Political Economy of Korea

Fall Semester 2022

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Hieyeon Keum

Visiting Professor

Department of East Asian Studies

Time and Place: Tuesdays 1:20 PM – 4:20 PM, 撲 306

Office Hours: By appointments at 綜 711

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# Course Description:

This lecture course is for undergraduate students with interests in the domestic politics, economic development, and foreign policies of South Korea. In recent years, Korea has been spotlighted in lieu of its geopolitics and rising soft power with its cultural outreach. Since the foundation of Republic of Korea (ROK, South Korea) in the South and People’s Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) in 1948, Korean peninsula has been a central flashpoint for major powers. Special focus is put on the political economy, society, security issues and its foreign relations with major powers such as the US, China, Japan, Russia, and other security related countries in the world.

This course also deals with the secrets to success of “Korean Wave” or “Hallyu”, which has been one of Korea’s most successful cultural developments, and has helped enhance the nation’s image, not through traditional hard power but through cultural products. South Korea has become the world’s leading exporter of popular culture. As Barack Obama and others have noted, the Korean Wave has been a top priority of the Korean government. Its success is due to a confluence of various elements: government policy, skillful marketing by entertainment companies, and popular content.

Lastly, this course covers the changes and characteristics of Korea’s foreign policies with emphasis on trajectories of its policy goals and strategic interests since the 1948 to the present. Recently, Korea has been facing the strategic dilemmas between traditional ally, the US, and it economic partner China. Korea’s strategic choices and the best foreign policy option will be assessed and examined.

# Course Objectives:

This course aims to provide the students with in-depth understanding of the structure, process, circumstances, and development in Korea’s domestic politics and society. In addition, this course also deals with the related topics such as historical development of Korean domestic politics, political economy of dramatic and rapid growth and industrialization, democratization, nationalism and globalization, inter-Korean relations, and most of all, everlasting potential security threat from the North’s NUKE issues and unification or integration policy.

Throughout this course, students will

* Understand the role of the Korean government and political factors played in Korea’s industrialization, democratization, and social development and cultural exportation policies.
* Develop their analytical skills and knowledge of the Korea’s domestic political process and characteristics, and the core interests of foreign policies and its strategy of enhancing the “Smart Power” of Korea, which was coined by Joseph S. Nye as the “Sum of Hard Power and Soft Power.”
* Learn Korea’s efforts to enhance and diversification of its foreign policy to increase the cooperation with its neighboring countries in the South and the North through the so-called “New Southern Diplomacy” and “New Northern Diplomacy” including Southeast Asian countries, West Asia (India, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan) and Central Asia.

# Course Requirements & Evaluation:

1. Students are supposed to attend all the classes, but absence (s) are excused only in case of emergency with necessary proof or documents. Students must read the reading materials and be prepared for the class discussion. Students’ active participation is strongly recommended.
2. Students need to write writing assignment(s). The assignment(s) should be written in English. All the writing assignment and exams should be turned in on time. 20% of points will be deducted for the late submission. Students are strongly “required” to have the writing assignments proofread before submission.
3. Each student is supposed to make a class presentation. Presentation topics must be approved by an instructor. Structure, design, contents with most updated data and statistics along with speaking style and preparation skill will be taken into consideration for grading. Each presentation should not exceed 20 minutes.
4. Pop-up quizzes might be given without prior notice.
5. Course grade will be based on the followings,

Writing Assignment 10 %

Midterm Exam 25 %

Final Exam 25 %

Class Presentation 20 %

Class Participation 5 %

Attendance 5 %

Case Study Report 5 %

Pop-up Quiz 5 %

The exams may consist of short identifications, fill the blanks, true/false, multiple choice, and essay questions. No makeup exams will be given. Adequate class preparation and active participation in class discussions are strongly required.

# Texts and Recommended Readings

Text:

1. James Hoare. *Korea: An Introduction*. Kegan Paul International, 1988.
2. Donald Stone MacDonald. *The Koreans: Contemporary Politics and Society*. 2nd Edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990.

