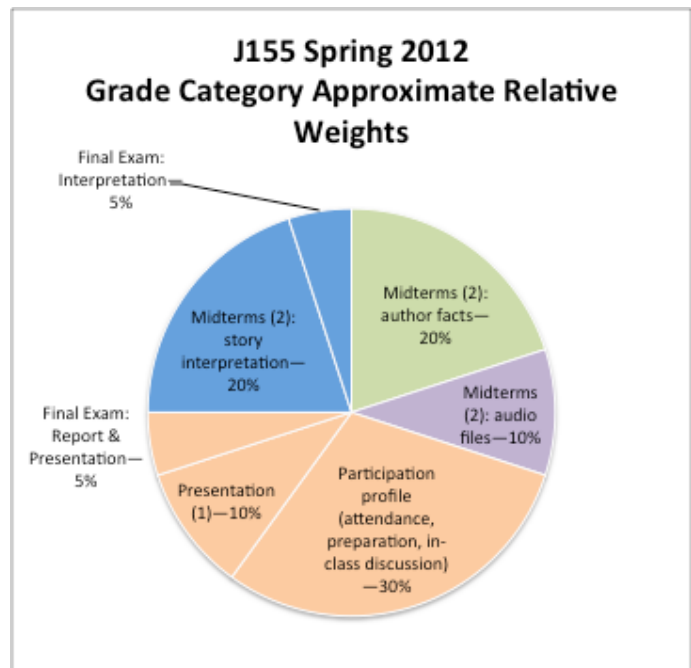


Course description (syllabus) & other information

Course title: Japan 155 — Modern Japanese Literature
Semester: Spring 2012
Instructor: John R. Wallace (Dwinelle 3409, office hours and how to email me on *Announcements Page*)
Meets: T&Th 2PM–3:30PM (confirm class location at [Online Schedule of Classes](#))
Grade categories with percent of course grade:

Midterms (2): author facts—20%
Midterms (2): audio files—10%
Participation profile (attendance, preparation, in-class discussion)—30%
Presentation (1)—10%
Final Exam: Report & Presentation—5%
Midterms (2): story interpretation—20%
Final Exam: Interpretation—5%

Green: management of factual information; purple: aural comprehension; tan: hybrid material that requires some language skills and some analytic skills and some fact management skills; blue: analytic skills



Please note ...

This syllabus contains critical information about course content, procedures, policies and grade calculations. It covers the material that is unlikely to change during the term. Other details are on the web pages. I suggest you read this syllabus carefully and review it once or twice during the term. I assume that you understand its content so please contact me if you don't. This document is "live" throughout the term although it is not mentioned as often at the web pages.

In this syllabus are statements that influence your grade. While you should read this document in full, I will list here a few of the items that are not "intuitive" for a class approach and which have significant impact on your grade, or are frequently misunderstood by students:

- ◆ Announcements: I do NOT make all relevant announcements in class, even important ones. Visit the *Announcements Page* frequently.
- ◆ Students who attend regularly, are attentive while in class (section & lecture), and avoid multitasking during class (section & lecture) generally receive better grades even if one can perform very well on the exams.
- ◆ I have "bright lines" for submission times: if something were due at, say, 1PM, if it arrives at 1:01PM it is late.
- ◆ Skimming instructions, schedules and such can hurt your grade. I sometimes have very specific instructions either for pedagogical reasons or file management at my end.
- ◆ Correct subject lines in emails are critically important (see below).
- ◆ Grades are reported as a number, not a letter, where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on. On bSpace, 11/12 does not mean you got 11 out of a possible 12 points and it has nothing to do with percentage points. It means the letter grade is an "A-".

- ◆ Note my treatment of extra credit activity stated in the grade category descriptions. Most general extra credit has value only if you are already fully engaged in the class and general extra credit never substitutes for weak performance on regular assignments.

Communicating

How to reach me

Office hours: Please use the link on the *Announcements Page*.

My office is **Dwinelle 3409**.

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu.

- ◆ ALL emails for this class should follow this subject line template (note the underlines!):

J155_assignmenttag_LASTNAME_classname keyword

“Assignment tags” are given by me in various instructions, at the time of submission. “Classname” is the name you will use in class. Often it is your first name but some have a nickname they use consistently or a conversion of a Chinese, Japanese, Korean name, whatever. You tell me this name at the beginning of the term and it is what I memorize. “Keywords” are always one word (or multiple words crammed together with not spaces) and often have odd spellings, so that a computer search doesn’t grab tons of possibilities. See Home Course Page sidebar “OH & EMAIL” me for more information, etc.

