Course Description
This course introduces students to various texts of Japanese horror fiction and film, ranging from the early modern era to the contemporary period. The goal of this seminar is to explore the dominance of the mode of horror in both Japan and the West today. What accounts for the popularity of J-Horror even in the U.S.? What are some of the social issues that J-Horror examines? Is J-Horror culturally specific, or is it transnational? On top of exploring these questions through reading/viewing primary texts, students will also read seminal theoretical and historical readings on horror and Japanese ghostly culture in order to acquire the vocabulary necessary in analyzing horror and other fantastic texts. The first half of the semester will thus be devoted to studying the language of Japanese horror fiction, mainly ghost stories (kaidan). The second half will then turn to two dominant themes in Japanese horror—gender and technology—and will explore how these issues are tied to the popularity of horror in contemporary Japan.

Requirements
Students are required to prepare in advance by reading all assigned texts and attend every class, participating in classroom discussions. There will be two individual student presentations, one group presentation, two short analytical papers (3-4 pages each), and one final analytical paper (7-8 pages). The individual student presentations are analytical in nature, where each student will be asked to simply provide his/her observation on the topic in question (the language of horror/the dominance of horror). The group presentation will be on the readings and the film of that week, where the students will be asked to provide a synopsis of the theoretical reading and offer a reading of the film based on that reading (sign-up sheet provided second week). The two short papers will be on 1) the language of horror and 2) gender and horror. The specific questions will be announced later in the course. The final paper should be analytical in nature and does not need to be research-based. The topic may go beyond classroom readings as long as it sticks to the main topic of Japanese horror and uses some of the theoretical readings. Possible topics may include: horror video games, gothic culture, American remakes of J-horror, suicide stories, monster tales, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, etc. Students wanting to write research papers on the topic may forego the paper requirements and submit a 15-20 pg. research paper at the end of the semester. Please write your Student ID numbers (not your names) when submitting these papers.

Classroom Rules
1) Please feel free to bring in drinks and laptops (for note-taking purposes only).
2) Please turn off all cell phones and any other sound-producing device. If your phone rings in the class twice, you will be asked to leave the classroom and receive zero credit for participation that day.

3) You **MUST** bring the readings with you to every class session. If you do not have the text in front of you, it will count as **half an absence** no matter how much you contribute to the classroom discussion.

4) During classroom discussion, if you were the last person to speak, please let another person speak. Let’s practice being good listeners as well as being good speakers.

5) Please be kind and considerate to your fellow classmates. If any inappropriate comments are made, you will be asked to leave the classroom.

6) Please enjoy yourself. Education should be fun. If at any time, you find yourself bored during class time, please notify the instructor. (^o^)

**Honor Code**

http://www.wesleyan.edu/studenthandbook/3_honorsystem.html

The following six infractions constitute the basis for the Honor Code:

1. The attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic exercise without due acknowledgment;

2. Plagiarism;

3. The submission of the same work for academic credit more than once without permission;

4. Willful falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise;

5. Deception concerning adherence to the conditions set by the instructor for the formal academic exercise;

6. The failure to take constructive action in the event of committing or observing a violation or an apparent violation.

**Other Sources**

**Students with Disabilities**

It is the policy of Wesleyan University to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students, however, are responsible for registering with Disabilities Services, in addition to making requests known to me in a timely manner. If you require accommodations in this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible (by the second week of the semester), so that appropriate arrangements can be made. The procedures for registering with Disabilities Services can be found at [www.wesleyan.edu/deans/disability-student.html](http://www.wesleyan.edu/deans/disability-student.html).

**Writing Support**

If you need help at any stage of the writing process, there are writing workshops and tutors to help you on your papers. To request a writing mentor, someone who will work with you for the whole semester, contact the Writing Workshop at the beginning of the semester: x2440 or
writingworks@wesleyan.edu. The workshop is also open afternoons and evenings for drop-ins and appointments at Downey House, 294 High Street.

**Course Materials**

**Bookstore**

Lafcadio Hearn, *Kwaidan*

Hino Hideshi, *Lullabies from Hell*

Enchi Fumiko, *Masks*

It's Only Natural, 386 Main St.

Course Reader (Contains all other readings)

**Electronic Reserves**

All readings from the Course Reader are also on e-reserve at Olin Library.

http://www.wesleyan.edu/libr. Click on “Items Online-ERes.” When prompted, enter password: alit202 (note small letters). Download or open Adobe files. Hardcopies are also available at the circulation desk.

