2025-2026 Korea University International Winter Campus (KU IWC)
Join our winter, cherish your winter
December 23 (Tue), 2025 - January 9 (Fri), 2026

IWC 285 – Media and Popular Culture in Korea

Ⅰ. Instructor

Professor	Ji Hoon Park
E-mail	koreamediaschool@gmail.com
Home Institution	Korea University
Class Time	9:00 – 11:55 AM (KST)
Office Hours	By appointment
Class Format	In-person
Academic Field	Humanities & Korean Studies

Ⅱ. Textbook

Required Textbook	Course packet
Recommended Additional Readings	TBA

Ⅲ. Course Description and Objectives (1 course = 3 credits)

This course provides an overview of contemporary popular culture in Korea, with a focus on media's role in expressing and shaping it. Students will learn theoretical concepts to analyse Korean popular culture from an academic perspective, covering topics such as gender, collective memory, music, Korean wave, film, journalism, broadcasting and more. The course includes group research projects and class discussions.

Ⅳ. Grading

Midterm Exam	40%
Final Exam	40%
Assignments	20% (Group assignment, self-intro essay)
Attendance	2 points deduction for each absence

V. Class Outline

Date	Topic	Chapter	Remarks
Dec 23 (Tue)	Introduction		

Dec 24 (Wed)	**Korean Film** Klein, C. (2008). **Why American studies needs to think about Korean cinema, or, transnational genres in the films of Bong Joon-ho,** *American Quarterly, 60*(4), 871-898.		
Dec 25 (Thu)	No Class		
Dec 26 (Fri)	**Korean Film** Park, J., Kim, K. A., & Lee, Y. (2023). **Netflix and platform imperialism: How Netflix alters the ecology of Korean TV drama industry.** *International Journal of Communication, 17*, 72-91.		
Dec 29 (Mon)	**Collective Memory and Korean Media** Zelizer, B. (1995). **Reading the past against the grain: The shape of memory studies,** *Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 12*(2), 211-235.		
Dec 30 (Tue)	Kim, H. & Lee, S. (2017). **Collective memory of Japanese military 'comfort women' and South Korean media: The case of television dramas,** *Eyes of Dawn* **(1991) and** *Snowy Road* **(2015),** *Asian Women, 33*(3), 87-100.		
Dec 31 (Wed)	Midterm Exam		
Jan 1 (Thu)	No Class		
Jan 2 (Fri)	**Korean Broadcasting & Journalism** Park, J., Lee, J., & Lee, Y. (2019). **Do Webtoon-Based TV Dramas Represent Transmedia Storytelling?: Industrial factors leading to webtoon-based TV dramas**. *International Journal of Communication, 13*, 2179-2198. Seo, S. (2020). **South Korea's Watergate moment: How a media coalition brought down the Park Geun-hye government**. *Journalism Practice,* DOI: 10.1080/17512786.2020.1730221		
Jan 3 (Sat)	**Korean Popular Music, K-Pop** Hare, S. & Baker, A. (2017). **Keepin' it real: Authenticity, commercialization, and the media in Korean hip hop,** *Sage Open, 7*(2), 1-12.		Make-up Class
Jan 5 (Mon)			

Jan 6 (Tue)	Kim, J. (2021)**. BTS as method: A counter-hegemonic culture in the network society**. *Media, Culture & Society,* 1-17. Jin, Y. & Kim, V. (Nov. 5, 2022**). 'Gangnam Style' brought to the world, but haunted its creator.** *New York Times.*		
Jan 7 (Wed)	**Korean Wave** Park, J., Lee, Y., & Seo, H. (2019).**The rise and fall of Korean drama export to China: The history of state regulation of Korean dramas in China.** *International Communication Gazette.81*(2), 139-157.		
Jan 8 (Thu)			
Jan 9 (Fri)	Final Exam		

Course Policy

** ATTENDANCE: Your professor will deduct 3 points from your total grade for each absence from the class. (e.g., If you earn 90 points for your grade but miss class three times, your final score will be adjusted to 81.)

- If you check your attendance during the break, it will count as half an absence.
- If you check your attendance after the break, it will count as one absence.
- Leaving the class early without prior notification to the professor will be counted as one absence.

Proxy attendance: If someone attends on your behalf, you will receive an F.

