Spring 2009

Korean Politics and Foreign Policy
SIS 579-001 (Graduate Course)

School of International Service
American University

Professor Youngshik Bong    Classroom: WARD 204
Sports Annex BLD 107-A    Wednesday, 2:10-4:50 pm
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Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4 pm and Wednesday 1-2 pm

Course Description

In recent history, the Korean peninsula has been a central point for the collision of the great powers. As a result of these events and its geographic location, Korean domestic politics and international relations are deeply intertwined. The purpose of this course is to use the politics of the Korean Peninsula as a testing ground for contending theories of comparative politics and international relations while presenting an analytical overview of Korean politics. The course will cover the following topics: the historical development of Korean politics, politics of rapid industrialization, democratic consolidation, nationalism and globalization, women and labor, inter-Korean relations, anti-Americanism, and North Korean nuclear diplomacy.

This course will incorporate both lecture and seminar formats, but students’ participation in discussions will be heavily emphasized. I assume that students are either familiar with basic theoretical concepts in political science or have some prior knowledge of Korea.

Course Materials

The following books will be used extensively throughout the course and are available at the bookstore. Weekly reading assignments will also include journal articles. Please visit the Blackboard to download additional readings.


Course Requirements and Grading:

1. Weekly Short Papers 30% (best five, 6% each)
2. Research Paper 40%
3. Student-led Discussion 20%
4. Class Participation 10%

1) Weekly Short Papers:

Each week, students are required to submit a short paper which critically assesses the assigned readings. The paper should be no longer than 800 words and must be submitted via email no later than Wednesday, 9 AM. Late papers will be accepted, but marked down immediately upon being late.

The task is to analyze in depth and actively interpret the readings in the context of the general themes that we will be studying. No outside research is required. Bring a hard copy of the paper to class each week for discussion.

You may submit as many short papers as you like, but only the five highest grades will be counted towards the course grade.

2) Research Paper:

Each student will write a research paper. Topics must be specific enough for a 3,000 word (double-spaced, 11-12 point font), analytical discussion of an issue related to the course. Students are encouraged to visit and discuss their paper topic with the professor as early as possible, no later than by the end of the 4th week in the semester (see also the course schedule for week 14th). The paper is due on May 6th by 4 pm in my mailbox at SIS Office. Late submissions will be penalized.

3) Student-led Discussions:

All students are expected to do all the assigned readings. Be prepared to summarize the main issues and arguments, and participate in discussion on a regular basis. In addition, each student should select at least two dates on which he/she will act as a discussion leader. This will involve giving a concise, critical, 10-minute presentation of the main arguments presented in the readings. After the initial presentation, the discussion will be open to the whole class. Contributions to the discussions both as a leader as well as a participant will count towards the grade.
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Calendar

**Week 1 (January 14)  Course Introduction**
Presentation Schedule Will Be Decided.

**Week 2 (January 21)  State Formation in Korea (I): Nationalism**
- Approaches to Korean Politics; Korean Nationalism; Modernization, Colonialism, Liberalization, and War
  - *André Schmid, Korea between Empires, Chapters 1-5, and Epilogue.
  - Shin, pp.1-78.

**Week 3 (January 28)  State Formation in Korea (II): State vs. Society**
- State-Society Relations in Contemporary Korea; Military and Politics; Democratic Movement
  - Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas*, Chapters 2-7.
  - Shin, pp.103-109, 166-181.

**Week 4 (February 4)  Politics of National Security**
- The Cold War and beyond; Sociological Approach to National Security
  - Shin, pp.141-65
  - *Moon (Entire).*

**Week 5 (February 11)  Governing the Economy (1)**
- Developmental Statism; Colonial Legacy

**Week 6 (February 18) Governing the Economy (2)**

Guest Lecture: Professor Jae-min Lee on South Korea’s Trade Policy and the US-ROK Free Trade

(Readings TBA)

**Week 7 (February 25) North Korea**

Shin, pp. 79-95.

Oberdorfer, Chapters 8-10.

Film in Class: “A State of Mind”

**Week 8 (March 4) Nuclear Crisis in the Korean Peninsula (1)**

Don Oberdorfer, The Two Koreas, Chapters 11-16.

March 11th No Class (Spring Break)

**Week 9 (March 18) Nuclear Crisis in the Korean Peninsula (2)**

*Funabashi (Entire)

**Week 10 (March 25) Minorities and Civic Activism**

Gendered modernization; sexual minorities


**Week 11 (April 1) Historical Reconciliation in Asia**
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***Shin-Reconciliation (Entire)

**Week 12 (April 8)  Korea and Asian Regionalism**

André Schmid, Korea between Empires, Chapters, 6-7.

*Kang-China (Entire)

**Week 13 (April 15)  Guest Lecture**

Reading will be provided prior to the lecture.

**Week 14 (April 22)  Presentation of Research Projects**

No Required Readings.

Each student is expected to give a 15-minute presentation on the progress they have made on their research paper and will receive comments and suggestions.

Research paper due by May 6th, 4:00 pm.