Korean Politics (POLI 133J)

Spring 2013
T/TH 2:00-3:20pm, Center 113

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TAs’ office hours: Brian Tsay (brtsay@ucsd.edu) M 2-4pm, SSB 350
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Course Description:
This course is about the government and politics of South Korea (Korea, hereafter), but we will also cover some issues on North Korea. We will first look at the historical processes from the division of the Korean peninsula to the democratic transition and consolidation. We will briefly look at politics and political economy of North Korea as well as foreign and unification policies of South Korea. We will then survey the political institutions that shape Korean politics and policy making. We will analyze how mechanisms of delegation, representation, and accountability work, and what authorities and constraints decision makers possess and face. We will also review what role the government and political factors played in Korea’s rapid economic development, the financial crisis, economic reforms and social policy.

Course Requirements and Grade:

1) Class attendance and quizzes (25%): All students must come to class, prepared to discuss any of the required readings. If you cannot attend a class, you should notify the professor in advance. There will be quizzes often times at the beginning of class.

2) Midterm paper (35%): A short essay (5 pages, 1.5 spaced) is due by May 7. You should cite at least four scholarly articles/books that are not included in the course readings. You are also encouraged to cite course readings and newspaper articles.

3) Final paper (40%): A co-authored term paper (10 pages, 1.5 spaced) is due by June 11. In principle, two students, including at least one who can read scholarly articles and books in Korean, should make a team. A paper should cite at least scholarly eight articles/books, including four in Korean, that are not included in the course readings. You are also encouraged to cite course readings and newspaper articles.
Topics for the midterm and final papers and further guidelines will be distributed and discussed in class.

**Readings:**
The following books will be used in this course and are available in the bookstore.


All other course readings will be available through the links in the syllabus or will be provided by the professor.

Korean Online Full-Text database “KSI KISS”, which contains more than 1 million full text articles (most articles are in Korean, but some are in English and many have English abstracts) from 1200 academic journals in Korea, is available for UCSD faculty and students. KISS is cataloged in Roger and list in the UCSD proxy server. Access is restricted to UCSD IP addresses.

E-Korean Studies (http://www.e-koreanstudies.com) and Nurimedia (http://nanc.nurimedia.co.kr) are also available in Roger.

Korea’s National Assembly Digital Library (NADL) can be accessed at www.nanet.go.kr
Copy-righted materials in NADL will be soon available for free at a designated computer in the Reference room of the 2nd floor, Geisel Library.

To follow the up-to-date information on Korea, the following newspapers and magazines will be useful.

Korea Herald (a daily newspaper in English): http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/


*Korea Focus* (a monthly webzine and a quarterly journal published by the Korea Foundation): Available at http://www.koreafocus.or.kr/

Comparative Connections (a quarterly update of US-Korea relations and inter-Korean relations, electronically published by the Pacific Forum, Center for Strategic and International Studies): Available at http://csis.org/program/comparative-connections
Professor Stephan Haggard at IR/PS, UCSD and his colleague Marcus Noland at Peterson Institute run an informative blog about North Korea at: http://www.piie.com/blogs/nk

Also, the following sites may be useful.

www.riss4u.net
(Korea Education and Research Information Service, 교육학술정보원)

http://www.kossda.or.kr/
(Korean Social Science Data Archive)
Various survey data and statistical data are available.

1. Historical Overview of Korean Politics and Political Economy

April 2. An introduction to the course

April 4. Overview of South Korea’s political and economic development, 1945-2010

1. What distinguishes South Korea’s economic and political development from the experiences of North Korea and other developing countries in East Asia?


April 9. The division, war, and cold war politics

2. What are the causes of the division and the war? Which party is most responsible for the division and the war, the US, USSR, the Korean left, or the Korean right?

3. What effects did the division and the war have on the nature of politics in the two Koreas?

4. What explains the swift collapse of both the Syngman Rhee government and the Second Republic? What explains the authoritarian intervention of Yushin?

5. What are the positive and negative legacies of Park Chung-hee?

Oberdorfer. Chs. 1 through 3.
April 11. Democratic transition

1. What factors account for the democratic transition in 1997, when other efforts had failed?
2. What role did the U.S. play in Korea’s democratic transition?
3. Why did it result in the election of Roh Tae-Woo rather than an opposition candidate?

