

KOR 3415 UA Syllabus (2026 Late Summer)

Korea in Media: K-pop, Film, and Drama. 3 credits. Asynchronous.

Instructor Information

Instructor
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Office Hours
Virtual/phone, by appointment

General Information

Description

South Korea is one of the most media-represented countries in the world. Korean film, music, and television have been exported around the globe to audiences worldwide, and in this course we will use these media works as useful windows for better understanding the country. At the same time, we will also be deconstructing those Korean media works themselves to understand how and why it has come to look and sound the way that it does. In addition to viewing Korean media as a kind of text for analysis, or as a reflection of various elements of Korean society, we will look at media works as corporate property, media as nostalgia, media as products of policy, etc. Taught in English.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

No prior knowledge required for this course.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will

- ✓ learn how to use a variety of resources for academic research
- ✓ have a deeper knowledge of South Korean society and its presentation in media
- ✓ understand that Korean media works as intersections of various forces, such as consumer culture, corporate expansion, government policy, international influence, and fandom
- ✓ evaluate Korean films and dramas as portrayals of the past but also reflections of their present
- ✓ consider how media representations are images that engage with both Korean and global discourses

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

Course Requirements & Grading

Assignment	Date	Weight (Percentage, points, etc)
Discussion postings	Daily	45%
Review Assignments (3)		30%
Film Techniques Quiz		10%
Final oral exam		15%

Description of Graded Components

Discussion postings: One posting to be written after watching the assigned media work and reading the assigned readings. Minimum 400 words. Prompts will be provided. **Postings are due by midnight (EST).**

Each posting will be worth 3 points. Weekly postings do not need formal citations, but please include at least the author name and page number/timestamp if you are citing/quoting from a publication or media work. Failure to cite even just with (author name, page number) will result in deducted points.

Please review the Written Assignment Guidelines on Canvas before submitting any written assignment. **Students are welcome to request feedback on their postings.**

Review essays: The course is comprised of three parts. At the end of each part (see course schedule below), students will be asked to submit a 600 word essay reviewing the materials and readings. Prompts will be provided. Formal citations required.

Film techniques quiz: After Part 2, there will be a film techniques quiz given online. Students will watch a ~1 minute film clip and discuss (1) what film techniques were used therein, and (2) to what effect. There is a Canvas page of Film Techniques that students can consult.

Oral Examination: Students will schedule a 1-on-1 meeting with the instructor for 15 minutes, during which the instructor will conduct an interview reviewing the course's main topics and. Students should expect to discuss in detail the major analytical frameworks covered throughout the course, how they relate to the assigned media works, and present their own observations, thoughts, opinions. Paper-based notes are permitted, but students will not be allowed to type during this examination.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Course Materials

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

Announcements, course readings and other materials will be made available on Canvas.

Course Expectations & Guidelines

Content Warnings

Some of the audiovisual material assigned for the course may feature graphic, violent content. For students who wish to be better prepared for viewing these materials, content warnings will be provided and students are welcome to contact the instructor for further information. However, the viewing of these materials is a **requirement** and substitution will not be an option.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Course Policy on Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- AI-generated written work is prohibited in this course. AI tools include but are not limited to ChatGPT, Claude, Grammarly, etc. Written assignments should be based on the student's own absorption and understanding of the assigned materials and researched information, and therefore communicate the student's thoughts and responses with appropriate citation of sources. Writing that fails to cite its sources is plagiarism.
- Written assignments will be graded on substantiveness. While some students may want to use spell-check or grammar-check tools, mistakes in spelling or grammar will not result in any deductions. Poor writing - that is, lack of sound reasoning, illogical and un-fluid structure, vacuous and cliched language, and absence of substantive reflection - will be penalized.
- When researching information, students are expected to draw from academic, institutional, or journalistic sources for their writing; unreliable sources such as blogs, social media posts, or e-commerce websites are not considered valid sources for factual information, though they can be cited as *examples* of a phenomenon or trend. The student is also wholly responsible for any false citations, AI-hallucinated facts, or incorrect information in the assignment, and the assignment will be graded accordingly for shoddy research.
- Students are required to disclose the instances of AI usage in the brainstorming or research process, clearly highlighting in the assignment how AI was utilized, along with an explanation of why the use of AI was necessary. The explanation does not count toward the final word count of the assignment.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Attendance and/or Participation

Students are expected to come to class fully prepared to participate in class activities. If students engage in activities that indicate their **inattention or non-participation** in the classroom activities (e.g. falling asleep, text-messaging, doing homework, reading irrelevant materials, etc, this will be reflected in their participation score. Students may use their electronic devices in class inasmuch as they use the devices to

reference the readings and engage with the course material. Failure to comply with this will result in lowering their participation and performance grades. Students **are allowed to miss a class** without penalty once.

