Course Description:

Korea is currently the only divided country in the world, with two different political systems – democracy and dictatorship. This course explores dynamic transformations on the Korean peninsula in the modern to contemporary period. We will cover the demise of Chosŏn dynasty at the end of the 19th century, the Japanese colonial period (1910-1945), the Korean War (1950-1953), and the contemporary period (1960-present). The course is divided into two parts: Part 1 will introduce students to Korea’s political and economic development and Part 2 will cover social and cultural changes.

Parts 1 and 2 together will cover a range of issues related to Korean identity, modernity, social changes, forms of political rule, and Korea’s position in East Asia and the world. Part 1 is aimed at understanding how Korea, a country that is comparable in size to the state of Minnesota, come to have a pivotal role in East Asian and global politics. By uncovering Korea’s past, we will explore how the two Koreas took such divergent paths of political and economic development. Part 2 will explore the vast social and cultural changes happening in South Korea to understand how it has transformed from one of the poorest countries to the 11th largest economy in the world. We will also discuss how these changes are shaping Korea’s identity and role in a globalized world.

This course utilizes secondary sources (written by historians, sociologists, and political scientists) as well as primary source materials (written by leaders and ordinary people) – to understand the multifaceted nature of the major events and development on the Korean peninsula. The course will pay attention not only to domestic factors but also international factors that have shaped the political, economic, social, and cultural development of modern Korea. Upon completing the course, students will have a thorough grasp of the major social and political changes Korea underwent since the late 19th century to the present, and be able to place contemporary issues in their historical context.
Course Objectives:

The primary learning goals for this class are:

- Recognize and explain basic terms, key figures, and general concepts on Korea
- Have a good understanding of the major developments in Korean politics and society
- Gain skills to carry out independent research
- Improve academic writing skills
- Improve oral presentation skills

Course Requirements:

The course will involve lectures by the instructor, in-class discussions of readings, and student presentations. Students are required to do the assigned readings in advance of the class. Lectures will not summarize readings but will build upon them. Students are expected to participate in class discussion including one formal presentation of the final project. Students will take two examinations, corresponding to the substantive parts of the course. Each examination is closed-book and closed-note. In addition, students will conduct an independent final project exploring an issue related to any of the topics covered in the class and present the analysis in a final paper.

Grading:

1. Attendance and Participation (10%)
   - For each class session, students will be graded on a four-point scale. Students are encouraged to prepare a discussion memo (typed up and printed in advance), with the following format for each reading: (1) one sentence summary; (2) two interesting insights you obtained, and (3) three critical questions based on close reading and analyses of assigned readings – arguments and evidence. When submitted at the end of the class, these memos will count as bonus points (0.5 points each) toward your attendance and participation grade.

2. Critical Questions (10%)
   - Students are required to post one critical question on the assigned readings the evening before the class (by 9pm) on Moodle.
   - The question should not be a yes/no question or a question that tests factual knowledge. Consider the following questions when formulating your own critical questions: Are there any contradictions or gaps in the author’s argument or analysis? Does the author provide credible evidence? Are there any other important issues that the reading raises (or does not raise)? Are there any academic/political/social ramifications to the study/argument?

3. Midterm examination (20%)
   - The examination will cover topics covered in Part I (Political and Economic Changes in Korea). The exam will consist of multiple choice questions, short answers, and an essay. The examination will take place during class on Tuesday, November 1.
4. Final Examination (20%)

- The examination will cover topics covered in Part II (Social and Cultural Changes in Korea). Drawing on both readings and lectures, students will be asked to answer two out of three essay questions provided.

5. Research Project

- Thesis Statement and Outline, Annotated Bibliography, and Rough Draft (10%)
  - Annotated bibliography: one-paragraph statement for each of the five most promising sources of your bibliography, of how you will use its information and/or arguments in writing your paper.

- Oral presentation (10%)
  - Students will give a 10-minute presentation on their research paper. There will be a time for questions and feedback from your classmates immediately after your presentation. You will be graded on how successfully you transform your paper into an engaging presentation as well as on clarity in delivery, adherence to the time limit, and the content of the presentation itself.

