COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Japan’s most successful literary export is haiku, a kind of seventeen-syllable mini-poem focusing on the natural world and/or moments of sudden insight into the universe and/or the self. Haiku, with its poetics of brevity, immediacy, and depth, has informed Japanese culture, and global perceptions of Japanese culture, for four centuries and counting. However, what Westerners think of as “haiku” is often quite different from what Japanese think of, and modern haiku is different from classical haiku.

This course will focus on haiku during its golden age, from the 17th through 19th centuries, Japan’s early modern period. We will look at major poets including Bashō, Buson, and Chiyo; the haikai linked-verse practice from which haiku evolved; aspects of “haikai culture” such as painting, comic and scatological haiku, and haiku-influenced prose; haiku’s influence on prose fiction; and other topics. We will read scholarship on haiku and its aesthetics, as well as a lot of great poetry.

All readings in the 400-level version of the class will be in English. Graduate students may expect extra readings in either Japanese or English, depending on enrollment.

Expected learning outcomes:
i. Students will learn about haikai poetry in its cultural and historical context.
ii. Students will analyze haikai poetry for its meaning, aesthetic quality, and cultural significance.
iii. Students will present their analyses in carefully-argued, clearly-written essays.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades will be computed as follows:

Participation in class discussions: 35%
Close readings (3): 10% each, total 30%
Term paper: 35%

PARTICIPATION: Come to class having read and thought about the assignment. Participate actively in classroom discussions. Specifically, for each classroom discussion, each student should choose at least three poems from the assigned reading and be prepared to discuss them in thoughtful detail if called upon to do so. Not every student will be called on in every discussion, but you should be prepared.

CLOSE READINGS: You will be required to write three (3) short papers based on the readings we have discussed as a class. Each short paper should be 3-4 pages in length. Each paper should choose one poem from among those assigned to the class since the last short paper and present a close reading of it. Your close reading may draw on commentary, historical background, or other poetry included in the assigned reading, and it may also draw on things not assigned for the class (i.e., research is allowed but not required). However, the reading of the poem you present must present original insights: don’t simply recapitulate what Shirane or Keene has written about it. Each paper should effectively utilize at least one source beyond the reading required for the course, and you will be graded on the choice and use of your sources. A good paper will argue effectively in support of a clear, concise, underlined thesis statement. A good paper will also be carefully edited. The due dates are as follows:

Close Reading #1: Friday, October 17 (Week 3), 5:00 pm
Close Reading #2: Friday, November 7 (Week 6), 5:00 pm
Close Reading #3: Wednesday, November 26 (Week 9), 4:00 pm
TERM PAPER: Write a paper that addresses the themes of the class. The term paper may focus in part on poems or themes you examined in one or all of the close reading papers, but may not simply cut and paste from earlier papers. The term paper must incorporate at least three outside sources beyond the required reading, and you will be graded on the choice and use of your sources. A good paper will argue effectively in support of a clear, concise, underlined thesis statement. A good paper will also be carefully edited. Papers should be **10-12 pages** in length. The paper must be submitted to me by **5:00 pm on Tuesday, December 9**.

RULES FOR SUBMITTING PAPERS: Papers must be submitted electronically in one of the following formats: MSWord doc (or docx), PDF, or Google doc.

Late papers will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late, beginning at the moment the paper is due. I.e., a paper submitted at 5:01 pm on October 17 will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade. If it is submitted at 5:01 pm on October 18 it will be marked down 2/3 of a letter grade, and so on.

GRADUATE STUDENTS: The above requirements apply to students enrolled in the 400-level version of this course. Requirements for graduate students will be adjusted in consultation with the instructor.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Students are expected to know and comply with the standards for academic honesty as set forth in the University Student Conduct Code. In particular, the following issues are relevant to this class:

Papers must be your own work. If you are found to have plagiarized you may be given an F for the assignment, and the incident may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. The University Code of Student Conduct defines plagiarism as: “using the ideas or writings of another as one’s own. It includes, but is not limited to: (a) The use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; and (b) The unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.”

If you are found to have violated these rules you may be given an F for the assignment, and the incident may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: The university community is committed to making classes accessible to students. Any student who presents the instructor with a letter from the Accessible Education Center documenting a need and the accommodations appropriate for it can expect those accommodations to be made. The letter must be presented in a timely fashion. The Accessible Education Center is located in 164 Oregon Hall and may be contacted at 346-1155 or <uoaec@uoregon.edu>.
Reading schedule (all readings posted on Blackboard):

Week 1 - Introduction

9/29 (M) – Introduction

10/1 (W) – Historical and cultural background

Week 2 – Bashō, I

10/6 (M) – Overview of Bashō

10/8 (W) – Overview of Bashō interpretation

Week 3 – Before Bashō

10/13 (M) – Teimon and Danrin schools

10/15 (W) – Ihara Saikaku

10/17 (F): **Close Reading #1 due at 5:00 pm**

Week 4 – Bashō II

10/20 (M) – Haibun overview

10/22 (W) – A travelogue
Week 5 – Haiga

10/27 (M) – Haiga overview

10/29 (W) – Buson I
Read: 1. Donald Keene, World Within Walls, pp. 337-57 (Chapter 14: Buson and the Haikai Revival).

Week 6 – Collective composition

11/3 (M) – Bashō etc.

11/5 (W) – Buson II

11/7 (F): Close Reading #2 due at 5:00 pm

Week 7 – Women and haikai

11/10 (M) – Tamamoshū

11/12 (W) – Chiyo
2. Makoto Ueda, Far Beyond the Field, pp. 37-72 (Chiyojo; Enomoto Seifu; Tagami Kikusha).

Week 8 – Later haikai/haiku

11/17 (M) – Issa
Read: 1. Donald Keene, World Within Walls, pp. 358-70 (Chapter 15: Haikai of the Late Tokugawa Period).

11/19 (W) – Shiki
Week 9 – Senryū

11/24 (M) – Clean
Read:

11/26 (W) – Dirty
Read:
2. robin d. gill, *Octopussy, Dry Kidney & Blue Spots*, pp. 31-54 (Riding Horses Through Moon Water – No Taboo on Metaphor!).

**Close Reading #3 due at 4:00 pm**

Week 10 – Haikai in Edo-period popular fiction

12/1 (M) – Early
Read:

12/3 (W) – Late
Read:

12/9 (Tuesday): Final paper due at 5:00 pm