

EAST ASIA/ANTHROPOLOGY 448
MODERN KOREAN SOCIETY
AUTUMN 2011

Instructor: Clark Sorensen
Office: 421 Thomson Hall
Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 10:30-12:00
Office Phone: 543-1696; E-mail sangok@u.washington.edu

TuTh 8:30-10:20
Denny 211

This course consists of three sections: SISEA 448, ANTH 448, and SISEA 584. There are no differences between SISEA 448 and ANTH 448. Decide which section you want based on availability and whether you want Asian Studies or Anthropology credit for the course. SISEA 584 is for students entering the graduate MA program in Korean Regional Studies. Graduate students in other programs may also take this course for graduate credit on a case-by-case basis. SISEA 584 has a different discussion section from SISEA/ANTH 448, and substantial additional requirements to bring it up to graduate school level.

In this course we will study Korean society in the twentieth century, concentrating primarily on the period after World War II. No previous knowledge of Korea, or the Korean language, is assumed or required, though such knowledge may help you remember concepts more easily. As the course is taught at the 400 level, it is intended primarily for students in their last three years of study at UW who are capable of assimilating and synthesizing much material on their own. (Many freshmen have successfully taken this course, but not all freshmen have proved ready to independently assimilate material from readings, synthesize these materials with lecture, and write them down in essay exams.) The course has substantial historical content, but we will focus primarily on social science approaches to describing and accounting for the characteristics of Korean social organization. Students with personal experience of Korea will find, thus, that they must nevertheless study hard to master the ways in which social scientists analyze and do research on Korea, and they must be prepared to write essays demonstrating their mastery of this mode of analysis of Korean society. A main concern will be the description of, and explanation for, recent changes in Korean social organization. We will not emphasize historical events such as various presidential elections, or the Korean War, except in so far as these events can be seen as the cause or consequence of present-day Korean social structure.

The course is organized with two lectures a week. The second half of Thursday's lecture will normally be reserved for discussion of the readings focusing on the discussion question listed for that week. Graduate students taking the course as SISEA 584 will attend lectures Monday through Thursday, but have a separate discussion section, and slightly different readings. They should not attend the second half of Thursdays lecture. **You can expect a little over 100 pages of reading a week.** Students should take care to keep up with the readings and have completed each week's readings by the Thursday discussion section. As class participation is part of your grade, attendance will be taken on Thursday.

The following books are required reading and are available at the University bookstore. They will also be on reserve at the Odegaard Undergraduate Library (under SISEA448).

- Roger Janelli (1987) Ancestor Worship and Korean Society. Stanford University Press.
- Hagen Koo (2001) Korean Workers: The Culture and Politics of Class Formation. Cornell University Press.
- Seungsook Moon (2005) Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea. Duke University Press.
- Marcus Noland and Stephan Haggard (2011) Witness to Transformation: Refugee Insights into North Korea. Peterson Institute of Economics
- Laurel Kendall, ed. (2011) Consuming Korean Tradition in Early and Late Modernity: Commodification, Tourism, and Performance. Hawaii Press.

The following book is recommended as having lots of interesting pictures of North Korea, but is not required:

- Mark Edward Harris and Bruce Cumings (2007) Inside North Korea. Chronicle Books.

Additional short readings will be available on the course web site. Additional materials, such as maps and handouts will also be available on the course web site (<http://faculty.washington.edu/sangok/SISEA448>). The URL is case sensitive, so make sure to put "SISEA" in caps. Grades will be based on performance on a midterm, a final (equal weight, part objective and part essay), and a research paper on a subject of your choice related to Korean society. Those students who are capable of integrating the class readings and lectures in well-organized essays will get the best grades. Participation in Friday discussions will also form a small part of the grade. **The midterm is on November 1st. Make-ups will be given only for documented medical reasons, so plan to be there. Be sure to bring a blue book. The paper is due on Wednesday, November 30th in my mailbox in 411 Thomson Hall. Late papers will be penalized, so plan ahead. The In-class final is on December 13, 10:30-12:20 in 211 Denny, so plan your plane tickets accordingly.**

Each Thursday you will be asked to turn in a 200-word summary of the assigned readings for that week, and be prepared to discuss a suggested study question. These taken together will account for 10% of your grade. (Summaries are due **in class except for the week of the midterm** when they will be due on Friday at 5:00 in my mailbox in 411 Thomson Hall). These summaries are part of your class section participation grade. For this reason I will not accept them by e-mail, late, or turned in by friends. (You will be allowed to drop two, so you will be responsible for a total of **six** weekly summaries). The midterm and final will be in-class essay exams worth 30% of your grade each. The paper will be worth 30%.

