

## Syllabus

Japanese 472: Okinawan Language and Literature is one course in the JPN471–472 two-course Okinawan language and culture set designed for students with some background in the Japanese language. The class meets twice a week (MW 3 to 4:15PM) and includes an introduction to Okinawan vocabulary and grammar as well as instruction in using reference materials to read (decode) and appreciate written Okinawan materials from the modern, classical/literary, and archaic stages of the language. In addition, the course may have guest lectures on various topics of interest, such as the Okinawan performing arts. Students will also prepare materials for a midterm mini-research project and presentation, and write a final research paper on a topic of their choosing, and make a brief presentation on the results.

### Instructor and contact information

Stewart Curry — [scurry@hawaii.edu](mailto:scurry@hawaii.edu) — Moore 368 — 956 2080 — virtual office hours on Discord MTWF 10:30–11, or by appointment

### Reference resources

Sakihara, *Okinawan-English Wordbook* (required, but you won't really need it for a couple of weeks)

The following might prove of use as well, but are not required:

Kokuritsu Kokugo Kenkyūjo, *Okinawa-go jiten*

Uchima & Nohara, eds., *Okinawa-go jiten — Naha-bōgen o chūshin ni*

*Ryūkyū-go onsei deetabeesu* at <http://ryukyu-lang.lib.u-ryukyu.ac.jp/>

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

Students in this course will learn Okinawan grammar and vocabulary that will enable them to appreciate Okinawan written material (and, on occasion, the performances associated with certain written materials) from various genres and ages of the Okinawan literary spectrum. They will also engage in a modicum of light analysis of themes involved in the works considered and their connections to similar works in other traditions. Specifically, students will be able to:

- read Okinawan language materials presented in romanization and *kana*-derived modern and traditional orthography,
- compare and contrast Okinawan and Japanese phonology and grammar,
- comprehend modern written Okinawan language material,
- comprehend and appreciate, with the assistance of reference materials, the written versions of the *ryūka* (*uta*) and *kumi odori* (*kumi wudu*) genres recorded in Classical/Literary/Middle Okinawan,
- be conversant, through exposure to and consideration of original poems and traditional expositions, regarding items from the *Omoro Sōshi*, written in Old Okinawan.

In addition, the following Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures Departmental SLOs apply, at least in part, to this course:

- [SLO 5—Research] Conduct independent research on topics in Japanese literature and/or linguistics, and effectively communicate the results.
- [SLO 6—Linguistics] Demonstrate an understanding of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics through analysis of words, phrases, and clauses from authentic Japanese samples.
- [SLO 7—Literature] Identify and describe major authors, works, features, forms, and styles of Japanese literature, both pre-modern and modern.
- [SLO 9—Literature] Situate and evaluate Japanese literature in its social, historical, intellectual, and religious contexts.

Further, the following University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) apply, at least in part, to this course:

- [ILO 1—Know: Breadth and Depth of Knowledge] 1a “General Education” and “Specialized study in an academic field”
- [ILO 2—Do: Intellectual and Practical Skills] 2b “Conducting research” and 2c “Communicate and report”
- [ILO 3—Value: Personal and Social Responsibility] “Respect for people and cultures”

## Prerequisites

This course assumes no familiarity with Okinawan, although some previous experience with the language, such as Japanese 471, EALL 197, or extracurricular sources (such as family, for example) might be helpful. A reading knowledge of Japanese is essential (minimum Japanese 202 or 205; 301 or concurrent enrollment preferred), as much of the reference and background material is available only in Japanese, and Japanese models are overtly referenced in presentations of Okinawan grammar and vocabulary. In addition, an ability to tolerate abstractions about grammar and language (i.e., some experience in general and/or Japanese linguistics, such as Linguistics 100 or Japanese 350) might prove useful as well. The only other basic requirement is a willingness to work hard and to be an active participant in the conduct of the course.

## Structure

The semester is divided into thematic blocks. The length of each block may vary depending on our progress, so the schedule below is more of a general outline than a specific plan; if you think of this course as a journey in which the experience, rather than some intended absolute destination reached via clearly defined waystops, is the end, you will enjoy it more and get more out of it. The only fixed things on the schedule are the final project topic due date (see the schedule below) and the project presentations. And the final exam, of course.