- Final paper (20%)
  - Students will have an opportunity to pursue their own research topic and question. Topics and questions will be refined throughout the semester through independent research, various course assignments, and class discussions in which students will provide feedback on each other’s topic.
  - The final paper must be 8-10 pages in length, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12 point text on a issue related to any of the topics covered in the class. Footnotes may be included in the page count, but not endnotes or bibliography. Sources must be scholarly sources (books or journal articles). Internet sources or encyclopedia entries can be used only as background reference. Your paper should cite sources using any standard format – APA, Modern Language Association, Chicago Manual Style, etc. – and include a Work Cited or bibliography page. See [http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing](http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing) for more information on citation.

6. Extra credit: public event write-ups (up to 5% of your entire grade)

- I highly encourage you to attend public events (lectures, exhibits, films, etc.) on campus that are related to Korea. If you attend these events and submit a one-page write up that summarizes an event and your reflections on it, I will grade your write up and it will count as 2.5% of your entire grade. The maximum is two write-ups (5% of your entire grade).

★ All assignments are due at the beginning of each class. Please bring one hard copy to class and submit the electronic version on Moodle.

Required Text:

Carter Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New: A History* (Seoul: Ilchokak for Korea Institute, Harvard University, 1990) — Two copies are available on reserve at Olin library.
All other required reading materials for the course will be on reserve at the Olin Library. E-journal links and other forms of digital readings (e.g., book chapters) are available through E-Res and Moodle.

Course Policies and Expectations:

**Class attendance:** It is required that you attend every class except in extraordinary circumstances such as emergencies and illness, verified by a doctor or relevant authority. Be sure to let me know beforehand that you will have to miss a class. If you do so, I will provide you a way to make up for your missed participation. Typically, I will only allow you to do this once over the semester. Please be an active participant during class, and if you have any questions or concerns, let me know in advance.

**Deadlines and due dates:** Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. No extensions, substitutions, etc. will be allowed except in extraordinary circumstances as illness or emergency, again verified by a doctor or relevant authority. Late papers will be penalized by one third of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-) for each day (24 hours) following the due date.

**Conversations regarding grades:** I am happy to discuss your grade beyond the written feedback that I will provide on your paper. Please first wait 24 hours after having received your grade and write out an explanation of your questions as well as the reasons why you think your grade should be changed. Please make an appointment no more than two weeks after the assignment has been returned to you.

**Policy on academic integrity and collaboration:** Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. You are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on a related topic/case. However, any written work submitted for formal evaluation should be the result of your own research and writing. Cheating or plagiarism is not tolerated. You must also use appropriate citation practices to acknowledge the use of books, articles, websites, lectures, discussions, etc. that you have consulted to complete your assignment. If you are unsure or have any questions regarding the appropriate way to use or cite sources, please consult with me in advance (i.e., before you submit your paper for formal evaluation).

See the Handbook’s section on the Honor System for an explanation of student responsibilities, the process involved in prosecuting an Honor System violation, and an essay on plagiarism: [http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/studentconduct.html](http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/studentconduct.html).

**Cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices:** Research shows that students learn better when they put their laptops away and take notes by hand. For effective learning and retention during class, all cell phones, tablets, and laptops are not allowed during class. Lecture slides will be posted in advance on Moodle for students to print out and take notes on during class.

**Requesting accommodation for disabilities:** Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all

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qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodation, a student must have a documented disability defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and must provide documentation of disability. If you need accommodation for a disability, please contact Student Academic Resources as soon as possible.

* I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.

**Course Schedule** (Subject to change with notice):

**Part I: Political and Economic Changes in Korea**

**Week 1**

Sept. 6  Introduction

Sept. 8  Overview of (Late) Chosôn Period

What were the major social and political changes during Chosôn Dynasty?


Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 107-121; 178-192

**Week 2**

Sept. 13 Opening of Korea and the Demise of the Chosôn Dynasty I

How did the arrival of Western imperialism affect Korea? How did the Korean people pursue modernization while attempting to preserve their sovereignty?

Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 192-230

“Reform From Above, 1894-1895,” in *Sources of Korean Tradition: Volume Two: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 272-275.

Sept. 15 Opening of Korea and the Demise of the Chosôn Dynasty II

How did the presence of foreign forces and changes in regional order shape Korean identity?

Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 231-253


“The Independent and the Independence Club,” in *Sources of Korean Tradition: Volume Two: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, pp. 278-280.
Week 3

Sept. 20  Overview of Japan’s Colonization of Korea

*How and why did the Japanese colonial policies change over time?*

Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 254-326.

Sept. 22  Legacy of Japanese Colonialism I

*Did Japanese colonialism have positive effect on Korea’s economic growth?*


Week 4

Sept. 27  Legacy of Japanese Colonialism II

*How did Japanese wartime expansion and mobilization affect Korea? How is the legacy of Japanese wartime mobilization being portrayed and perpetuated in Japan and Korea?*

(Read Shin et al.’s Introduction chapter and pick Korea or Japan readings)


**Korea**


**Japan**

Sept. 29  Discussion of research topics

**Due: Research topic and question with 3 promising sources**

**Week 5**

Oct. 4  Division and the Korean War

*Who was primarily responsible for the division: the Japanese, the Americans and Russians, or the Koreans themselves? Was the Korean War a civil war or an international conflict?*


Oct. 6  Experiencing and Portraying the Korean War

**Guest Speaker - Professor Patrick Dowdey, Curator of Wesleyan’s Mansfield Center for East Asian Studies**


**Week 6**

Oct. 11  Politics of South Korea

*What was the nature of authoritarian rule in South Korea? How did South Korea’s democracy movement unfold?*

Eckert et al., *Korea Old and New*, pp. 375-387


Oct. 13  South Korea’s Economy

*How did South Korea achieve its “economic miracle?”*
Due: Annotated bibliography

Eckert et al., Korea Old and New, 388-418


Review Sept. 22 readings

⋆ 42nd Annual Freeman Lecture at 8pm - The Origins of America’s Alliance System in Asia: Japan, Taiwan, and Korea by Victor Cha (MANDATORY) *

Week 7

Oct. 18 Politics of North Korea

How did the “Kim dynasty” achieve and maintain political control in North Korea? Will North Korea collapse?

Bruce Cumings, Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History, pp. 404-429


Oct. 20 North Korea’s Economy

Why is the initially rich North Korea now poor?


Week 8

Oct. 25 NO CLASS – FALL BREAK

Oct. 27 Documentary – The Jangmadang Generation by Liberty in North Korea

4:30pm Talk by Chi-Hoon Kim, “Discover Korea’s Delicious Secret: The Politics of Globalizing Korean Cuisine”

Week 9

Nov. 1 Student Project Update

Due: Thesis Statement and Outline of Research Project

Nov. 3 In-class Midterm Examination

Part II: Social and Cultural Changes in Korea

Week 10

Nov. 8 Gender and Family

What effect did industrialization have on gender roles and family dynamics?


Nov. 10 Religion (Christianity) in Korea

What explains the explosive growth of Christianity in Confucian Korea? How did modernization contribute to the growth and decline of Protestantism?

Class Visit to the Special Collections & Archives at the Olin Library (missionary holdings at Wesleyan)
Week 11

Nov. 15 Diversification of Korean Society

What factors contributed to the diversification of Korean Society? What are the opportunities and challenges for South Korea’s domestic and international affairs?


Nov. 17 Korean Diaspora

What are the origins and consequences of Korean diaspora? How can we understand Korean identity in the context of an increasingly globalized world?


Week 12

Nov. 22 Korean Popular Culture

How has Korean Wave (Hallyu) influenced Korean society and culture? How is it impacting its position in East Asia and the world?


Due: Rough Draft of Research Paper

Nov. 24  NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13

Nov. 29  Student Project Presentations

Dec. 1   Student Project Presentations

Week 14

Dec. 6   Student Project Presentations

Dec. 8   Wrap-Up Discussion: The Future of Korea

Due: Final Draft of Research Paper

* Final Examination TBD