OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION:

This subject is designed as a compact introduction to politics and the policy process in Japan. Its ten 90-minute sessions are divided into two parts. After a short general introduction to Japanese history, politics and society, we will explore four aspects of Japanese politics: (1) The Political Landscape, (2) Interests, Parties, and Elections, (3) The Bureaucracy, and (4) Budgeting. We will then focus on four areas of public policy: (1) SOCIAL POLICY, (2) ENERGY POLICY, (3) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY, (4) TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY and (5) FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY. We will try to understand the ways in which the actors and institutions identified in the first part of the class affect the policy process across a variety of issue areas.

REQUIREMENTS:

In addition to attendance, mastery of the assigned readings, and active participation in class discussion, students are responsible for one short, synthetic paper (5-7 pages) that examines a policy area in depth. There is no final examination.
PART ONE
[POLITICS]

CLASS 1: JAPAN’S POLITICAL HISTORY

CLASS 2: JAPAN’S POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

CLASS 3: INTERESTS, PARTIES, AND ELECTIONS

CLASS 4: THE BUREAUCRACY
CLASS 5: BUDGETING


PART TWO
[PUBLIC POLICY]

CLASS 6: SOCIAL POLICY


CLASS 7: ENERGY POLICY


CLASS 8: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY


CLASS 9: TRADE AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY


CLASS 10: DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY


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PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Due before Class 10 begins

Write a creative 5-7 page essay on the subject: "The X Policy Process in Japan." (X = the policy area of your choice.) How do the actors and institutions identified in the first half of this syllabus interact to make policy in this area? Is there a useful model to explain these interactions? Is there a single policy process in Japan? How important is conflict? How widespread is consensus? Has this policy process changed since 1993?