Recommended Books:

1. Michael Breen. *The New Koreans: The Business, History and People of South Korea*. UK: Penguin Random House, 2017.
2. Daniel Tudor. 2012. *Korea: The Impossible Country*. Hong Kong: Turtle Publishing.
3. Sung-Wook Nam, et. al. *South Korea’s 70-Year Endeavor for Foreign Policy, National Defense, and Unification*. 1st edition. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.

No need to purchase any books listed. Reading materials with class notes will be posted or provided prior to the class.

**Weekly Class Schedule**

\*\* Weekly class schedule is subject to change according to the level of background understanding and the final enrollment.

**Week One (September 6): “Introduction of Course”**

Class Description and General Information

Why Dose Korea Matter?

Understanding Korean Society

Tradition vs. Modernity

How to Make a Good Presentation?

**Week Two (September 13): “Korea in the East Asian Traditional Order”**

Lecture 1: “Changes and Continuation of International Order in East Asia”

Tributary Relations

Fall of Chinese Empire and the End of Traditional Asian Order

Different Japanese Colonial Policies between Taiwan and Korea?

Readings: Ronald Higgins. “Tributary Relations”

**Week Three (September 20): “Korean History at a Glance, Division and War”**

Lecture 2: “Brief History of Korea”

Foundation of “Two Koreas”: ROK and DPRK

Division and Korean War: “Civil War” or “Proxy War”?

Korea in World Affairs and New Asian Order

Readings: Hoare, Chapter 1, 2, 5

MacDonald, Chapter 1, 2

**Writing Assignment**: “What are the differences between Japanese Colonial Rule and Policies in Taiwan and Korea?” Length: 700 Words, Due: October 4. Proofreading is strongly required. No Email submission or late submission are allowed. Late submission will be disadvantaged.

**Week Four (September 27): “Cold War and Its Implications in East Asia”**

Lecture 3: “Origin of Cold War in Asia”

Korean War and Vietnam War

Taiwan Strait Crisis

From “Europe First” to “Domino Theory”

Student Presentation 1

Student Presentation 2

**Week Five (October 4): “Korea’s Rapid Economic Growth under Authoritarian Rule”**

Lecture 4: “Korean Miracle: Culture and Politics”

Park Chung Hee and Military Rule: Suppression of Democracy

Economic Growth without Democracy

Asian NICSs: Industrialization Policy and Rapid Economic Development

Readings: MacDonald, Chapter 6

Dani Rodrik, G. Grossman and V. Norman, “Getting Interventions Right: How South Korea and Taiwan Grew Rich,” *Economic Policy*, 20 (1995), pp. 55-107.

Student Presentation 3

Student Presentation 4

**Week Six (October 11): “Democratic Transition and Consolidation”**

Lecture 5: “’Third Wave’: Democratization Movement in 1987”

Korea’s Path to Democratization: From Students Revolution to Gwangju Revolution

Changes in International and Regional Political Security Order in East Asia

Student Presentation 5

Student Presentation 6

Readings: Charles Holcombe, *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Chapter 11: Korea Since 1945. pp. 295-312.

**Week Seven (October 18): “Understanding Modern Korean Society”**

Lecture 6: “Tradition, Culture and Customs of Modern Korea”

Differences in Values and Power Distance

Readings: Hoare, Chapter 8, 10

MacDonald, Chapter 3

“Top 10 Misconceptions of Koreans”

“Top 10 Things to Know About Korea in the 21st Century”

Student Presentation 7

Student Presentation 8

**Week Eight (October 25): “Midterm Exam”**

2 Hours. Further directions will be provided before Exam

**Week Ten (November 1): “Foreign Policies of Korea in the Post Cold War Period”**

Lecture 7: “Korea’s “Northern Policy”

Outreaching Korea’s Diplomacy with the Communist Bloc

Readings: Hoare, Chapter 12

MacDonald, Chapter 7

Hieyeon Keum. “Normalization and After: Prospects for Sino-South Korean Relations,” *Korea and World Affairs*, 20 (4), Winter 1996, pp. 572-589.

