Contemporary Korean Culture & The Korean Culture Wave

Korean popular culture has recently gained critical attention in the global media marketplace. Particularly, *Hallyu* (the Korean Wave), a term coined in Asia describing the widespread popularity of Korean cultural products and its regional and trans-regional influences, has been prominently addressed by the scholars, the critics, and the fans altogether in many parts of Asia and beyond. Through readings, discussions, in-class screenings, and presentations, this introductory course aims to provide a comprehensive view of contemporary Korean culture, society, and politics through examining some of the most representative forms of popular culture.

**PREREQUISITE**
No Prerequisite for this course

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**
Attendance and completion of assignments and examinations.

**GRADING POLICY**
- 20% Class participation
- 30% Midterm Research Paper (5 pages / Double-Space, 12 Points, Times New Roman)
- 50% Closed-book Final Exam

Class Participation (20%): Participation is a significant part of your grade for this lecture course. You should let me know in advance if you will not be able to attend a class. Students will be graded on both attendance and participation. If you miss the class FIVE TIMES (and more) you will fail the course. If you miss the class FOUR TIMES (and more) you will receive a ‘zero’ for a ‘20% class attendance and participation’ portion of your final grade. If you are late to class (i.e. 10 minutes or more past the time class is scheduled to begin) it will adversely affect your grade. And if you are late FIVE TIMES (or more) you will receive a ‘zero’ for a ‘20% class attendance and participation’ portion of your final grade.

* Please leave the fields blank which haven’t been decided yet.
Midterm Research Paper (30%): You are to write a 5-page midterm research paper based on your engagement with the course material and additional outside research you do on a pre-selected topic in consultation with your instructor and/or teaching assistant. Each paper should not exceed 5 pages (Double-Space, 12 Points, Times New Roman) excluding bibliography, figures, and captions. This is an opportunity for you to explore a topic in-depth and with much creative investment. The most important thing is that your paper has a thesis, is focused, and is well researched. In your paper, you must cite at least THREE written sources: books or articles, NOT web pages. Only one of the sources may be from the works assigned in class. The other sources must be ones that you find in the library or elsewhere. They must be scholarly sources.

- The paper must be submitted to your instructor on hard copy at the lecture (Date is TBA). No late papers will be accepted except in the case of documented dire emergencies. Be aware that this does not include computer problems. Be sure to back-up your work, make multiple copies of a document, don't wait until the last minute to write or print your paper, and you should be able to avoid disaster. Late papers will receive a zero.
- All references must be properly cited using either MLA (Modern Language Association) Style (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/) or Chicago Manual Style (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html) depending on your general familiarity.

Closed-book FINAL Exam (50%): An exam will be held during the last class (Thursday, August 4). It will be a closed-book exam. No books, lecture notes, handouts or photocopies are permitted. Each student will be tested how he/she understands the assigned readings, lectures, and films shown in the class. Students will have 90 minutes to complete the questions. The format and guidelines for the exam will be announced later. Make-up exams are only possible for emergency medical reasons or if okayed by your department chair.

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Plagiarism: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Ideas that are not your own must be accompanied by a citation with the source and page number. Direct quotations must be in quotation marks and must also be accompanied by a citation. Paraphrasing is plagiarism. Copying another student or another author’s work is cheating and is a violation of YISS policy. Students who cheat will be brought before a university disciplinary panel. If you have questions about citing source materials, feel free to ask me.

Electronic Devices: Laptops, iPads, Cell phones and all mobile devices must be turned off and put away during class unless the instructor allows to use them for academic tasks and activities. Students who text during class, leave regularly to
use phones or act in a disruptive manner will find that their midterm and final attendance grades suffer significantly.

*The student's final grade is based on his academic performance of the assignment criteria listed above.*

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<th>TEXTS &amp; NOTES</th>
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<td>Reading materials (PDF documents) will be provided by the instructor</td>
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<td><strong>References:</strong></td>
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<td>Dal Yong Jin. <em>Korea’s Online Gaming Empire</em> (MIT Press, 2010).</td>
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<th>INSTRUCTOR’S PROFILE</th>
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<td><strong>Sangjoon Lee</strong> (Ph.D. New York University) is Assistant Professor of Asian Cinema at the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Previously, he taught at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He is coeditor of <em>Hallyu 2.0: The Korean Wave in the Age of Social Media</em> (University of Michigan Press, 2015) and currently editing two volumes on Korean Cinema, tentatively titled <em>Rediscovering Korean Cinema: History, Politics, and Nation</em> and <em>Contemporary Korean Cinema: From National to Transnational</em>, both with the University of Michigan Press. His monograph project is entitled <em>The Asian Cinema Network: The Asian Film Festival and the Cultural Cold War in Asia.</em></td>
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<td>WEEK (PERIOD)</td>
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| **1** | **Tues-Wed**  
*Introduction*  
Why we study Korean popular culture  
Understanding Popular Media | Lectures and Group Discussions  
Readings: TBA | Romance Papa,  
Houseguest and a Mother, The First Son, Youngja’s Heyday |
| | **Thurs**  
*The Birth of (Dysfunctional) Family:*  
- Korean family and cinema  
- Disappearing fathers, dying mothers, and Post-IMF crisis Korean film and television | Class begins: (Tuesday, June 28) | |
| **2** | **Mon-Tues**  
*The Birth of (Dysfunctional) Family* (cont’d) | Lectures and Group Discussions  
Readings: TBA | A Good Lawyer’s Wife,  
Family Ties, Mother, Marriage is a Crazy Thing,  
Goddess of Marriage, Marriage, Not Dating |
| | **Wed-Thurs**  
*Marriage is a Crazy Thing:*  
- Or, why don’t Korean women want to get married? | | |
| **3** | **Mon-Tues**  
*Wedding Campaign:*  
- South Korea’s foreign brides and multiculturalism | Lectures and Group Discussions  
Readings: TBA | Wedding Campaign,  
Bandoobi, Looking For Mr. Ronnie, 200 Pound Beauty,  
Oh My Venus |
| | **Wed-Thurs**  
*Oh My Venus! Plastic Surgery Gangnam Style*  
- The K-Pop plastic surgery obsession  
- And how Hallyu Boom is feeding eating disorders | | |
| **4** | **Mon-Wed**  
*Once Upon a Time in High School:*  
- South Korea’s education fever  
- Horror, terror, and nostalgia  
- *Horror at Girl’s School* | Lectures and Group Discussions  
Readings: TBA  
*Midterm Paper due on Monday (Monday, July 18)* | Boys Over Flowers, Dream High, Heirs, Whispering Corridors,  
Memento Mori |
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<th>WEEK  (PERIOD)</th>
<th>WEEKLY TOPIC &amp; CONTENTS</th>
<th>COURSE MATERIAL &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Globalization of Korean Popular Culture</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Culture, the state, and nationalism in contemporary Korea&lt;br&gt;- Cultural landscape of Korea since the late 1990s</td>
<td>Lectures and Group Discussions&lt;br&gt;Readings: TBA</td>
<td>Jewel in the Palace, Winter Sonata, My Sassy Girl, My Tutor Friend</td>
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<td><strong>Hallyu Goes Global</strong>&lt;br&gt;- “Riding the Wave”: Korean film and TV drama in Asia and beyond</td>
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<td><strong>Hallyu Goes Global (cont’d)</strong></td>
<td>Lectures and Group Discussions&lt;br&gt;Readings: TBA</td>
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<td><strong>Wrap Up and Discussions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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