



This is an abridged sample syllabus. Information is subject to change. Full syllabus will be distributed to registered students when term begins.

## **ASIA\_V 349 - Ecoculture and Literature in Japan**

**Christina Laffin**

This course offers an ecocultural approach to reading, analyzing, and writing about narratives written in Japan from premodern times to the present. We will read, interpret, discuss, and write about literary texts from the past millennium to better understand how the human and “more-than-human” have been defined and understood.

We will study and apply a range of methodologies and theories, including Indigenous epistemologies, narratology, ecocriticism, critical animal studies, queer environmentalism, and material ecocriticism. Students will have the opportunity to carry out embodied learning activities in Nitobe Memorial Garden. Through exercises involving material culture, observation, and applied tasks, students will gain experience with literary analysis and ecocritical approaches while producing original, scholarly research.

**Mode of Delivery:** In Person

### **Sample Readings**

Backus, Robert L. “The Lady Who Admired Vermin.” In *The Riverside Counselor's Stories: Vernacular Fiction of Late Heian Japan*. Stanford University Press, 1985.

Takahata, Isao, dir. *Heisei Tanuki Gassen Pon Poko (Pom Poko)*. Studio Ghibli, 1994.

Tawada, Yoko. *The Emissary*, translated by Margaret Mitsutani. New Directions, 2018.

### **Assignments**

Tests of reading knowledge|30

Land-based observation|20

Nitobe Memorial Garden group project|20

Annotated bibliography|10

Final research contribution|20