

CMHT 4000/5000 (Summer 2026 5W1)

Global Discovery in Merchandising and Hospitality: The Japanese Experience

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| Instructors: | Todd A. Uglow, J.D. and Marissa Zorola, M.S. |
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| Office Hours: | By Appointment |
| Credit Hours: | 3 hours |

Pre-trip Meetings: March 20, April 17 – 12:30-2pm; May 28; 9am – 2pm

Travel Dates: May 31 – June 15

Post-trip: No post-travel meetings

Course Description

Experience retail and hospitality industries through visits to manufacturing facilities, retail establishments, hotels/restaurants, tourism venues, UNESCO sites, museums, historical structures, and industry support organizations in Japan. The program will take place primarily in Tokyo and Kyoto. Students will learn to communicate ideas across cultures, gain insight from diverse perspectives, and analyze major global trends and their impacts on market conditions. Additionally, students will gain a historical and cultural perspective of Japan.

Study Abroad Objectives

1. To learn to communicate ideas across cultures with diversity of perspectives.
2. To be provided with an opportunity outside of the classroom to communicate and network.
3. To analyze major global trends and their impact on market conditions and emerging economies.
4. To develop an appreciation of other cultures and ways of life.
5. To gain a historic and cultural perspective of another culture.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of effective and ethical management and leadership of people and their combined impact on hospitality organizations
2. Understand the rewards and challenges present in managing and leading culturally diverse organizations in a global dimension
3. Familiarize students with the structure, goals and purpose of working in teams within hospitality and merchandising organizations

4. Have proficiency with the concepts of emotional intelligence and relationship building with culturally diverse peers

Course Expectations and Conduct

Professional Conduct / Behavior Expectations – Students are representatives of the university and are expected to always conduct themselves professionally. This includes behavior during site visits, interactions with industry professionals, and adherence to local laws and cultural norms. Loud conversations in public places are not permitted. Disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or removal from the program.

Travel & Safety Statement – Students are responsible for following all university travel policies and guidelines. Health, safety, and emergency procedures will be reviewed during pre-trip meetings. Students are expected to comply with all instructions provided by faculty and program coordinators. We require that all students travel at least in pairs during free time activities. Always be aware of your surroundings and never loan money to anyone, including students in this class.

Communication Expectations – Students must regularly check Canvas and their UNT email for updates before and during travel. While abroad, students are expected to maintain communication access for timely updates.

Late Work Policy – Due to the nature of this course, assignments must be submitted on time. Late submissions may not be accepted unless prior arrangements are made.

Assignments and Assessments

Pre-trip Meetings (30 points each) – Students are required to attend two pre-trip meetings during the spring semester (March 20 and April 17), in addition to an all-day meeting on May 28. The meetings are intended to prepare students for the cultural experiences they will have in Japan, provide pertinent information on traveling abroad, discuss course/project expectations, discuss course readings, and any other information deemed necessary.

Pre-trip Quiz (20 points) – The pre-trip quiz will cover course policies, Japanese business etiquette, and Japanese cultural expectations. The quiz will be due on Friday, May 29, 11:59pm.

Pre-trip Presentation (40 points) – Through research and presentations, students will share relevant information about Japan and related topics designed to prepare study tour participants with a well-rounded understanding of the country's culture, history, entertainment venues, shopping environments, culinary traditions, transportation systems and more. Presentations will be given by all students on May 28, and the expectation is that students will be present in person.

Appointment Attendance (100 points) – Because this is a study abroad course, participation is mandatory at all scheduled activities, site visits, and group events. Students are expected to be punctual, professional, and engaged. Unexcused absences may result in significant grade

penalties and/or removal from program activities. Rare excuses for medical emergencies might be accepted.

Illustrated Journal (100 points) – Each student will create an illustrated (photographic, drawings, graphics) journal of their Japanese Study Abroad experience (e.g. welcome and farewell dinners, what you learned at appointments, Japanese hospitality and retail encounters, cultural experiences, and reflections on your professional and personal development). This is a keepsake that will live far beyond this class and so we hope you will take it seriously and give it to attention. (Note: We can provide you with a simple UNT journal if you would like one.) Record your thoughts throughout the trip. Otherwise, you may find that you cannot keep the information as clearly delineated as you would like.

The purposes of the Illustrated Journal are to:

- a. Demonstrate your understanding of the hospitality and retail industries in an international context
- b. Give evidence of your understanding of the hospitality and retail practices in the global economy
- c. Illustrate your perspective of the culture and the people of Japan
- d. Develop your aesthetic thoughts inspired by this travel
- e. Record information about developing trends in hospitality and retail
- f. Reflect on your study abroad experiences

Secondary purposes are to provide contact information for future networking and a tangible reminder of your Japan experience. The journal will be due once midway through the study tour and once again towards the end. The first submission will involve photographing a few page spreads and uploading photos to Canvas. The second submission will involve the physical journal.

Tokyo Scavenger Hunt (25 points) – The Tokyo Scavenger Hunt assignment is designed to encourage cultural exploration and observation during the study tour. Working individually or in pairs, students will document selected locations, objects, and experiences through personal photographs and brief written reflections. Each submission should demonstrate engagement with the local environment and thoughtful interpretation of cultural elements.

Cross-Cultural Comparison Project (50 points) – Students will engage with two local individuals in Japan (not tour guides or professional contacts) to gain cultural insight. A summary of both interviews will be submitted.

Grading Breakdown

| ASSESSMENT | POINTS |
|---|------------|
| Pre-trip Meetings (30 points each) – March 20, April 18, May 28 | 90 |
| Pre-trip Quiz | 20 |
| Pre-trip Presentation | 40 |
| Appointment Attendance | 100 |
| Illustrated Journal | 100 |
| Tokyo Scavenger Hunt | 25 |
| Cross-Cultural Comparison Project | 50 |
| TOTAL POINTS | 425 |

Grading Scale

| PERCENTAGE | GRADE |
|---------------|----------|
| 90% - 100% | A |
| 80% - 89% | B |
| 70% - 79% | C |
| 60% - 69% | D |
| 59% and below | F |