Block 0: Introduction to the course; choosing workgroups; resources; Japonic overview

Block 1: sounds, words, grammar, and syntax of Okinawan

Block 2: reading in Modern Okinawan: *Utu nu tami...*, *Uchinanchu nu ugwansu*, *Wannee mayaa du yaru*

Block 3: Midterm Reading Project: *Uchinaa nu shikee isan*

Block 4: Classical Okinawan dance drama *Kumi wudui: Shūshin kani'iri*

Block 5: Classical Okinawan poetry/song: *Ryūka*

Block 6: Old Okinawan poetry: *Omoro*

Block 7: Project presentations

## Attendance

This course will be conducted fully online synchronously for Spring 2021, and your regular attendance and participation are expected. As a general policy, no make-up work will be given without a valid, documented excuse. A valid document could be from a medical doctor, a commanding officer, a work supervisor, a faculty supervisor, or a police or court official. Except in the case of emergency, an excused absence must be accompanied by email, text, or personal notification *no later* than the day of the class absence (and ideally, before the class). Emails must include JPN472 and your name in the subject line. Texts must include JPN472 and your name in the first line. You can send texts to 808 225 8080.

## Homework

Homework consists of worksheets, texts with supporting notes, and study questions. It will be assigned and is required, but will not be turned in or checked *per se*. Full participation in the class depends on your doing the required advance work, such as readings and worksheets, for each class; anything less will do a disservice not only to yourself, but also (and perhaps more importantly) to the others in your workgroup and to the congenial functioning of the class as a whole. All homework will be posted at the course site on Laulima (or distributed by hard copy in a “normal” semester) a few days in advance of the class in which the homework is discussed.

## Quizzes

You can expect a short quiz for most classes, distributed after class as a take-home exercise, and due to Laulima>Dropbox before the next class session. Quizzes will be open-note and open-reference because that is the nature of the course. In the case of an excused absence no make-up will be given for a missed quiz. When the quiz average is calculated, the total number of quizzes will be the number of quizzes where a score has been recorded. In the case of an unexcused absence, that day's quiz will be counted as a zero. Each quiz will count for about 1.25% of the final overall grade (based on about 24 quizzes in all; this number may be a bit lower depending on our progress).

Material from a given day's session will comprise the content for that day's quiz. This means that doing appropriate preparation for each class is an absolute necessity rather than a mere strong recommendation. (Your performance on quizzes will typically not be good if your only exposure to and consideration of the assigned materials is during the class session.) On occasion, material from previous sessions, including guest lectures and student presentations, may appear on quizzes as well. Some material(s) reflecting class discussions of assigned material may be posted at the course site at Laulima, but will likely not completely reflect all information presented and discussed. **You will not be able to fully rely on posted materials to take the place of attentive preparation for class and active engagement during class.**

### Midterm Reading Project (MRP)

For the Midterm Reading Project, you will work with one or two other students on short excerpts from a modern Okinawan text about the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Okinawa. Tackling the material more or less independently, you will analyze and translate each text and do research regarding the background of the sites, and of the people and historical events related to the sites. You will present your findings to the class using some version of presentation software (i.e., not just a verbal report), and turn in a brief write-up of your translation and other findings. The MRP will help you hone analytical skills and (and maybe find sources) that will be of use for the final project. At least (part of) one class session will be given over to your independent work on the material.

### Final Project

For the Final Project, you will work with one or two other students to deploy your own interests and curiosity to discover sources, conduct investigations, and develop a research paper, the highlights of which will be shared in a class presentation. Both the paper and the presentation will be in English. The final project will be worth 30% of the final overall grade, broken down as detailed below.

**+Topic Submission (2.5%)** Topics investigated by students in previous semesters include: a thematic and grammatical analysis of a folk song, a discussion of the appropriateness of reading *omoro* as history, and reports on independently sourced materials such as Okinawan colloquialisms and idioms. The point is to find something of interest to you that involves **written Okinawan** (e.g., song lyrics, transcribed conversation, vocabulary sets, folk tales, etc.), and work with that.

**+Written Report (25%)** For the written report, which should adhere to MLA standards, you will produce a minimum of five pages of **content** (sections for notes and works cited will not count towards this total). An MLA formatting and style guide is available at [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/).

The report should be of good quality, meaning it has documented and reliable sources, a scholarly tone, and the like; it should also be entirely free of mechanical errors, such as mistakes in spelling, grammar, and formatting. Errors in spelling, grammar, and formatting will result in a half-grade (5% of the report grade, equivalent to 1.25% of the final overall grade) deduction for each occurrence.

Superlative papers will be the record of the investigation of a clearly stated hypothesis (even if it turns out to be wrong) or research question, or a critical analysis (comparison/contrast) of differing views on a topic of significance (a literature review). Papers that summarize other works (i.e., book reports) will be accepted but may not end up with the best scores. Special consideration will be given to papers that involve field work.

