KOREAN POLITICS

Fall 2016
The George Washington University
Class meets: Wed., 5:10-7:00 p.m.
Rome 459

PSC 3192W.80
Professor Celeste Arrington
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Office: Monroe 465
Office hours: Wed. 3-5 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description

This course analyzes political institutions, processes, and issues in South Korea and North Korea. We will pay particular attention to relevant theories and approaches in comparative politics and international relations. Readings and discussions will cover authoritarianism, economic development, democratic transition and consolidation, models of policy-making, state-society relations, and political participation. We will trace the evolution of political institutions and examine the legacies of Japanese colonial rule and national division. In the final third of the semester, our focus will turn to inter-Korean relations and regional security as we examine questions related to North Korea’s nuclear and missile development, illicit activities, human rights, defectors, and the possibility of unification.

This is a writing-in-the-discipline seminar, which aims not only to help you understand sociopolitical developments in the Koreas and inter-Korean relations, but also how to read, speak, and write more effectively in the fields of comparative politics and political science more broadly. Over the course of the semester, you will write in several different formats, including a short response paper that compares and evaluates several scholarly articles, a presentation of a defector memoir, sample research questions, a review of the scholarly literature on a particular research question, an abstract, and an independently researched final paper. Some of these assignments constitute building blocks for your research paper, and you will have multiple chances to revise. You should choose your research topic early in the semester. Through seminar discussions, peer evaluations, presentations, and other group activities, we will work on improving our skills related to reading, selecting a topic, designing a research project, conceptualizing variables, gathering and evaluating evidence, constructing a persuasive argument, presenting research, responding to potential counterarguments, outlining, developing writing strategies, writing, and revising.

Throughout the semester, you should follow current events on the Koreas by regularly reading English-language newspapers from both Koreas and other reputable news media. Examples from current events and policy debates will complement seminar readings and enrich our discussions. Recommended sources are linked on the course’s Blackboard site.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand political institutions, recent history, and policy processes in both Koreas
2. Learn conceptual and theoretical tools for analyzing political and social phenomena
3. Improve your ability to write and speak about political institutions and processes
Requirements

Your grade will reflect your class participation, presentations in seminar, your comments on your classmates’ work, and your performance on interrelated writing assignments that culminate in a research paper.

1. **Participation and Attendance (15%)**—Do all readings and be prepared to discuss them each week. Each week’s seminar will mix lectures, discussion, student presentations, small group exercises, and writing workshops. Absences and tardiness will affect your grade.

2. **Book Presentation (15%)**—On November 16th, groups of students will present a recent book on North Korea to the class. The books (listed below) include refugees’ accounts, journalistic accounts, and a former U.S. soldier’s account. They portray different views of life in North Korea and the human rights situation in the North. I will distribute more detailed instructions for the presentations later in the semester.

3. **Discussion Questions and Response Paper (15%)**—For each week that we have assigned readings, students will serve as discussion leaders. Each discussion leader will submit three questions related to the readings by 5pm on Sunday before class to help the rest of the class prepare for seminar. The discussion leaders should also prepare a 5-minute presentation elucidating key concepts/theories from that week’s readings, rather than just summarizing the readings. A 600-word response paper (due in class) should serve as the basis of your presentation. You will be evaluated on your ability to concisely identify the readings’ main concepts and arguments and, more importantly, compare/contrast their approaches and evaluate them in relation to readings from other weeks.

4. **Final Research Paper**—Please clear your topic with me by Oct. 5.

   a. **Research Questions (10%)**—You should draft three potential research questions. What are you going to explain in the paper? Define your dependent variable.

   b. **Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography (15%)**—In 1,500 words or less assess existing explanations for your dependent variable. What’s wrong with existing explanations? Include an annotated bibliography with one or two sentences explaining the argument and utility of at least 15 sources (scholarly books and articles, primary sources, think tank or government reports etc.).

   c. **Abstract (10%)**—This 300-word abstract should outline your research question, main argument, evidence, research design, and the significance of your research.

   d. **Final paper (20%)**—This 18-page (6,000 words max) paper is a chance for you to develop your interest in some empirical phenomenon/issue in Korean politics. You should think about analyzing some change, difference, variation, or puzzle. Present evidence to support your thesis. Address potential alternative explanations. You should draw on theories and themes from the class, but should also incorporate substantial outside research. During the semester we will develop key components of the paper (see above), giving you multiple opportunities to revise and improve your final product. The final version is due on Dec. 13 (by email by 5pm).
Required Readings & Blackboard
Complete all readings (posted on Blackboard) before the class date under which they are listed.

Course Policies
Participation: I expect you to come to every class prepared to participate actively. Class will involve a mixture of discussions, lectures, debates, and other in-class activities. Your participation counts for 15% of your final grade. High-quality participation entails completing all readings and assignments on time, bringing thoughtful questions and insights about the readings to class, listening respectfully to your classmates, and adding your ideas to our discussions.

Absences: You will receive a zero for participation (15% of your final grade) if you have more than 2 unexcused absences (i.e., anything other than a documented medical reason, interview, or religious holiday). Email me in advance if you need to miss class, arrive late, or leave early.

Formatting Written Work: Submit all written work in Times New Roman, 12-point font, and double-spaced with one-inch margins and page numbers. Use APSA style guidelines.

Classroom Etiquette: Please do not use your laptops to check email or do anything else online during class. Refrain from using your mobile devices. Don’t arrive late or depart early from class. All of these behaviors are distracting to your fellow classmates and impede your learning.

Late Assignments: Any late assignment will be docked by 1/3 of a grade (i.e., from a B+ to a B) for each day it is late.

Grade Disputes: All grade disputes must be submitted to me in writing.

Recommended Reading on Writing in Political Science

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/. Please also speak with me before the end of the second week of classes. All discussions will be kept confidential.

Academic Integrity
Do your own work. You must properly cite all the sources upon which you draw. Plagiarizing others’ work is dishonest and will be handled as a serious offense. I will adhere to the GW Code of Academic Integrity, which states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the rest of the Code, see http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html. For an explanation of plagiarism and tips on how to avoid it, see http://libguides.gwu.edu/content.php?pid=56080&sid=410568. We will discuss issues related to plagiarism in the course. Please consult me if you have any questions.
Course Topics and Reading Assignments

August 31—Introduction

Part I: The Emergence of Two Koreas

September 7—Japanese Colonial Occupation and National Division


September 14—Authoritarianisms


September 21—Theories of Economic Development


September 28—Explaining Democratic Transition


PART II: POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

October 5—The South Korean Political System


Yusaku Horiuchi and Seungjoo Lee, “The Presidency, Regionalism, and Distributive Politics in South Korea,” *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 6 (June 2008): 861-882.

October 12—Civil Society and Political Participation in South Korea

Sunhyuk Kim, “Civil Society and Contentious Democracy in South Korea,” paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, DC (September 2-5, 2010).


**October 19—Famine, Marketization, and Political Participation in North Korea**


**PART III: INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

**October 26—Understanding DPRK Policymaking**


**November 2—North Korea and Regional Security (Guests: Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mark Manyin)**


November 9—North Korea through Defectors’ Eyes (Guest: Jeong Yeong)


November 16—North Korean Human Rights (book presentations)

Read one of the following:


Thanksgiving Break (no class November 23-25)

November 30—Unification?


December 7—Debating Policy toward North Korea

