Japanese modern author Dazai Osamu once said, “Saikaku is the best writer in the world: far better than Mérimée and Maupassant”. Ihara Saikaku was an author of the merchant class in 17th century Osaka. He published several full-length novels and dozens of collections of short stories. He set various themes for each collection including subjects such as homosexuality, vengeance, filial piety, jurisprudence, and the nouveau riche. Although Saikaku’s work was not critically acclaimed during the Edo period, after the Meiji restoration, proponents of modern naturalism discovered his pioneering work in describing the reality of human nature. Recent studies have proposed other ways of understanding the essence of his writing. For example, Noma Kōshin believes it to be criticism of the shogunate, while Taniwaki Masachika sees it as fundamentally humorous, and Nakamura Yukihiko reads it as propaganda.

In this class we will read short novels written by Ihara Saikaku in English translation. Selections have been chosen to include seven samurai stories, six sexual stories, three epistolary novels, and six financial stories from his broad works. The selections have been chosen from five of his collections.

The focus of each class meeting will be on close reading and discussion. Students are therefore expected to read and reflect upon the assigned materials prior to class and to participate actively in discussion.

Students will also be asked to write brief response essays (approximately 100 words) before each class, starting with our 3rd meeting and continuing through to the 22nd meeting. This should include a brief summary of the material along with personal reactions and potential discussion topics. These are to be posted to the online discussion forum the evening before class. Each student will serve as the reading presenter for one of our class meetings. The presenter will be expected to give a 15-20 minute oral presentation including an analysis of the chapter (its title, content, and structure), explanation of noteworthy passages, an examination of one of the secondary readings, a summary of the online discussion, and the student’s conclusions.

A short paper (4–6 pages in length) will be assigned halfway through the term. Suggested topics will be provided but students are welcome to formulate their own questions in consultation with the instructor. As a final project, each student will also be required to select one of the five collections from which the class readings have been drawn. The student will give an oral presentation on their project and will also submit a final paper (about 8–10 pages in length). Both writing assignments will be evaluated for their coherence, critical argumentation, persuasiveness, and thoroughness of engagement with the material. Students are expected to read the complete text of the reading they have chosen.

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussions, preparation for exams, etc.).

Grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading leader</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web posts</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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Learning Goals:

Develop skills as a reader of literary texts.
Consider reception synchronically, diachronically, and cross-culturally.
Think critically about how literary texts are canonized.
Learn to give oral presentations on one's research effectively.

Instructor:
Prof. Motoi Katsumata  Mail: motoikatsumata@gmail.com  Phone: N/A
Class: N, T, TH 14:00-15:20  Office: XXX  Hours: T 1:00–2:00

Disabilities:
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Extensions:
Extensions are not granted except in cases of medical or family emergency. Late work will be penalized one grade per day late; e.g., a paper turned that would have earned an A had it been turned in on time Monday becomes a B+ if turned in Tuesday, a B if turned in Wednesday etc.

Academic Integrity:
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities (http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/srsc/rr/) for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS Library guides (http://guides.library.brandeis.edu/c.php?g=301723).

Principal text and other readings are available online.
● Indicates required readings; ○ indicates optional readings.

Students who are interested in reading materials in Japanese (in the original classical Japanese, in modern Japanese translation, or secondary scholarship) are encouraged to consult with the instructor.
Week One – Overview
Thursday August 29: Introduction

Week Two –
Tuesday September 3:
- *Tales of Samurai Honor* Book One Chapter 1: His Own Money Put Him Naked into the River, (Callahan, 31-34).

Thursday September 5:

Week Three –
Tuesday September 10:
- *Tales of Samurai Honor* Book One Chapter 5: In Death They Share the Same Wave Pillow, (Callahan, 45-51).
  - Olivier Ansart “Loyalty in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Samurai Discourse” *Japanese Studies* Vol.27(2) (September 2007) 139-154

Thursday September 12:

Week Four –
Tuesday September 17:

Thursday September 19:

**Week Five –**

Tuesday September 24:

- *The Great Mirror of Male Love* Book Two Chapter 5: Nightingale in the Snow, (Schalow, 118-125).

Thursday September 26:

- *The Great Mirror of Male Love* Book Three Chapter 2: Tortured to Death with Snow on His Sleeve, (Schalow, 133-138)

**Week Six –**

Tuesday October 1: Rosh Hashanah: No university exercises

Tuesday October 3: Brandeis Monday: No class

**Week Seven –**

Tuesday October 8:

- *The Great Mirror of Male Love* Book Five Chapter 2: He Pleased for His Life at Mitsudera Hachiman, (Schalow, 196-203).

Tuesday October 10:

- *The Great Mirror of Male Love* Book five Chapter 5: Votive Picture of Kichiya Riding a Horse, (Schalow, 214-218).
Week Eight –
Tuesday October 15: Brandeis Monday: No class

Thursday October 16:
- *The Great Mirror of Male Love* Book Seven Chapter 1: Fireflies Also Work Their Asses at Night, (Schalow, 247-254).

Week Nine –
Tuesday October 22:
- *The Life of an Amorous Woman* Book One Chapter 1: An Old Woman’s Heritage, (Morris, 121-126).
  - Ivan Morris “Introduction”, *The Life of an Amorous Woman and Other Writings* (New Directions, 1963) 3-54.

Thursday October 24:
- *The Life of an Amorous Woman* Book Three Chapter 2: The Evil Wrought by a Gorgeous Lady, (Morris, 164-172)

Week Ten –
Tuesday October 29:
- *The Life of an Amorous Woman* Book Four Chapter 2: The Drawing Found in a Wanton Robe: (Morris, 176-183).

Thursday October 1
- *The Life of an Amorous Woman* Book Six Chapter 4: Song for a Woman of the Streets, (Morris, 192-203).

Week Eleven –
Tuesday November 5:
- *The Life of an Amorous Woman* Book Six Chapter 5: The five Hundred Disciples Who Found a Place in My
Thursday November 7:


**Week Twelve**

Tuesday November 12

- Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in print: information and nation in the early modern period*, (University of California Press, 2006)

Thursday November 14


**Week Thirteen**

Tuesday November 19

- *Worldly Mental Calculations* Preface and Book Two Chapter 2: Tall Tales at the Brothel Can Be Costly, (Befu, 57-60).

Thursday November 21

- *Worldly Mental Calculations* Book Three Chapter 3: The Dream of a Man-Sized Pile of Gold Coins, (Befu, 77-81).

**Week Fourteen**

Tuesday November 26:

- *Worldly Mental Calculations* Book Five Chapter Three: Mr. Heitaro, (Befu, 111-115).
Thursday November 28 Thanksgiving holiday: No university exercises

Week Fifteen –
Tuesday December 3: Final presentations 1/3

Tuesday December 5: Final presentations 2/3

Week Sixteen –
Tuesday December 10: Final presentations 3/3

Final papers due Friday December 13