

Course Name : Current Issues in Korean Society

Course Detail	Credit / Hour	3 / 45 hours
	Class Time	Mon-Fri 15:00-18:00 (Korean Time)
	Live/Recorded	Both live and recorded
	Language	English
Instructor	Name	Byoung-Kwan Kim
	Email	bkkim@ajou.ac.kr
	Office hours	Monday 14:00~16:00

1. Introduction

This course is designed to give students, primarily of foreign origin, an introduction to contemporary Korean society, economy, industry, politics, and culture. This course is based on the comprehensive accumulated knowledge and information in various disciplines of social sciences. Since the course is intended primarily for international students and Korean students with little social science background, we will focus less on the theoretical arguments in social sciences but more on the basic and widely acknowledged understanding on Korean society.

This course is intended to provide you understandings of Korean society with interests on topics encompassing people, geography, history, cultural characteristics, value systems, people's behavioral patterns, doing business in Korea, economy and industry, social issues and problems, domestic politics, international relations, two-Korea issues, and future prospects of Korea into the 21st century. In addition, we will try to look into the East Asian region including China and Japan, albeit briefly, to provide a context for our endeavor to understand and seek prospects about the future of Korea and the region.

This course is organized with six modules. The topics of these modules are as follows.

Module 1: Overall introduction to Korean Society

geography, people, history, language

Module 2: Culture: Traditional and Modern Cultural Characteristics

Module 3: Economy and Industry

Module 4: Domestic Politics and International Relations

Module 5: Social Issues

Module 6: East Asian region

Module 7: Future Prospects

2. Course Objectives

- Upon having taken this class, students are expected to have been exposed to the basic knowledge and information about contemporary Korean society, have acquired a balanced perspective on Korean society, and have some far-reaching overall ideas about contemporary East Asian region.
- Students will have learned how to analytically understand the commonalities and peculiarities between countries with a comparative perspective.

3. Class types and activities

Given the Covid-19 pandemic situation, this course will be conducted online.

The mode of class will be based on the video lectures delivered online together with learning materials, including ppt lecture materials and related readings.

Lectures will be provided as pre-recorded online video lectures at class time, and other learning materials will be provided in advance.

On top of the video lectures, in certain pre-arranged classes (most likely, one-hour session at the end of each class module; we have six modules of classes in this course), a session will be administered as live online classes and will focus primarily for discussion of the materials that we covered in lectures. Students are expected and required to have taken the online lectures prior to these live online classes, and student's attendance is compulsory.

4. Teaching Method / Support System in Use / Teaching tools

Lecture and Discussion

Online Learning Management System: Ajour Bb

5. Knowledge and ability required for taking this course

Interest in Korea and Asia

Prior knowledge in any discipline in social sciences may be of help.

6. Method of Evaluation

Evaluation Item	Evaluation Proportion	Remarks
Attendance	10 %	
Mid-term	30 %	
Final	30 %	
Homework	30 %	

7. Textbook and supplementary material

Main/Sub	Title (Website)	Writer	Publisher	Publication year

8. Class Schedule

Day	Topic
1	Introduction: Course info and introduction
2	Introduction: Basic information for understanding Korean Society. Geography, Population, History, Economic and Political situation, society and culture at a glance
3	
4	Legacy of Traditional Culture in Modern Korea
5	Cultural Codes and Behavioral Patterns of People in Modern Korea How to do business in Korea
6	Economy and Industry I
7	Economy and Industry II
8	Mid-term Exam Day
9	Economy and Industry III
10	Domestic Politics in Korea
11	International Relations of Korea Geopolitical situations around Korean peninsula Prospects of Unification for two Koreas
12	Social Issues in Korea I Gender Poverty and Inequality Labor relations Development of Civil Society in Korea
13	Social Issues in Korea II Education in Korea Crimes and other social issues Popular Culture in Korea
14	East Asia as a region
15	Wrap up: What's next for Korea? Students' Term Project Presentation and Discussion Session
16	Final Exam Day