- ◆ I usually do not check email after 9:30PM.

This class uses two web sites (www.sonic.net/~tabine & bspace.berkeley.edu) for announcements, schedules and materials access

This class uses a primary and secondary Web site. Below is a table explaining what material is where. (Off-campus individuals following my class via podcast, please email me. I might be creating a special site for this group since you do not automatically have access to the bSpace site):

PRIMARY <i>Announcements Page</i> — www.sonic.net — ALWAYS START HERE	PRIMARY <i>Course Pages</i> — www.sonic.net —	SECONDARY <i>(materials that require restricted access)</i> —bSpace—
announcements links to course pages	sidebar: class policies, syllabus, assignment & test information , links to other Web site, etc. main window: class schedule	course materials (texts, vocab glosses, sound files, powerpoints, etc.) unofficial grade postings* *If I have posted a grade to bSpace then for whatever reason changed the grade, the new grade will almost never appear on bSpace.

Class announcements (Announcements Page: <http://www.sonic.net/~tabine/aa/calcrses/annc/annc.html>)

Where to look for announcements?

In the days and weeks before class begins, I might contact the class using the message tool on bSpace. These emails will go to enrolled and waitlisted students. At some point I “hand-off” announcements to my *Announcements Page* Web site with a class-wide email that says so. **The student now needs to navigate regularly to that Web page to read announcements. There will be no emails except under special circumstances.** After class stops meeting but until grades are submitted, I continue to use the *Announcements Page*. Once I submit grades, I will soon begin using bSpace again to notify students if any additional announcements have been made.

There will again be a “hand off” announcement indicating this.

Announcements Page Web Site

- ◆ **Please check the Announcements Page frequently** beginning a few days before the start of the course until the end of finals week.
 - ◇ I will not introduce changes in what needs to be done for a class in the 24 hours prior to the class. However, I often upload shortly before a class (in the last few hours ahead of class), as I prepare to teach that session, additional information or web links that might be helpful for a class session.
- ◆ **Remember to refresh your browser** to insure you are seeing the updated version of the page on my Web site.

Class sessions schedule & content, deadlines (Course Home Page)

- ◆ **See: Announcements Page.**
- ◆ **Please DO NOT download the Course outline or individual schedule pages.** There are two problems with doing so:
 - ◇ You might miss grade-relevant, and other important announcements mentioned only on the Announcements Page.
 - ◇ The schedule pages change during the term. For example, I often add notes to sessions after they are complete that might help in preparing for exams.

Course materials (bSpace)

All material for this class that is not listed for purchase is provided as digital files, usually via bSpace. Please respect copyright laws. **Note that many students have reported difficulty downloading some of my pdfs from bSpace when they are using Chrome (the browser).** Course materials specifics are listed below.

General policies

On the sidebar of the Course Home Page are links to my policies about

- ... my efforts to be “green” in class operation (including an invitation to contact me if my policy is hindering your learning experience),
- ... laptops use in the classroom and all other types of multitasking (**prohibited**), and
- ... **academic honesty** (extensive page of definitions, explanations, examples, penalties mostly related to plagiarism and the accurate and fair use of research material).

Please read them; some of the information there affects your grade.

A note on academic honesty

I am very attentive to issues about plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. **All students are expected to read carefully my full statement on these issues.** Access the Academic Honesty page through the Course Home Page sidebar. The academics honesty page is long, for a web page. **Please read it in full by the end of the first week of the term.** Ask questions. **After a week I will assume you are fully aware of, and have understood thoroughly, its contents.**

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you need accommodations for any physical, psychological, or learning disability or if you want me to have emergency medical information, please email me, or speak to me after class or during office hours.