**+Presentation (2.5%)** The presentation will be **around ten minutes**. Note that this does not mean a *minimum* of ten minutes: your presentation must be planned, practiced and honed to meet the time specified. Keep in mind that the report write-up will likely include more information than the time frame for the presentation will allow you to present; treating the highlights and significant points of your research in the actual presentation will be the key to a successful report/presentation combination. Your grade for the presentation will be based solely on finishing at or near the time limit.

### Exams

There is only one exam, the final, which will consist of two parts of roughly equal weight: 1) an analysis and discussion of a short text in Modern Okinawan, and 2) discrete-point and short-answer exercises on topics considered in class, including facts about Okinawan, its similarities and contrasts with Japanese, grammar issues, and readings. It will be distributed after the last regular class session as a take-home exam, open-note and open-reference, and due by the following Monday's regular final exam session finish time (4:15 HST).

**Grading**

Daily quizzes			30%
Midterm Reading Project (MRP)			10%
Project development and presentation:	topic submission	2.5%	30% total
	report	25%	
	presentation	2.5%	
Final exam			30%
Total			100%

Letter grades will be assigned according to the scale below. Note that plus-minus grading will *not* be used for this course.

90–100%	A
80–89%	B
70–79%	C
60–69%	D
under 59%	F

Percentages will rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Online course information**

As mentioned above, this course is a fully online synchronous course for Spring 2021.

Just as a reminder, you will need access to a computer or other internet-capable device (something tablet-sized or larger is recommended), a stable internet connection, and a quiet space with a minimum of outside intrusions. (For that last, just do the best you can—working/studying from home can have some interesting moments.)

Quizzes will be distributed as pdfs, and should be submitted via Laulima>Dropbox. Group projects (the MRP and Final Project steps) can be emailed.

**Additional information**

If you have a disability with related academic access needs, you are warmly encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program, Student Services Center, Room 013, (V/T) 956-7511. KOKUA is our campus program serving students with disabilities.

Students are reminded that breaches of academic honesty, such as cheating and plagiarism, can deleteriously affect grades and maintenance of good academic standing. You are referred to the University of Hawai'i Student Conduct Code for definitions and explanations regarding this and other academic citizenship topics, at [http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct\\_code/](http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct_code/).

## Schedule

Block	Wk	Day	Content
0/1	1	11 Jan	Introduction to the course; workgroups; resources; Japonic overview; sounds and words
1		13 Jan	Nouns and particles
	2	18 Jan	<i>holiday: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>
		*19 Jan	<i>see below</i>
		20 Jan	Adjectives
	3	25 Jan	Verbs
		27 Jan	More Verbs
	4	1 Feb	Sentences
2		**3 Feb	Reading in Modern Okinawan: <i>Utu nu tami ni bana ushichicharu tuji</i> (**see below)
	5	8 Feb	
		10 Feb	
	6	15 Feb	<i>holiday: Presidents Day</i>
		17 Feb	Reading in Modern Okinawan: <i>Uchinaanchu nu ugvansu</i>
	7	22 Feb	
		24 Feb	
	8	1 Mar	Reading in Modern Okinawan: <i>Wanee mayaa du yaru</i>
		3 Mar	
	9	8 Mar	
3		10 Mar	Midterm Reading Project: <i>Uchinaa nu shikee isan</i>
		15–19 Mar	<i>days off: Spring Recess</i>
	10	22 Mar	MRP Presentations
4		24 Mar	Classical Okinawan dance drama <i>kumi nудui: Shūshin kani'iri</i>
	11	***29 Mar	<i>see below</i>
		31 Mar	<b>Final Project topic due</b>
	12	5 Apr	
		7 Apr	

	13	12 Apr	
5		14 Apr	Classical Okinawan poetry/song: <i>Ryūka</i>
	14	19 Apr	
		21 Apr	
6	15	26 Apr	Old Okinawan poetry: <i>Omorō</i>
		28 Apr	
7	16	3 May	Project Reports
		5 May	(Project Reports); Review

Finals week                      Final Exam due date: Monday 10 May 4:15PM (HST)

\* Tuesday 19 January, last day to register, add classes, or change grading option.

\*\* Wednesday 3 February, last day to change sections and drop courses without a W on your record. After 3 February, all withdrawals require written consent of instructor and College Student Academic Services Dean.

\*\*\* Monday 29 March, last day for in-person restricted withdrawal (with W grade). After 29 March, no withdrawals are permitted, except under unusual circumstances beyond your control.