Student Presentation 9

Student Presentation 10

**Week Nine (November 8): “Ideological and Social Cleavages in Korean Politics”**

Lecture 8: “Ideological Discrepancies in the Korean Politics and Society”

Korea vs. Taiwan

Readings: Won-Taek Kang. “Ideological Clash of Progressives and Conservatives in Korea,” *Korea Focus*, 13, (5), 2000. pp. 63-80.

Hieyeon Keum and Joel R. Campbell, “Perils of Transition: Korea and Taiwan Democratization Compared,” *Korean Journal of International Studies*. Vol. 16, No. 1 (April 2018), pp. 29-55.

Student Presentation 11

Student Presentation 12

**Week Eleven (November 15): “Korea’s Security at the Crossroads”**

Lecture 9: “Korea’s Omni-directional and Multilateral Diplomacy

“New Southern Policy (新南方政策)”

Korea’s Dilemma between Washington and Beijing

Readings: Hoare, Chapter 12

Scott A. Snyder. *South Korea at the Crossroads: Autonomy and Alliance in an Era of Rival Powers.* NY: Columbia University Press. 2018

Student Presentation 13

Student Presentation 14

**Week Twelve (November 22): “Asian Paradox: How to Overcome?”**

Lecture 10: “Asian Paradox: ‘Love and Hate’ in East Asia”

Class Discussion: How to Overcome?

Student Presentation 15

Student Presentation 16

**Week Thirteen (December 6): “Two Koreas: Inter-Korea Relations”**

Lecture 10: Changes and Continuity of North-South Relations

Changes in leadership and strategic choices in the North and the South

Reunification? How and when?

Readings: Hoare, Chapter 14

MacDonald, Chapter 8  
Derek McDougall, *Asia Pacific in World Politics*, 2016, Chapter 9, pp. 173-196.

Student Presentation 17

Student Presentation 18

**Week Fourteen (November 29): “Korean Wave 4.0: Toward the Smart Power State”**

Lecture 11: “Korean Wave 4.0 and Exportation of Korean Culture”

Smart Power?

Readings: Gunjoo Jang and Won K. Paik. “Korean Wave as Tool for Korea’s New Cultural Diplomacy,” *Advanced in Applied Sociology*. Vol. 2, No. 3 (September 2012), pp. 196-202.

Jenna Gibson, “How South Korean Pop Culture Can Be a Source of Soft Power,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, December 15, 2020.

<https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/12/15/how-south-korean-pop-culture-can-be-source-of-soft-power-pub-83411>

“Explained: How Korean Wave is So Much More than Just Netflix’s Squid Game,” *The Indiana Press*, October 27, 2021.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/squid-game-south-korea-7574331/>

“Entertainer of the Year: BTS”: What’s the Secret Behind BTS Success? Reporter’s Notebook, *Hankyoreh*, December 20, 2020.

<https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_entertainment/975011.html>

Daniel Tudor, *A Geek in Korea: Discovering Asia’s New Kingdom of Cool*, Tuttle Publishing, 2014.

Watching TED Talk Speech: Joseph S. Nye. “Global Power Shift”

<http://www.ted.com/talks/joseph_nye_on_global_power_shifts>

Student Presentation 19

Student Presentation 20

**Week Fifteen (December 13): Special Lecture on “America’s Asia**

Student Presentation 21

Student Presentation 22

Lecture 12: “Special Lecture” on “US Policy toward Korean Peninsula and China under Biden Administration”

Speaker: Dr. Joel R. Campbell, Pf. D.

Professor, Department of International Relations

Troy University, AL, USA

**Week Sixteen (December 20): Final Exam**

2 Hours