

Course description (syllabus) & other information

Course title: J144, Edo Literature—Matsuo Bashō's 奥の細道 [*Oku no hosomichi*, *Narrow Road to the Deep North*]
Semester: Spring 2013
Instructor: John R. Wallace
Meets: TuTh 2–3:30PM

Course description

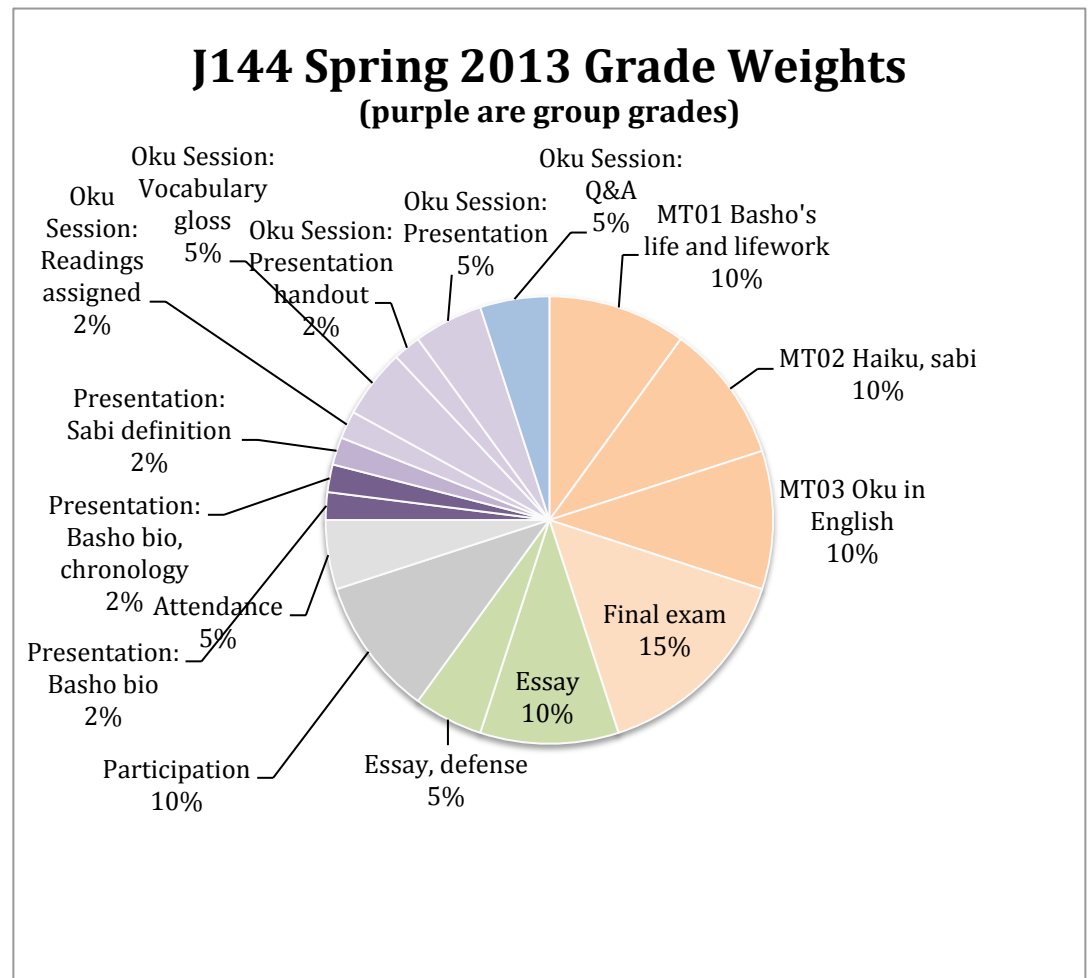
This course provides an opportunity to read at length premodern, literary Japanese of the Edo period. We take as our primary text the famous travel journal of the 17th century, *Oku no hosomichi* ('Narrow Roads of the Interior', ca. 1694) by Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). Bashō is the preeminent *haiku* master of Japan and *Oku no hosomichi* is widely seen as the best of his prose works as well as one of the great classics of Japan. The text is *haibun*—a mixture of concise prose passages and haiku. Both prose and poem are given full consideration. Both grammar and literary qualities will be discussed. The course also presents Bashō beyond the borders of this one text, including his view of *sabi* (rustic beauty). The nature of the text also requires that we take up the more general topic of haiku principles, as well.

Grade weights

The grading scheme in this course is designed to lead up to an informed reading of *Oku no hosomichi* in the original. To that goal, we read background material on its author, test that, develop haikai reading skills (and make more sophisticated our understanding of *sabi*), test that, look at the text as a whole, test that, then finally read specific passages in Japanese. At the end there is a comprehensive final exam on all of this.

In addition, *Oku no hosomichi* is a difficult text. The encourage involvement in the text, there are a number of group activities when the students are responsible for generating course content.

Finally, there is an essay where the student can explore in greater detail some aspect of the course topic (the Genroku author Matsuo Bashō and his *Oku no hosomichi*) interesting to him or her.



