

Korean Society

Summer 2019

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Office Hours: by appointment

Class Room: TBA

Course Description

This introductory course is designed to provide an overview of broad issues related to Korean history, society, and culture, with an emphasis on the changes and continuities in Korea. Firstly, this course will begin with an overview of the cultural traits and historical background of Korea. Second, we will explore themes relevant to understanding Korea, such as Confucianism, modernization and industrialization, transition to democracy, US-Korea relations, North Korean regime, and popular culture in contemporary Korea. Third, we will deal with some social problems of current Korean society. Specifically, the focus will be on some noticeable social changes and problems after 1997 Asian Financial Crisis in Korean Society. Some differences and similarities between Korea and other countries, with respect to social problems and changes, will be discussed.

Course Goals

1. Examining Korean history, socio-cultural aspects.
2. Ability to critically evaluate some current social issues in Korean society.
3. Ability to write and present your viewpoints clearly and concisely to make persuasive arguments.
4. Finding Korea-related topics for further study

Course Structure

Classes will include combinations of lectures and discussions. Since this course includes discussion sessions, you should be prepared to present your opinions on topics discussed in the class to facilitate discussion. In other words, you are expected to do the required reading before the class. One or two hour lecture and one hour discussion will be combined in each class.

In addition, each student (or a group of students) is required to give a 20 minute class presentation and then lead to a 10 minute class discussion on topics that you choose (this can be re-scheduled according to the class enrollment size). The class presentation will be on the last day of this course.

Grading Policy (This policy is more likely to change. A detailed grading policy will be announced on the first day of the class)

There will be mid-term exam (40%) and one short essay (5-6 double-spaced pages, 12pt) for class presentation (40%). Grade will be based on the mid-term exam, paper and presentation. Class attendance and participation will take 20% of total grade.

(The current grading policy can be changed)

A more detailed grading policy will be noticed in the class.

Required texts

Cumings, Bruce. 2005. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. Norton: New York.

Tudor, Daniel. 2012. *Korea: The Impossible Country*. Tuttle Publishing.

Reading Package will be provided.

Class Schedule

Topic 1: A brief Korean history (from Choson Dynasty to 1990s)

Class 1: Introduction & sharing interest and knowledge on Korea

Class Overview

- Cumings, Preface

Class 2: Rise and Fall of Choson dynasty

- Cumings, Preface and chapter 1
- Palais, James, B. 1984. "Confucianism and the Aristocratic / Bureaucratic Balance in Korea." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol 44(2): 427-468.

Class 3: Japanese Colonialism

- Cumings, Chapter 3
- Haggard et al. 1997. "Japanese Colonialism and Korean Development: A Critique." *World Development*, Vol 25(6): 427-468.
- Bang-Soon L Yoon. 2010. "Imperial Japan's Comfort Women from Korea: History & Politics of Silence-Breaking." *The Journal of Northeast Asian History*, Vol. 7(1): 5-39.

Class 4: Korean War

- Cumings, Chapter 5

Class 5: Development & Industrialization 1

- Cumings, Chapter 6
- Some articles related to the ‘developmental state’ will be assigned

Class 6: Development & Industrialization 2

- Chang, Kyung-sup. 2017. “Compressed Modernity in South Korea: Constitutive Dimensions, Manifesting Units, and Historical Conditions.” in *The Routledge Handbook of Korean Culture and Society* (Routledge, 2017).

Class 7: Transition to Democracy

- Cumings, Chapter 7

Class 8: North Korea

- Cumings, Chapter 8
- Excerpt from *The Impossible State*, written by Victor Cha (Random House, 2012)

Class 9: North Korea & US-Korea Relations

- Cumings, Chapter 9
- Some articles related to the Six Party Talk and US-Korea alliance

Topic 2: Current social changes and problems

Class 10: Growing Gap in Korea

- Koo, Hagen. 2007. "The Changing Faces of Inequality in South Korea in the Age of Globalization." *Korean Studies*, Vol. 31: 1-18.
- Shin, Kwang-young. 2013. "Social Class and Income Inequality in Korea." in *Contemporary South Korean Society* (Routledge, 2013)

Class 11: Family, Gender, and Marriage

- Finch, John, & Kim Seung-kyung. 2017. "The Korean Family in Transition" in *Routledge Handbook of Korean Culture and Society*(Routledge, 2017)
- Some articles covering population change issue will also be assigned.

Class 12: Current Social Issues in Korea 1

- Excerpt from *Korea: The Impossible Country*, written Daniel Tudor (Tuttle Publishing, 2012)

Class 13: Current Social Issues in Korea 2

- Excerpt from *Korea: The Impossible Country*, written Daniel Tudor (Tuttle Publishing, 2012)

Topic 3: Global Korea

Class 14: Korean Wave 1

- John, Lie. 2012. "What is the K in K-pop?: South Korean Popular Music, the Culture Industry, and National Identity." *Korean Observer*, Vol. 43, No. 3: 339-363.
- Youna, Kim. 2013. "Korean Wave Pop Culture in the Global Internet Age: Why Popular? Why now?" in *The Korean Wave: Korean Media Go Global* (Routledge, 2013).

Class 15:

- Jin-kyoung, Lee. 2017. “Immigrant Subempire, Migrant Labor Activism and Multiculturalism in Contemporary South Korea.” in *Routledge Handbook of Korean Culture and Society*(Routledge, 2017)
- Part 5 in *Korea: The Impossible Country*, written Daniel Tudor (Tuttle Publishing, 2012)

Class 16: Wrap-up discussion and students’ class presentation

Special Accommodations

- Students with disabilities who are seeking to consideration for services should contact Support Center for Students with Disabilities.
- Personal help will be provided if needed.