Course content & goals

In J155 we read, in the original full-length modern Japanese, short stories by highly regarded authors from the Meiji through Heisei periods. The class is designed to expose students to excellent authors by discussing the works as literary objects, with emphasis on theme and style. We consider various sound-related facets of a work (those characteristic that help create an author’s “voice” — rhythm, pacing, the sound effect of the text if read aloud, and such — as well as sounds evoked within the story). This gives us a specific platform from which to consider style, and a way for the student just learning to read well to think about language nuance and individual written style. The authors we will read are: Kunikida

Doppo (1871–1908), Shiga Naoya (1883–1971), Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886–1965), Kawabata Yasunari (1899–1972), Mishima Yukio (1925–70), Abe Kōbō (1924–1993), and Yoshimoto Banana (1964–). This is a hybrid class in the sense that I aim to develop the student's ability to appreciate written Japanese as literature, but ground that appreciation in a close look at the original language.

Course prerequisites

When offered in the Fall — Completed or concurrent enrollment in J100A (as a minimum), or consent of instructor.

When offered in the Spring — Completed or concurrent enrollment in J100B (as a minimum), or consent of instructor.

Course materials

There is nothing to purchase or order for this class. Class materials are in the form of digital files and are posted to bSpace. Please respect copyright law and use these materials only for the purposes of this class.

Grades

General comments

- ◆ Students are always welcome to discuss with me concerns about grades. **If you use the course number at the beginning and “gradeissue” as a keyword in the email subject line your emails will be reviewed again before assigning a final course grade, so I recommend this.** (Keywords are irregular word strings I request to be put in emails so that later I can use them as a search term. This is explained in my comments on emailing me, found through the Course Home Page sidebar.)
- ◆ “Curved,” when used by me below or in class, means that while I start off with standard cutoffs for letter grades (listed below in this syllabus as “Start point in defining cutoffs ...”), I often adjust these for particular tests or quizzes. The intent is not to create a “bell” curve, but rather to make a grading profile for a particular graded activity that takes into account the difficulty of the activity, how well I think students should be able to perform, and how students have actually performed.
- ◆ **Some grades are reported to bSpace**, though this report might be several sessions after the grade is determined. bSpace is NOT the official grade book record. Also, **when I have discussed a grade with a student and changed it, these changes are almost never uploaded to bSpace.** (It is time inefficient to upload grades on an individual basis.)
- ◆ **All grades in all categories are either originally in or converted to a 12-pt scale where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on.** (See the charts at the end of this document.) This is also the way grades are communicated. To tell a student that s/he made a 12 on an assignment is to say that s/he received an “A”. Test grades might initially have a raw and/or percent score but this is curved and given a letter grade and it is the letter grade, not the raw score or percent that counts towards the final grade.
- ◆ **Travel plans:** Students often schedule travel plans very close to class sessions. I do not consider missed flights, delayed or cancelled flights or inexpensive tickets to be excusable reasons for absences. I take our class sessions very seriously and hope you will, too. **I understand that students have various summer activities planned. The material covered in class can rarely be captured via just written notes. Keep that in mind when planning your summer. Also, I may or may not offer makeup opportunities for exams (the default is not to offer).**
- ◆ **Leaving early or arriving late because of midterms in other classes:** I do not consider this a valid reason for missing part of the class. I do have sympathy with a student's desire to arrive early to a test room or when a test runs overtime. However, this explanation is so frequently abused that it is difficult to sort out those who legitimately need to do this and those who do not. Therefore, please email me ahead of time if possible and perhaps we can work something out.
- ◆ **I consider the final exam period a firm date.** Please do not ask to take an exam early because you have travel or moving plans. (This is a general statement, some of my classes do not use the final exam period.)
- ◆ **I basically never give incompletes in a class.**

About “graded activities” & “grade categories”

By “graded activities” I mean anything you do for the class that is given a grade. This includes attendance, class participation, quizzes, tests, written assignments, and so on.

I group graded **activities** under several **categories** to provide an overview of the type of work expected for the class and to create relative grade values for this work. I assign a higher percent of the final grade to activities that are a) closer to the core mission of the class and b) reflect the amount of time and effort required of the student for that category. For example, in some of my classes,

class participation is around 10% of the final grade while in others that are closer to seminar style it is 40% of the final grade.

How the grade for a category is calculated is stated on this syllabus while the rubric used to determine a grade for a particular activity is on the Course Home Page sidebar. Therefore, information on how I determine grades is split over these two places.