**Field Trip**

If the planning for the field trip comes through, each student may be asked to pay up to $10 to contribute to the cost. Please keep this in mind.

**Grading**

Classroom participation and preparation: 10%

Group presentation: 15%

Individual Presentations: 10%

Analysis Paper 1: 20%

Analysis Paper 2: 15%

Final paper: 30%

**Absence Policy**

Absences will not be excused unless the student notifies the instructor at least 24 hours in advance.

Absences will be excused with a note from the student's advisor or the doctor. If you do not have the primary text in class, it will count as half of an absence. 3 unexcused absences will result in the drop of your final grade by a notch (e.g. from A to A-). Missing the field trip will count as missing 3 classes, hence your final grade will be dropped by a notch.
Course Schedule

1/23 Course Introduction

The Language of Horror

1/28 FILM: Ju-on (Original V-Cinema, Shimizu Takashi, 2000)
FILM: The Amityville Horror (Stuart Rosenberg, 1979)

1/30 Robin Wood, “An Introduction to the American Horror Film”
Sigmund Freud, “The Uncanny”

2/4 Ueda Akinari, “The Reed-Choked House,” “The Serpent’s Lust”
Noriko Reider, “The Appeal of Kaidan, Tales of the Strange”
FILM: Ugetsu monogatari (Mizoguchi Kenji, 1953)

2/6 James Twitchell, “The Dimensions and Evolution of Modern Horror Art”

2/11 Lafcadio Hearn, Kwaidan 1-137

2/13 Kwaidan 137-end
Noel Carroll, “Plotting Horror”

2/18 (Evening Class)
*Student Performance of Hyaku monogatari* (Freeman Center 7p.m.)
Midori Deguchi, “One Hundred Demons and One Hundred Supernatural Tales”

2/20 Hideshi Hino, Lullabies from Hell

2/25 Sanyütei Enchō, “Peony Lantern”
FILM: Scary True Stories (Tsuruta Norio, 1991)

2/27 Tzvetan Todorov, “The Definition of the Fantastic,” “The Uncanny and the Marvelous”

3/3 Tsuruya Nanboku, Yotsuya Kaidan (“Ghosts and Nineteenth-Century Kabuki”)
FILM: Yotsuya Kaidan (Nakagawa Nobuo, 1959)

3/5 Student Presentations: The Language of Kaidan

Analysis Paper Due 1:10p.m.

3/10 Midsemester Recess!
3/12 Midsemester Recess!
3/17 Midsemester Recess!
3/19 Midsemester Recess!

Gender and Horror

3/24 FILM: Evil Dead Trap (Ikeda Toshiharu, 1988)
FILM: Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)
3/26  Carrol Clover, “Her Body, Himself”
3/31  Enchi Fumiko, Masks
      FILM: *Onibaba* (Shindô Kaneto, 1964)
4/2   Judith Zeitlin, “Ghosts and Historical Time”
4/7   Izumi Kyôka, “The Holy Man of Mount Kôya”
      Barbara Creed, “Horror and the Monstrous-Feminine: An Imaginary Abjection”
      FILM: *Audition* (Miike Takashi, 1999)
4/9   Carrol Clover, “The Eye of Horror”
4/12 (Sat): *Field Trip* (tentative)

**Technology and Nostalgia**

4/14  Guest Speaker, New England Paranormal Video Research Group
      FILM: *Ringu* (Nakata Hideo, 1997)
4/16  **Analysis Paper (Gender and Horror) Due 5p.m.**
      Jean Baudrillard, “The Procession of Simulacra”
4/21  Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, “Cogwheel”
      Tanizaki Jun’ichirô, “Mr. Bluemound”
      FILM *Tetsuo* (Tsukamoto Shinya, 1997)
4/23  Friedrich Kittler, “Dracula and His Legacy”
4/28  Edogawa Ranpô, “Twins” “Human Chair”
      Marilyn Ivy, *Discourse of the Vanishing*, Chapter 2
      FILM: *Kairo* (translated as *Pulse*, Kurosawa Kiyoshi, 2001)
4/30  Brian Massumi, “Everywhere You Want to Be: Introduction to Fear”
5/5   Conclusions and Individual Presentations

5/13 (Tues): **FINAL PAPER DUE 5 p.m.**

Let’s have a fun (and very scary) semester!