According to the regulations of Korea University, students may receive an F grade if they miss one-third of the total classes. The method of reflecting attendance in grades varies depending on the professor and course, so please refer to the course syllabus for details. If students have unavoidable circumstances that prevent them from attending class, they can obtain permission for absence by consulting with the professor in advance, and the professor may request proof of the circumstances. In addition, the professor may recognize attendance through assignments or make-up classes.

REQUIRED TEXTS: All the required readings and PDF files for the course will be available on Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES:

This class places a strong emphasis on fairness in academic learning, and has established several course policies to ensure that evaluations are conducted in a fair and consistent manner. These policies are designed to provide maximum educational benefits to all students, and

exceptions will only be made in the most exceptional of circumstances and only by the professor. ==By choosing to enroll in this course, students are implicitly agreeing to abide by the policies outlined in this syllabus.==

- **No Make-Up Exams:** <u>Exams will only be given at the scheduled times and make-up exams will not be provided. Please ensure to mark your calendar accordingly.</u>

- **Classroom Disruption**: It is the responsibility of instructors to address disruptive behavior within the classroom setting to ensure a civil and respectful environment that supports productive learning.

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* Code of Conduct: To get the most out of this class, it is important to fully focus on the lectures and seminars. Any behavior such as chatting, whispering, text-messaging, wearing headphones or web surfing during class can have a significant impact on your grade. The professor has a zero-tolerance policy for these types of actions and will not hesitate to take action if it occurs. ==If you receive a warning from the professor, it will be impossible to receive an A+ in this class, regardless of your performance==. If you continue to violate the code of conduct, you may fail the class.

Examples of Disruptive Behavior:
(Source: https://www.webster.edu/faculty/classroom-disruption.html)

> Continually leaving and re-entering class without permission
> Loud and distracting noises
> Talking with others
> Talking on the phone
> Munching on chips
> Texting, or using electronic devices for reasons not related to the course
> Continually interrupting the instructor, or other students
> Frequently going in and out of the classroom
> ==Wearing headphones or earphones during the lecture==

- **Discussion Etiquettes:** Avoid being antagonistic or inappropriately argumentative. Avoid being openly rude or inappropriately critical. Avoid being threatening or Abusive.

- **Active Participation Rewards**: By actively engaging in class discussions, you will have the opportunity to earn extra credits.

- **Cheating:** ==If the proctor (e.g., TA or Professor Park) observes any suspicious behavior during the exam, you will receive an F.== ==When you cheat during an exam, Professor Park will report it to your home university.==

- **Auditing**: Per IWC policies, auditing is strictly prohibited. <u>Bringing anyone who is not registered in this course to class without notifying the professor may result in an F for the course.</u>

- **IWC Grading Scale:** A+ (95-100), A (90-94), B+ (85-89), B (80-84), C+ (75-79), C (70-74), D+ (65-69), D (60-64), F (0-59) Grades will not be rounded.

- **Justified Absence:** If you are unable to attend class due to a religious holiday, travel with a university-affiliated team or group, or unavoidable circumstances, please speak with Professor Park. Excused absences can only be granted if you notify Professor Park in advance. A medical note from a doctor is required for any medical absence to be considered excused.

  According to the regulations of Korea University, students may receive an F grade if they miss one-third of the total classes. The method of reflecting attendance in grades varies depending on the professor and course, so please refer to the course syllabus for details.

- **Grading:** Consultations about grades are encouraged, but they are intended to clarify course standards and procedures and to provide guidance for future performance improvement. Assigned grades will not be changed unless clear and significant procedural errors have occurred. Generally, good grades such as A+ and A reflect students' strong efforts and high level of performance. However, efforts alone do not guarantee a good performance. Please refrain from asking your professor to raise your grade simply because you think you have put in enough effort. Your grade will be determined solely based on your performance.

- **Students with Disability:** If you have a disability, please inform the instructor at the start of the semester regarding any special accommodations or equipment needed to fulfill the requirements of this course.

- **Plagiarism:** Submitting an assignment or project that is identical to, or heavily borrowed from, another paper submitted in this or any other course is not permitted. Double submission of papers and/or plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

- **Exams:** Students are required to bring their laptop computers to class on the days of the midterm and final exams.