I regularly “curve” graded activities. For example, in the case of tests, I usually first determine a percent correct, then draw borderlines/cutoffs for the various grade steps based on overall class performance. I do not try to create “bell” curves; they look more like a playground slide. The steepness of this curve is a result of thinking over how successful I was in creating the type of test I wanted to give and what I think is a reasonable expectation of performance. The *start point* for this thinking is in a chart towards the end of this syllabus.

I rarely adjust a student’s category grade. However, if, for example, there had been a graded activity category of quizzes and I had intended to give five or so but ended up giving only three and if a student missed one due to illness and I did not offer a makeup opportunity, I might conclude that the mathematical average for the category is not a fair reflection of the student’s performance. I might adjust the category grade at the end of the term, giving more weight to the two quizzes successfully completed.

Since nearly all grade adjustments are done at the level of graded activities and therefore part of the reported grade, a student can determine his or her category grades and can therefore *estimate* a final course grade. The student can generate various final grade scenarios by using the **“Grade estimator” link on the Course Home Page sidebar**, when provided. This Excel document is usually linked to the Course Home Page sidebar.

Please show some restraint in asking me to project a final grade for you towards the end of the term. (Basically I like all grade issues to be discussed in person. However, I understand that there might be times when this is not workable.) I will speak only in general terms, so if your question is, for example, whether I think you will get an “A” or an “A–”, I can’t answer that question. (This is true for P/NP students, too, when they are close to the borderline.) Also, if you are just curious, please wait for the reported grades. That being said, there are situations when such questions are legitimate. Please include **“gradeissue”** in your subject line. If I do not answer your email it either means that I don’t think your situation warrants an answer or I am simply too busy to do so. I will give it serious consideration and respond as quickly as possible if appropriate. However, please remember that it will not be entirely accurate since there are many calculations involved in the final weeks, including balancing your performance against that of other students after all grades have been calculated (usually something that happens in the last 48-72 hours before grade submission). Estimating an individual grade before I have entered into the phase of considering the class as a whole is a time-consuming process since it is not just a matter of running numbers.

Brief description of graded activities for this class (details on the Course Home Page sidebar)—for grade category weights (for final course grade) see the top of this document

Grade category—Participation Profile

I consider three areas when developing a “profile” for student participation: **attendance, preparation and participation**. I take roll and after each session I take notes on preparation and participation.

Calculating the category grade: I use the below simple scales. At the end of the term I generate a total number of points, sort students from high to low and create a scale to give each student a letter grade for the category. It is possible to score an “A+” in the category—consistency would be important. It is possible to score as low as a “C” but probably not much lower unless attendance patterns are very poor. Students who attend nearly all the time and prepare well always except perhaps once or twice should score an “A”. Students who prepare in a rushed way, even if attentive in class, should score a low “B” or worse because **outside preparation is key** in classes that involve the original Japanese. Here are the simple scales I will use (points earned followed by description):

Attendance	Preparation	Participation
2 present	4 confident that student prepared	4 attentive, engaged, contributes
	3 seems likely student prepared	3 in the room, attentive, as standard presence

1 late (after
name is called
during roll)

2 can't be sure student
prepared sufficiently

2 seems somewhat disengaged at
times

1 seems unlikely student
prepared sufficiently

1 seems disengaged too often

0 absent

0 absent

0 absent

How to prepare for class and what I mean by participation are described on the course Web pages.

Category—Student presentation:

Each student is expected to do one presentation during the term. It is less than 10 minutes long and is given in English. (There is also a very short presentation during the final exam period.) This is graded carefully. What is required depends on the individual assignment. Presentations are required by instructors for a variety of reasons: to give the student practice in public discourse, to encourage a student to study something with more care than usual, to deliver information to others, and so on. For this class, the emphasis is on the delivery of information to other students. It is a **focused presentation** on the most **pertinent information** of the topic at hand.

- ◆ The presentation has a relatively tough grade scale. Please develop an excellent presentation.
- ◆ It is the student's responsibility to watch for his or her presentation date. I will not send out reminders, or make class announcements.
- ◆ Details about how to do the presentation, and the grade rubric, are on the course Web pages.

Category—Midterm Tests:

There are two in-class midterms. They are in three parts: factual information about the authors covered, based on lecture material and student presentation material; questions that ask for interpretations of the stories covers, questions the explore the sound elements of the stories covered, primarily with audio files.