Syllabus

N. B. Starred (*) readings are recommended but not required (i.e. they will help you understand the subject, but won't specifically be tested)

Preweek: (September 29th): Introductory Material

Thursday: Why Study Korea? Origins, Topography, Climate, and History

Discussion Topic: Who are Korea's neighbors? What is Korea's relationship to them in terms of language, culture, history, and foreign relations? How should we understand foreign influence versus cultural creativity?

Reading (*no summary due*): Sorensen "South Korea: The Land and People" In An Introduction to Korean Culture, edited Koo and Nahm pp 17-37 (pdf on course website)

Week I: (October 4th and 6th) Traditional Family and Ritual

Tuesday: The notion of a corporate family, Stem family Cycle (Marriage, Inheritance, Partition, and Succession)

Thursday: Household Ancestor Worship (*kije*) then and now

Discussion Topic: (*Reading summary due*)—Male and Female in the Korean family, formal and informal sources of power and authority.

Reading: Janelli chaps 1-4

Week II: (October 11th and 13th): Lineage and Villages

Tuesday: Family cycle, lineage, and tombstone Rites

Thursday: The Village, Gender, Class and Folk Religion

Discussion topic (*Reading summary due*)—What were the important social groups in traditional rural Korea?

Reading: Janelli chap 5-7 and read *one* of the following articles: Sorensen "Land Tenure and Class Relations" *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol 7 (1990) pp 35-54, Janelli, "Interest Rates and Rationality" *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol 6 (1989-90) 165-91, Sorensen "Marketing and Social Structure" *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol 3 (1981) pp 83-112.

Week III: (October 18th and 20th): Industrialization, Gender, and the South Korean Working Class

Tuesday: Industrialization and Development in North and South Korea

Thursday: Gender and the Characteristics of South Korean Working Class Formation

Discussion Topic (*reading summary due*)—What, according to Koo, is distinctive about Korean class formation compared to Europe and the United States?

Reading: Koo 1-4, Soon Won Park, “The First Generation of Korean Skilled Workers” *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol 7 (1990), pp 55-96.

Week IV: (October 25th and 27th) Class and Class Consciousness

Tuesday: Unions and the South Korean Working Class

Thursday: What happened after 1987?

Discussion Topic: (*No reading summary due*)—To what degree do you see evidence in Koo that South Korean workers have class consciousness? What counter-arguments could you make to Koo?

Reading: Koo 5-8 and Eckert “The South Korean Bourgeoisie: A Class in Search of Hegemony” *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol 7, 1990 pp 115-148.

Week V: (November 1st and 3rd): Militarized Modernity?

Tuesday: **In Class Midterm (bring blue book)**

Thursday: Militarized modernity: masculine subjectivity and women’s incorporation into the nation.

(*summary due Friday*)—how do gender and class differ as ways of understanding the structuration of South Korean society? Do they give similar or different pictures of the kind of society Korea is?

Reading: Moon, Introduction, chapters 1-3.

Week VI: (November 8th and 10th): Democratization and Changing Gendered Citizenship

Tuesday: The Rise of Discourse of Modernization.

Thursday: A Neoliberal Welfare Society?

Discussion topic: (*Reading summary due Friday*)—

Reading: Moon, chapters 4-6, conclusion, Jesook Song, “Family Breakdown and Invisible Homeless Women” *positions: east Asian cultural critique* 14(1): 37-65.

Week VII: (November 15th and 17th): The Rise and Fall of Central Planning in North Korea

Tuesday: Collectivization and Central Planning

Thursday: Marginal Adjustments in the 1980s and 1990s

Reading: Cumings, “Corporatism in North Korea” *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol. 4 (1982-3) 269-94, Gwang-Oon Kim, “The Making of the North Korean State” *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol. 12 (2007), pp15-42, and Chong-Ae Yu, “The Rise and Demise of Industrial Agriculture in North Korea,” *Journal of Korean Studies* Vol. 12 (2007) PP 75-109.

Week VIII: (November 22nd) Famine and Aftermath

Tuesday: The Forced March, 1998 Constitution, and the 2002 Measures

Thursday (**Thanksgiving Holiday**)

Discussion topic (*No reading summary*): What kind of society has North Korea become today? What alternatives are there to the Holand/Haggard Model?

Reading: Noland and Haggard (all)

Week IX: (November 29th and December 1st): Commodification of Korean Culture

Tuesday: Consumer Culture and Commodification

Thursday: Meaning, Market, Performance

Discussion Topic (*summary due*): What makes a cultural item a *commodity*? Why does it matter? What is international about this?

Reading: Kendall introduction, parts I and III

Week X: (December 6th and 8th): Tourism and Performance of Korean Culture

Tuesday: Tourism and Performance of Korean Culture

Thursday: Review for Final

FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13TH, 10:30-12:20 Denny 211.