



## 2026 Korea University International Summer Campus (KU ISC)

*Embark on a unique summer*

June 27, 2026 – August 6, 2026

### ISC285A – Media and Popular Culture in Korea

#### I . Instructor

Professor	:	Ji Hoon Park
E-mail	:	<a href="mailto:koreamediaschool@gmail.com">koreamediaschool@gmail.com</a>
Home Institution	:	Korea University
Class Time	:	10:50am – 12:30pm (KST)
Office Hours	:	By appointment
Class Format	:	In-person
Academic Field	:	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)
Participation	:	2 points deduction for each absence

#### V . Class Outline

Date	Topic	Chapter	Remarks
June 27 (Sat)	Orientation Day (No Class)		
June 29 (Mon)	Class begins, introduction		
June 30 (Tue)			

July 1 (Wed)	<p><b>Korean Film</b></p> <p>Klein, C. (2008). <b>Why American studies needs to think about Korean cinema, or, transnational genres in the films of Bong Joon-ho</b>, <i>American Quarterly</i>, 60(4), 871-898.</p> <p>Park, J., Kim, K. A., &amp; Lee, Y. (2023). <b>Netflix and platform imperialism: How Netflix alters the ecology of Korean TV drama industry</b>. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>, 17, 72-91.</p>		
July 2 (Thu)			
July 6 (Mon)	<p><b>Collective Memory and Korean Media</b></p> <p>Zelizer, B. (1995). <b>Reading the past against the grain: The shape of memory studies</b>, <i>Critical Studies in Mass Communication</i>, 12(2), 211-235.</p> <p>Kim, H. &amp; Lee, S. (2017). <b>Collective memory of Japanese military ‘comfort women’ and South Korean media: The case of television dramas, <i>Eyes of Dawn</i> (1991) and <i>Snowy Road</i> (2015)</b>, <i>Asian Women</i>, 33(3), 87-100.</p>		
July 7 (Tue)			
July 8 (Wed)	<p><b>Gender and Korean Media</b></p>		
July 9 (Thu)	<p>Han, W., Lee, S., &amp; Park, J. (2017). <b>Gendering the authenticity of military experience: How male audiences of a Korean reality show <i>Real Men</i> construct hegemonic masculinity in online bulletin board</b>. <i>Media, Culture &amp; Society</i>. 39(1), 62-76.</p> <p>Lee, J., Lee, R., &amp; Park, J. (2020). <b>Unpacking K-pop in America: The subversive potential of male K-pop idols’ soft masculinity</b>. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>, 14, 5900-5919.</p>		
July 13 (Mon)	<p><b>Midterm Exam</b></p>		
July 14 (Tue)			
July 15 (Wed)	<p><b>Korean Broadcasting</b></p>		
July 16 (Thu)			
July 20 (Mon)	<p>Park, J., Lee, J., &amp; Lee, Y. (2019). <b>Do webtoon-based TV dramas represent transmedia storytelling?: Industrial factors leading to webtoon-based TV</b></p>		

	<p>dramas. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>, 13, 2179-2198.</p> <p>Seo, S. (2020). <b>South Korea's Watergate moment: How a media coalition brought down the Park Geun-hye government.</b> <i>Journalism Practice</i>, DOI: 10.1080/17512786.2020.1730221</p>		
July 21 (Tue)	<p><b>Korean Popular Music, K-Pop</b></p> <p>Hare, S. &amp; Baker, A. (2017). <b>Keepin' it real: Authenticity, commercialization, and the media in Korean hip hop.</b> <i>Sage Open</i>, 7(2), 1-12.</p> <p>Kim, J. (2021). <b>BTS as method: A counter-hegemonic culture in the network society.</b> <i>Media, Culture &amp; Society</i>, 1-17.</p> <p>Jin, Y. &amp; Kim, V. (Nov. 5, 2022). <b>'Gangnam Style' brought to the world, but haunted its creator.</b> <i>New York Times</i>.</p>		
July 22 (Wed)			
July 23 (Thu)			
July 27 (Mon)			
July 28 (Tue)	<p><b>Korean Wave</b></p> <p>Park, J., Lee, Y., &amp; Seo, H. (2019). <b>The rise and fall of Korean drama export to China: The history of state regulation of Korean dramas in China.</b> <i>International Communication Gazette</i>.81(2), 139-157.</p>		
July 29 (Wed)			
July 30 (Thu)			
Aug 3 (Mon)			
Aug 4 (Tue)	Review		
Aug 5 (Wed)	<b>Final Exam</b>		
Aug 6 (Thu)	Last day of 6-week program & Graduation Day		

**ATTENDANCE:** Your professor will deduct 2 points for each absence from the class.

- ◆ 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.

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:** Exams will only be given at the scheduled times and make-up exams will not be provided. Please ensure to mark your calendar accordingly.
- ♦ **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.

**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 an 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 may receive an F.**
- ♦ **Auditing:** Per ISC policies, auditing is strictly prohibited. Bringing anyone who is not registered in this course to class without notifying the professor may result in an F for the course.
- ♦ **ISC 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.

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- ◆ **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.