Calculating the category grade: It is the average of the two midterms.

Category—Final Exam:

There is a final exam, at the regularly scheduled time. Details, when ready, will be on the course Web pages.

Grade category—Extra Credit (on tests and such), Major Extra Credit (additional, substantial assignments), General Extra Credit (little things that you do), "A+" as course grade, and "gradeissue":

I use three types of extra credit in my classes.

- ◆ The first is a type you are used to encountering—**on assignments and tests** where students are given the opportunity to answer more challenging questions or include information beyond the usual expectations of the assignment. This type of extra credit influences directly the grade on the assignment.
- ◆ The second type also a type you sometimes see, I think: **extra assignments** that include a challenge of some sort. I call this "Major Extra Credit" and identify the assignments as such. Completing Major Extra Credit in **excellent form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.3. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an "A", for the class, under this scenario, your grade is rounded up to an "A" if you have 11.3 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit in **good form** will change your final grade cutoff lines from n.5 to n.4. (Whereas in a usual scenario you must have a course final grade of 11.5 to round up to a 12, an "A", for the class, under this scenario, your graded is rounded up to an "A" if you have 11.4 or higher.) Completing Major Extra Credit **mechanically as if only done for the course grade** will not change your final grade cutoff lines. Some of my courses do not have major extra credit opportunities.
- ◆ The third type of extra credit is something more ineffable and you probably have not had this as an explicit grade category in your classes although I imagine it does work behind the scenes in some of your classes. These are little **things that you do that indicate an enthusiasm for the class**, or more than the usual attentiveness to assignments, or acts that help the teaching environment. This might be web links you find that are of special value, or an extended comment you send by

email about something that interested you, or finding an error in my Web site or other instructions. I acknowledge these things with an email that includes the keyword “**extracredit**”. **This type of extra credit is only valuable if, one the whole, you seem to be participating very well in the class. It cannot replace assignments. Indeed, it might work against you if I conclude that you are only interested in your grade and believe the extra credit can substitute for work on the regular assignments. This is an opportunity to show enthusiasm and share ideas and help others, not polish your grade although, indirectly, it does have that effect sometimes.**

At the end of the term: In the gradebook, there are columns directly next to the final grade box. They list details for extra credit, various grade issues you have discussed with me (that have the gradeissue keyword in the subject line, no others), and notes I make during the term about you, such as multitasking during class, or special circumstances). After the grades are calculated the first time, I consider these issues.

I consider giving one or two “A+”s in a course. Extra credit is usually necessary to qualify being considered for this, and the content and quality of the extra credit is definitely a factor in choosing among students who are on the short list. I do not assign “A+”s strictly based on the highest final grade score.

How grade categories are weighted for the final course grade

Please refer to the top of this syllabus.

Table: Equivalent of 12-pt scale numbers to letter grades

When a “12-pt scale” grade is reported on bSpace or elsewhere, the letter grade equivalent to that number is:

13 / A+	10 / B+	7 / C+	4 / D+
12 / A	9 / B	6 / C	3 / D
11 / A-	8 / B-	5 / C-	2 / D-
			0 / F

Table: Conversion of 12-pt scale course average to letter grades for the final course grade

At the end of the term, the 12-pt scores for each grade category are calculated together, according to weight, for the final grade. That mathematical result is then rounded to the nearest letter grade step. In other words, an 11.50 is rounded up to 12 while an 11.49 is rounded down to 11, and so on. Below are the cutoffs for each final course letter grade.

Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university
When given, usually highest 1-2 class averages, with general EC taken into consideration	A+	≥ 9.5	B+	≥ 6.5	C+	≥ 3.5	D+ (NP↓)
≥ 11.5	A	≥ 8.5	B	≥ 5.5	C	≥ 2.5	D
≥ 10.5	A-	≥ 7.5	B-	≥ 4.5	C- (P↑)	≥ 2	D-
						< 2	F

Table: Start point in defining cutoffs for grades when “percent correct” is the criterion used to determine a letter grade (multiple-choice tests and such)

≥ 100	A+	≥ 86.5	B+	≥ 76.5	C+	≥ 66.5	D+	< 60	F
≥ 93	A	≥ 83	B	≥ 73	C	≥ 63	D		
≥ 90	A-	≥ 80	B-	≥ 70	C-	≥ 60	D-		