These three major components are weighted like this (plus the usual attendance / prep & participation component):

- ✧ Tests 45%
- ✧ Group work 25%
- ✧ Essay 15%
- ✧ Attendance, preparation, participation 15%

Unlike most of my classes where various events are collected under “grade categories” and then that grade category might be curved to accurately reflect student performance, this class requires independent proficiency across various topics (biographical information, haikai reading, sabi, Oku no hosomichi as a whole, grammar, allusion and such of specific Oku passages) and so each graded event stands on its own. Here’s the full list of graded events, and what percent of the course grade they represent:

- ✧ Attendance 5%
- ✧ Participation 10%
- ✧ Presentation: Basho bio 2%
- ✧ Presentation: Basho bio, chronology 2%
- ✧ Midterm 01 Basho's life and lifework 10%
- ✧ Presentation: Sabi definition 2%
- ✧ Midterm 02 Haikai, sabi 10%
- ✧ Midterm 03 Oku in English 10%
- ✧ Oku Session Control: Readings assigned 2%
- ✧ Oku Session Control: Vocabulary gloss 5%
- ✧ Oku Session Control: Presentation handout 2%
- ✧ Oku Session Control: Presentation 5%
- ✧ Oku Session Control: Q&A 5%
- ✧ Final exam 15%
- ✧ Essay, defense 5%
- ✧ Essay 10%

Course prerequisites

J120 and J100A.

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.

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 necessarily “intuitive” and which can have significant impact on your grade:

- ◆ Announcements: I do NOT make all relevant announcements in class, even important ones. Visit the Announcements Page frequently.
- ◆ Academic honesty is important to me. Please read my Web page on this by the end of the first week and always keep those principles in mind. Please act honorably in class.
- ◆ Students who attend regularly, are attentive while in class, and avoid multitasking during class generally receive better grades even if one can skip the above items and still perform very well on the exams.
- ◆ I have “bright lines” for submission times: something arriving at 1:01PM for a 1PM deadline 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.
- ◆ Note my treatment of extra credit activity stated in the grade category descriptions.

Communicating

How to reach me

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

My office is **Dwinelle 5110**.

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu.

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

J144_assignmenttag_LASTNAME_classname keyword

See Home Course Page sidebar “OH & EMAIL ME” for definitions of assignmenttag, classname, and keyword.

I usually do not check email after 6:30PM and check less-frequently during weekends.

This class uses two Web sites (www.tabine.info/~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.tabine.info — ALWAYS START HERE	PRIMARY <i>Course Pages</i> — www.tabine.info —	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 or daily session page	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.tabine.info/~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 I continue to use the *Announcements Page* for a while. At some point I again “hand off” the announcements back to bSpace and will say so when I do.

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 pages)

- ◆ **Please DO NOT download the Course Schedule / Outline or individual schedule pages:** You might miss grade-relevant, and other important announcements mentioned only on the Announcements Page and the schedule changes during the term.

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. 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),
- ... laptop/tablet use in the classroom and all other types of multitasking, and
- ... **academic honesty**.

Please read them—**some of the information there affects your grade**. Please note that laptops ARE allowed in this course unless I change the policy. Multitasking, however, remains a concern and the comments about that on the policy page should be read carefully.

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 sidebar. **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 materials

All the materials for this class are provided in digital form, via bSpace or other online resources.

Grades

General comments

- ♦ Students are always welcome to discuss with me concerns about grades. **If you use the correct course number at the beginning, your name, and “gradeissue” as a keyword in the email subject line your emails will be reviewed again before assigning a final course grade. 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.)
- ♦ **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.**

Description of graded activities for this class

There are no “grade categories” for this course (except extra credit, see below). Instead, each graded event is a specific percent of the final course grade. Further, the grading rubrics and the content of graded activities are so closely related to each other, it seemed better to me to put them both in the same place, although usually a general description would be here on this page. For all that information, please see the details that are online, accessed via the sidebar tab “Assignments & tests”.

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 accustomed 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 you also sometimes see: **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 grade 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.

Table: Equivalents 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: How I convert 12-pt grade category grades to the letter grade reported to the University

At the end of the term, the 12-pt scores for each grade category are calculated together, according to weight, for the *initial* final

grade. Then, each student's result might have a further adjustment based on extra credit and grade issue items for that specific student and might be affected by a class-wide adjustment of the scale below. Typically, I look carefully at the cutoff for A and for A-minus and see if the overall percent of As in the course, and ratio of As to A-s is an accurate reflection of the course.

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 considered	A+	≥ 9.5	B+	≥ 6.5	C+	≥ 3.5	D+
≥ 11.5	A	≥ 8.5	B	≥ 5.5	C	≥ 2.5	D
≥ 10.5	A-	≥ 7.5	B-	≥ 5	Pass	≥ 1.5	D-
				< 5	No pass	< 1.5	F
				≥ 4.5	C-		

Table: My usual start point in defining cutoffs for grades when "percent correct" is the criterion used to determine a letter grade (multiple-choice tests and such). This is often modified to match better to the specific circumstance.

Usually above 100 unless several are, or top score(s)	A+	≥ 87	B+	≥ 77	C+	≥ 67	D+	< 60	F
≥ 94	A	≥ 83	B	≥ 73	C	≥ 63	D		
≥ 90	A-	≥ 80	B-	≥ 70	C-	≥ 60	D-		