

Sophia University – Summer Session 2025

July 1 – July 22, 2025 *July 1: Orientation *July 4: No-class day

Date: January 2025

Course Title	The Japanese Economy in a Comparative Perspective
Course Code	ECZ200
Instructor	Brieuc Monfort
Class Period	3rd Period (13:30-15:10)
Course Format	In-Person
Language of Instruction	English
Maximum class size	50
Course Description	<p>The course “The Japanese Economy in a Comparative Perspective” is an introductory course presenting the specificities of the Japanese economy and its relevance to the global economy. Once promised to overtake the U.S. as “number one” two generations ago, Japan has since slid in international rankings. A member of the G7 and the G20, Japan remains relevant not just as a major global economy deeply integrated within Asian and global trade and financial networks. Japan has also been confronted ahead of its partners with complex challenges, from the impact of aging on rising government debt to the impact of low growth on subdued inflation. Studying the Japanese economy thus offers key insights to understand current global challenges more generally.</p> <p>After a presentation of historical developments (Part I), the courses will discuss domestic and international issues (Parts II and III) before addressing the most pressing current challenges (Part IV).</p>
Course Objectives	<p>This is a non-technical course requiring no prior background in economics. The main objective of the course is to provide an overview of the Japanese economy, with a focus on what makes Japan specific and how it is integrated commercially and financially with its global partners.</p> <p>To better leverage the understanding of the students, the course will adopt a comparative perspective to allow students to contrast the main features of the Japanese economy with those of their country of origin.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Japanese economy and to critically assess economic articles in newspapers related to Japan.</p>
Expected work outside of class	Review course materials, answer to the online quizzes, preparation for the final report. This could take 1 - 1.5 hours per class depending

	on the individual.
Course Materials	PowerPoint and materials available on Moodle.
	Optional reading (available in Sophia University's Library) Ito, Takatoshi; Hoshi, Takeo (2020). The Japanese Economy (second edition). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262538244.
	Purchase of textbook: optional e-book: acceptable
Moodle	Course material and online quizzes.
Contact Instructor	•via Email (bmonfort@sophia.ac.jp)
Evaluation (Attendance, Class participation, in-class assignments, final exam, quizzes, etc.)	The evaluation for the course will be based on the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class attendance and participation (30%) • One-line quizzes on Moodle to review each specific lecture (30%) • Final report (40%)
Other comments	-
Class schedule	*July 1: Orientation
	*July 4: No-class
	[DAY 1] July 2 (W).....Introduction. Why Japan is Relevant
	[DAY 2] July 3 (R).....I. Growth in historical perspective. From the Meiji period to High growth Period
	[DAY 3] July 7 (M).....The Lost Decades & Abenomics
	[DAY 4] July 8 (T).....II. Domestic issues. Labor Market and Unemployment
	[DAY 5] July 9 (W).....Inflation and Monetary Policy
	[DAY 6] July 10 (R).....Public Debt and Fiscal Policy
	[DAY 7] July 11 (F).....Japanese Corporations
	[DAY 8] July 14 (M).....III. Global issues. International Trade and Global Value Chains
	[DAY 9] July 15 (T).....Global Finance
	[DAY 10] July 16 (W).....Adapting to Climate Change
	[DAY 11] July 17 (R).....IV. Current challenges. Aging and Demographic Challenges
	[DAY 12] July 18 (F).....Inequalities
[DAY 13] July 21 (M).....Innovation & Entrepreneurship	
[DAY 14] July 22 (T).....Conclusion. Scenarios for Japan's Economic Future	

*Course format, evaluation methods and class schedule may be subject to change.

[Important Note Regarding Class Capacity]

Course enrollment in each course is on a first-come, first-served basis. Please be aware that once the maximum capacity is reached, you will no longer be able to select that course.

If you plan to transfer the credits to your home university, please consider alternative courses as well when making your study plan, in case the courses you want to take are full.

In case you are unable to take your desired courses and the number of courses you are enrolled in changes, a refund will be issued based on the number of courses reduced.