



2026 Korea University International Summer Campus (KU ISC)

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June 27, 2026 – August 6, 2026

ISC385 – Korean Film and Society

I . Instructor

Professor	:	Immanuel Kim
E-mail	:	ikim52@gwu.edu
Home Institution	:	The George Washington University
Class Time	:	10:50am-12:30pm (KST)
Office Hours	:	TBA
Class Format	:	In-person
Academic Field	:	Korean Studies, Humanities

II. Textbook

Required Textbook	:	none
Recommended Additional Readings	:	

III. Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the Global and Cross-Cultural intersection of gender, class, and nation in contemporary Korean society through the lens of Korean films. The turbulent recent history of South Korea has produced a society that is engaged with a variety of local and global social forces in complex and contradictory ways. The sweeping social changes in South Korea have redefined and re-examined the country, and its relation to such basic ideas as gender, class, tradition, and the nation. Korean films provide a gateway into these issues and how Koreans have been thinking about them within the global cross-cultural context. Students will be exposed to a variety of films that deal with various issues pertaining to tradition, national division and civil war, gender, class, and national identity.

All films will have English subtitles.

****Please be advised that some of the films may contain scenes of explicit sexuality or violence.**

IV. Grading

Midterm Exam	:	30%
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Final Exam	:	30%
Assignments Group Project	:	30%
Participation	:	10%

V. Class Outline

Date	Topic	Chapter	Remarks
June 26 (Fri)	Dormitory Check-in		
June 27 (Sat)	Orientation Day (No Class)		
June 29 (Mon)	Introduction: History of Cinema	"A Century of Korean Film," Chonghwa Chung	
June 30 (Tue)	History of Korean Cinema, continued...		
July 1 (Wed)	Aimless Bullet (screening) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lfxlfk8ThFc&t=706s		
July 2 (Thu)	Aimless Bullet Lecture: War Consciousness	"Postwar Dystopia, Canonicity, and Cinema Realism," Kelly Jeong	
July 6 (Mon)	Seopyeonje (screening) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdjwD4jW4XY&t=6241s		
July 7 (Tue)	Seopyeonje Lecture: Tradition and Modernity		
July 8 (Wed)	People in the Slum https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqo7KL2DrMY&t=704s		
July 9 (Thu)	People in the Slum lecture: Marginalized People and Miracle on the Han		
July 13 (Mon)	Taxi Driver (screening) https://www.amazon.com/Taxi-Driver-Kang-ho-Song/dp/B076DF3JT9		
July 14 (Tue)	Taxi Driver lecture: Unspoken Truths, Martial Law, and Anti-Communism	<i>Contentious Kwangju</i> , Shin Gi Wook	
July 15 (Wed)	MIDTERM		

July 16 (Thu)	JSA (screening) (Tubi) https://tubitv.com/movies/633217/joint-security-area		
July 20 (Mon)	JSA lecture: Changing Representations of North Korea	<i>The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema</i> , Kyung Hyun Kim	
July 21 (Tue)	Host (screening)		
July 22 (Wed)	Host lecture: History of Anti-American Rhetoric in Korean Culture	"Life in Excess" Peter Paik	
July 23 (Thu)	Train to Busan (screening) Netflix		
July 27 (Mon)	Train to Busan lecture: Globalization of Cinematic Tropes, Representations of Capitalism, Sewol Ferry, and Political Distrust	"Glocalization, Korean Zombies, and a Man-Made Neoliberal Disaster," Keith Wagner	
July 28 (Tue)	Ode to My Father (screening) (Tubi) https://tubitv.com/movies/702940/ode-to-my-father		
July 29 (Wed)	Ode to My Father lecture: Rewriting Historiography, Omitting History, and Nationalism	"Korean War Through Cinema," Kyung Hyun Kim	
July 30 (Thu)	FINAL		
Aug 3 (Mon)	Group Presentation		
Aug 4 (Tue)	Group Presentation		
Aug 5 (Wed)	Group Presentation		
Aug 6 (Thu)	Last day of 6-week program & Graduation Day		