. Discuss works of modern Japanese art with an educated basis.
3. Analyze modern Japanese art in its cultural, social, and historical contexts.
4. Demonstrate an ability to think, speak, and write critically about works of modern Japanese art.
5. Develop an understanding, awareness and appreciation of the varying approaches to human expression in Japanese art.

**Course Website**

This class uses Desire2Learn (D2L), UWSP's Online Learning Management System. Your course syllabus, study sheets, study images, grades and additional activities will be posted here. You are responsible for keeping up to date with the course by logging into D2L frequently. You can log

into D2L at, <https://uwsp.courses.wisconsin.edu/>, with your UWSP logon. D2L can also be found on your MyPoint Portal, <https://mypoint.uwsp.edu>, on the Academics tab.

After you have logged in to D2L, look below "My Stevens Point Courses" in the middle of the screen. Click the plus sign in front of the current semester to access the link to our class.

Note: Although I do distribute study sheets for each lecture, I do not make full lecture notes available to students online or in any other fashion. Excellent note taking is essential to success in this course. If you need extra help with this course, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class. I am more than happy to give extra time to anyone who needs it.

### **Course Textbooks and Other Items**

Course purchase textbooks and other supplies are available at the University Store in the DUC.

#### **Required rental textbook:**

Guth, Christine, *Art of Edo Japan: The Artist and the City 1615-1868*

#### **Optional purchase texts:**

1. Oishi and Nakane, *Tokugawa Japan*, 1991
2. Seigle, *Yoshiwara: The Glittering World of the Japanese Courtesan*, 1993

#### **Required purchase supplies:**

1. Niji Wood Carving Knives Set (available on Amazon for \$13.10)
2. Japanese paper for printing your own woodcut design (Paper can be purchased in the University Store—I recommend mulberry paper for your prints)
3. Yasutomo bamboo baren (available [www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com) for \$3.75)

### **Course Requirements**

1. Attendance and participation in lectures and studio activities
2. Reading assignments from course textbook and readings posted to D2L
3. Exams (2)
4. Woodblock print project

### **Exams**

You are required to take two written exams. The first exam is scheduled for **March 5** and will consist of slide ID, slide discussion and short or long answer questions, and/or an essay question. The second exam is scheduled for **April 25**. **Each exam is worth 35% of your final grade.** Evidence of improvement throughout the semester will be taken into consideration.

Note, as a rule, I do not give make-up exams. It is your responsibility to arrive to class on time for the exams. Extra time will not be given to those who are tardy. Please see my policy on make-up exams in the *General Policies* section below.

### **Woodblock Print Project**

Students are required to carve and print a woodblock using traditional (but basic) Japanese techniques and subject matter. Students will need to purchase woodcarving knives (unless you already own your own), Japanese paper, and a baren for the traditional printing process. I will supply you with a small piece of wood for the project. Printing will be done in the printmaking studio during the last week of classes. You will need at least three good final prints, one of which you will submit to me to keep in the class archive. During our designated final exam period on **Wednesday, May 15 from 8-10 AM** you will present your final work to the class. Your final print and a brief self-reflection paper will be submitted to me at this time as well.

**March 26:** Present preliminary sketch of your print design to the class. Explain why you chose your specific design.

**April 30-May 2:** Final carving in the printmaking studio.

**May 7-9:** Printing in the printmaking studio.

**May 15:** Final print and self-reflection paper due

**Your woodblock, final print, and self reflection paper will be worth 25% of your final grade.**

### **Grading**

Attendance and participation	5%
Exam 1	35%
Exam 2	35%
Woodblock Print Project	25%

The grading distribution is as follows:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

### **General Policies**

1. All classes begin promptly, and attendance will be taken every day. Please do not miss class. Much of the information upon which you will be tested will be derived from lecture notes, not just the text.

2. You must take the two exams and complete the print project to pass the class. Make up exams will be given only in cases of dire emergency (i.e., you were deathly ill and in the hospital) and a note from your physician is required. If you are an athlete and your game schedule conflicts with

the exam schedule you must let me know ASAP to make arrangements. I will not make allowances otherwise.

**3. All electronic gadgets are banned in lectures, including cell phones, laptops, iPads, etc. Please silence or turn off your cell phones in class. Text messaging or instant messaging during class lectures is disruptive and distracting, and is therefore prohibited. I reserve the right to ask you to leave the class if you are engaging in social activities during lecture.**

4. Chitchatting with your classmates during lecture is discourteous. I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom if you are disrespectful to the professor or to your classmates. Disruptive behavior, in general, will not be tolerated and may result in class expulsion.

5. The University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. If you have a learning or physical challenge which requires classroom accommodation, please contact the UWSP Disability and Assistive Technologies office with your documentation as early as possible. They will then notify me, in a confidential memo, of the accommodations that will facilitate your success in the course. Students should register with Disability Services BEFORE the quiz to be guaranteed accommodations.

6. The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point values academic honesty and integrity. Each student has a responsibility to understand, accept, and comply with the university's standards of academic conduct, as well as policies established by the schools and colleges. Cheating, collusion, misconduct, fabrication, and plagiarism are serious offenses. Violations will not be tolerated and may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University.

### **Guide to Pronunciation**

Japanese:

1. In general, all syllables receive equal stress.
2. Vowels with bars (ā, ē, ō, ū) and double ii, are held longer.
3. Combined vowels retain their own sounds. Taira=tah-ee-ra.
4. If a word has a final u without a bar, the u is silent. Desu=des.
5. Consonants are pronounced as in English. The g is always hard as in "go."

### **Chronology of Historical Periods**

Asuka_____	542–645
Hakuhō_____	645–710
Nara_____	710–794
Heian_____	794–1185
Kamakura_____	1185–1333
Nanbokuchō_____	1336–1392
Muromachi/Ashikaga_____	1392–1573
Momoyama_____	1573–1615
<b>Edo/Tokugawa_____</b>	<b>1615–1868</b>
<b>Meiji_____</b>	<b>1868–1912</b>
Taishō_____	1912–1926
Shōwa_____	1926–1989

Heisei \_\_\_\_\_ 1989–present