Oberdorfer. Chs. 5 and 7.


(optional)

April 16. Democratic consolidation (1)

1. Has Korea’s democracy been sufficiently consolidated?
2. What are the main political cleavages in Korea? How have they evolved over time?

Diamond and Shin. Ch. 1.


April 18. Democratic Consolidation (2): Civil liberties


Freedom House, Freedom in the World, South Korea.
http://www.freedomhouse.org/

Freedom House, Freedom of the Press, South Korea.

Freedom House, Freedom on the Net, South Korea.

April 23. The political economy of South Korea’s development

1. What were the sources of the economic "take-off" of the 1960s and 1970s?
2. Why was government intervention in Korea effective unlike in many Latin American countries?


April 25. Politics of chaebol reform and “economic democracy”

1. What are the problems of chaebol?
2. What reforms did take place? Why?
3. What further reforms are being debated?

Kim, Eun Mee. “Reforming the Chaebols.” In Diamond and Shin, Ch. 7.


2. Overview of North Korea and South Korea’s Policy toward North Korea

April 30. The First Nuclear Crisis

1. Why did North Korea launch a nuclear weapons program?
2. What were the core features of the Agreed Framework?
3. What made the US and North Korea to reach an agreement?
May 2. The political economy of North Korea  
Guest lecturer: Professor Stephan Haggard, IR/PS, UCSD

1. The famine in North Korea raises a simple but painful question: how can so many people be allowed to die? What, if anything, can foreign governments and NGOs do about it? 
2. What are the basis of the military-first politics and nuclear armament? 
3. A frequently-asked question is whether the North Korean regime can reform. What are the prospects for reform? 

Haggard, Stephan and Marcus Noland. 2007. *Famine in North Korea: Markets, Aid and Reform*. Ch. 7.


May 7. Politics of North Korea policy (1)  
1. How have South Korea’s North Korea and unification policies changed over time? Why have these changes been made? 
2. Did “Sunshine policy” help North Korea to reform? 

Oberdorfer. Ch. 8(pp. 186-192), Ch. 11(260-265), Chs. 15 and 16 (pp. 369-441).

May 9. Politics of North Korea policy (2)  
1. Did Lee Myung-bak’s hard-line policy work? 
2. What are the prospects of Park Keun-hye’s North Korea policy? 
3. Will peaceful reunification of the peninsula be possible?


3. Political Institutions of Korean Democracy

May 14. Presidency and Legislature

1. What are the sources and limitations of presidential power in Korea?
2. How well has Korea’s legislature been functioning? Why?
3. What are the greatest challenges with regard to governability in Korea?

Jaung, Hoon. 2009. “Two Tales of the Korean Presidency: Imperial but Imperiled Presidency,” in Mo and Brady eds., The Rule of Law in South Korea (Hoover Institution Press), 61-82.

Park, Chan Wook. “Legislative-Executive Relations and Legislative Reform.” In Diamond and Shin, Ch. 3.

May 16. Electoral System and Party System

1. Why is Korea’s party system unstable?
2. How does the electoral system affect the voting behavior and the party system?


(optional)

May 21. Regional politics

1. Why has the party system not been sufficiently institutionalized?
2. What are the causes of regionalism? Are there remedies?
3. How are regionalist politics and ideologist politics related?


(optional)

May 23. Ideological politics


Optional:

May 28. Judicial politics

1. What explains the “high equilibrium” judicial review in Korea?
2. How has Korea’s Constitutional Court been able to maintain a high level of compliance as well as popular support?
3. Has judicial review contributed to consolidating democracy in Korea?


May 30. Civil society; Anti-corruption politics
1. What were the key changes in the civil society after the democratic transition in Korea?
2. *How* and *why* civil society groups still figure prominently in Korean politics?
3. Is Korea’s vibrant civil society good for democratic consolidation?

Kim, Sunhyuk. “Civic Mobilization for Democratic Reform” in Diamond and Shin, Ch. 11.


June 4. Politics of social policy

1. What effects did the democratization and the financial crisis have on social policy in Korea?
2. How has the politics of social policy been changing in Korea?


Yang, Jae-jin. 2013 (Forthcoming). “Politics of small welfare state in South Korea.” *Comparative Politics*.

June 06. Politics of Korea-US FTA


(optional)