

Seung-Whan Choi, Ph.D.
1136 BSB
Phone: 312-413-3280

Email: whancoi@uic.edu
Web: <http://www.uic.edu/~whancoi/>
Office Hours: T and R, 11:00 am - Noon or by appointment

PoLS 232 Korean Politics and Films
Spring 2012
Room 316, 2BH
T and R, 12:30 pm - 01:45 pm

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to introduce Korean politics to undergraduate students. Relying on a textbook on Korean politics, journal articles, and Korean films, this course examines important political phenomena such as Korean culture and values, the Korean War, the division of Korea, military dictatorships, democratization, the North Korean nuclear crisis, and the future of the Korean peninsula.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Textbook:

Don Oberdorfer, 2001, new ed., *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*. Basic Books.

Journal articles are provided by email.

GRADING POLICY

Class Attendance (10 points): Regular attendance is required of all students. Attendance is one of the most important measures of your interest and desire to do well academically. Your attendance helps me facilitate better discussions, and your fellow students benefit from your ideas and experiences. **Without appropriate documentation, each absence will cost you two points. If you fail to attend more than four class sessions, your final course grade will be lowered by one letter grade. If you fail to attend more than EIGHT class sessions, your final course grade will be an F. There will be no exceptions. If you come late twice (i.e., after I check the class attendance), it will be counted as one absence.**

Class Participation (20 points): You are expected to actively participate in class discussion. Participation includes thoughtful comments, sophisticated questions about readings, clear evidence of active listening of your fellow students, and other valuable contributions to classroom discussion.

Ten Reviews of Reading Assignments and Movies (5 points each): Their purpose is to help you begin pondering your take-home exam. Each summary must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

One Take-Home Exam (20 points): The purpose is to allow you to demonstrate your understanding of an important political event of Korean politics. Your answer must include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. They must be five pages long, typed,

double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

The grading scale is as follows: **A** (> 90); **B** (80-89); **C** (70-79); **D** (60-69); **F** (< 60)

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

Late work: I am willing to help solve almost any special problem or concern you might have with this course. However, this is only possible if you talk with me about it *in advance* of assignment due dates. Extensions for assigned work will be granted only for documented medical or family emergencies. In sum, if you anticipate difficulty submitting assigned work by the specified due date because of an illness or other emergency, extensions are possible only when you:

- contact me in advance **by email only**
- provide me with appropriate documentation **within one week after the due date**

Extremely important: For the record, you must keep our email exchanges for extensions granted *in your email account* (i.e., both your request email to me and my grant email to you). If you fail to present both emails, your claim will not be supported. This means that for your own protection, you can delete our email exchanges from your email account **45 days after you are officially able to check your final course grade on line.**

Computer-related problems: Ultimately, you are responsible for backing up your own work and caring properly for your own computing equipment. I may grant extensions for assignments due to computer-related problems, but only in the rarest of circumstances. First, I will not entertain any requests for extensions due to computer-related problems made to me within 12 hours of the paper's due date. If you expect computer difficulties that make it impossible for you to submit a paper by the due date (and that due date is not within 12 hours), contact me and we will discuss alternative arrangements for you.

Accommodations for disabilities: Students with disabilities must inform me of the need for accommodations. Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact ODS at 312-413-2183 (voice) or 312-413-0123 (TTY).

Academic dishonesty: The University expects students to fulfill their academic obligations through honest and independent effort. Any effort to gain an advantage that is not given to all students is dishonest, whether or not the effort is successful. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious offense subject to strong disciplinary actions, including but not limited to being dropped from the course with a grade of "F."

Classroom etiquette: You are expected to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct. In order to insure an appropriate environment conducive to learning by all: (1) please refrain from talking, eating or other disruptive activity during class- even one or two conversations quickly create distractions for other students; (2) no cell phone calls, incoming or outgoing, are allowed in this class- please turn off your cell phone or set to vibrate; and (3) please do not come to class

late. Also, please do not leave class early. If you must do so, tell me beforehand so I can ~~and~~ arrange for you to sit near the door so your exit will be less disruptive.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 10: Introduction to Korean Politics and Films

January 12 and 17: Traditional Korean Culture and Values

Reading: Kyoung Ja Hyun, 2001, "Sociocultural Change and Traditional Values: Confucian Values among Koreans and Korean Americans," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, V. 25, N. 2, pp. 203-229.

PBS Home Video: Hidden Korea

January 19: The first review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

January 19 and 24: Contemporary Korean Culture and Values

Film: My Sassy Girl

January 26: The second review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

January 26 and 31: The Korean War I

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-26.

Film: Tae Guk Gi: The Brotherhood of War

February 2: The third review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

February 2 and 7: The Korean War II

Reading: Robert Jervis, 1980, "The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, V. 24, No. 4, pp. 563-592.

Film: Welcome to Dongmakgol

February 9: The fourth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

February 9 and 14: Military Dictatorship

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, Chapter 2, pp. 27-46.

Film: The President's Barber

February 16: The fifth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

February 16 and 21: The Division of Korea I

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, Chapter 3, pp. 47-83.

Film: Joint Security Area

February 23: The sixth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

February 23 and 28: The Division of Korea II

Film: Shiri

March 1: The seventh review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

March 1 and 6: Democratization

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, Chapters 5 and 7, pp. 109-138 and 161-178.

Film: May 18

March 8: The eighth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

March 8 and 13: Choosing a Take-Home Exam Question

- 1) What is the uniqueness of Korean culture and values as compared to American culture and values?
- 2) Is there any difference between traditional and contemporary Korean culture and values?
- 3) What caused the Korean War?
- 4) Why did the US intervene in the Korean War?
- 5) Was it necessary to divide the Korean peninsula into the North and the South?
- 6) How has the division of Korea affected the lives of Korean people and soldiers?
- 7) Why and how did authoritarianism last for three decades in South Korea?
- 8) Who were the protagonists and the antagonists of Korean democratization?
- 9) Why are there so many demonstrations in the streets of Seoul?
- 10) Why is there no left-wing political party in South Korea?
- 11) What does the film, May 18, mean to you?
- 12) Is South Korea making good progress toward a true democratic society?
- 13) How could North Korea avoid being collapsed despite total economic failure?
- 14) What are the causes of the North Korean nuclear crisis?
- 15) Why does North Korea resort to nuclear gambling?
- 16) Do you think the two Koreas should be re-united?
- 17) Are ordinary South Koreans pro-American or anti-American?
- 18) If you were President Barack Obama, what would be your foreign policy toward the Korean peninsula?
- 19) If you were President Lee Myung-bak, how would you deal with North Korea and the US?
- 20) If you were Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, how would you deal with South Korea and the US?

March 15: North Korea I

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, pp. 16-23, 153-160, and 337-368.

March 20 and 22: Spring Break. University Closed

March 27 and 29: North Korea II

Reading:

Selig S. Harrison. 2005. "Did North Korea Cheat?" *Foreign Affairs* 84 (1): 99-110.
Mitchell B. Reiss and Robert L. Gallucci. 2005. "Dead to Rights." *Foreign Affairs* 84 (2):142-145.

Jihwan Hwang. 2004. "Realism and U.S. Foreign Policy toward North Korea: the Clinton and Bush Administrations in Comparative Perspective." *World Affairs* 167 (1): 15-29.

Film: *The Mouse That Roared*

April 3: The ninth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

April 3 and 5: The Future of the Korean Peninsula

Reading: Don Oberdorfer, 2001, *The Two Koreas*, Chapter 16, pp. 409-442.

Film: *Hanbando*

April 10: The tenth review, due by 12:30 pm (i.e., before the class begins)

The review must be one page long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

April 10 and 12: IRIS

April 17 and 19: Class Presentations

April 24 and April 26: Class Presentations and Final Thoughts

May 1: Take-home exam **by email**, due by 12:30 pm

Choose and answer one of the twenty following questions:

- 1) What is the uniqueness of Korean culture and values as compared to American culture and values?
- 2) Is there any difference between traditional and contemporary Korean culture and values?
- 3) What caused the Korean War?
- 4) Why did the US intervene in the Korean War?
- 5) Was it necessary to divide the Korean peninsula into the North and the South?
- 6) How has the division of Korea affected the lives of Korean people and soldiers?
- 7) Why and how did authoritarianism last for three decades in South Korea?
- 8) Who were the protagonists and the antagonists of Korean democratization?
- 9) Why are there so many demonstrations in the streets of Seoul?
- 10) Why is there no left-wing political party in South Korea?
- 11) What does the film, *May 18*, mean to you?
- 12) Is South Korea making good progress toward a true democratic society?
- 13) How could North Korea avoid being collapsed despite total economic failure?
- 14) What are the causes of the North Korean nuclear crisis?

- 15) Why does North Korea resort to nuclear gambling?
- 16) Do you think the two Koreas should be re-united?
- 17) Are ordinary South Koreans pro-American or anti-American?
- 18) If you were President Barack Obama, what would be your foreign policy toward the Korean peninsula?
- 19) If you were President Lee Myung-bak, how would you deal with North Korea and the US?
- 20) If you were Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, how would you deal with South Korea and the US?

The answer must include an introduction, body, and conclusion. It must be five pages long, typed, double-spaced, in the **Times New Roman** font and the **12** point font size, with **1** inch margins on standard letter-size paper.

January 19, 2012

SAMPLE FORMAT

Your Name

1st review

Introduction

Body

Conclusion

May 1, 2012

SAMPLE FORMAT

Your Name

Why did the US intervene in the Korean War?

About a half page long for Introduction

About four pages long for Body

About a half page long for Conclusion