At the same time, the GT rules and regulations (<http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>) will be honored, which allow the absences due to the participations in institute activities, attendance in funerals, participation in particular religious observation, jury duties, etc.

Students who miss class due to illness or emergency should notify the instructor when they can and then should file an [IAA form](#) with the Registrar's Office. The instructor will be notified by e-mail if the absence is approved.

Collaboration & Group Work

Students should complete all homework assignments and projects by themselves unless otherwise specified in the syllabus/by the instructor.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

Late assignments will be downgraded a letter grade for every day they are late. If you have major conflicts or extenuating circumstances, **please contact the instructor at least 24 hours in advance** to request an extension. Again, students who have an illness or an emergency should notify the instructor when they can and then should file an [IAA form](#) with the Registrar's Office. Lateness due to illness/emergency will not be penalized.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Campus Resources for Students

Georgia Tech offers many resources for students in need including counseling services, personalized research assistance, tutoring, and academic support. Please check out http://ctl.gatech.edu/sites/default/files/documents/campus_resources_students.pdf for more details, and feel free to ask me if you need any assistance in finding these resources.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading, Notes, due dates, and more
Part 1	K-pop and what came before	
6/29	Introduction to the course	Read: Syllabus, course schedule, written assignment guidelines Posting #1: Ungraded. Please post any questions you have about the syllabus and course requirements
6/30	Defining K-pop	Watch: "POP/STARS" by K/DA "Make You Happy" by NiziU "Touch" by Katseye

Date	Topic	Reading, Notes, due dates, and more
		"Soda Pop" from <i>K-pop Demon Hunters</i> Posting #2: For feedback purposes. See discussion prompt
7/1		Read: Roundtable: K-Pop—What's in a name? The Rhizomatic Revolution Review [20130613] Posting #3: See discussion prompt
7/2	Before "K-Culture" (1)	Watch: Dir. Jang Joon-hwan, 1987: <i>When the Day Comes</i> (2017) Read: Modern Korean History timeline (linked in module)
7/3	Institute Holiday	No class
7/6	Before "K-Culture" (2)	Read: Seung-ho Kwon, Joseph Kim, "From censorship to active support: The Korean state and Korea's cultural industries," <i>The Economic and Labor Relations Review</i> 24(4), 2013. Read pp. 524-529. Posting #4: See discussion prompt
7/7	Black Culture and K-pop	Watch: "Challan," by BewhY (2019) "Feel Like" by NAUL (2018) "Spot Interview" with NAUL (2018) Read: Crystal S. Anderson, <i>Soul in Seoul: African American Popular Music and K-pop</i>, Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2020. pp. 3-41. Posting #5: See discussion prompt
7/8	Gender, Sexuality, Commodity	Watch: "Miniskirt," by AOA (2014) "Egotistic" cover by AOA (orig. song by Mamamoo), <i>Queendom</i> Ep. 3 (2019) "Move," by Taemin (2017) Read: Excerpt from Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," chapter from <i>Feminism and Film Theory</i>, New York: Routledge. 1988 Posting #6: See discussion prompt
7/9		Review Essay #1 : See essay writing prompt
Part 2	Media Production in Korea, Korean Media in the World	
7/10	Films, Film Festivals, Circulation	Watch : Dir. Park Chan-wook, <i>Oldboy</i> (2003)
7/13		Read: Chi-Yun Shin, "The Art of Branding: Tartan "Asia Extreme" Films," <i>Horror to the Extreme: Changing Boundaries in Asian Cinema</i>, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009. 85-100. Posting #7: See discussion prompt

Date	Topic	Reading, Notes, due dates, and more
7/14	Film and Visual Analysis	Watch: Dir. Bong Joon-ho, <i>Snowpiercer</i> (2013) Read: Film techniques page Posting #8: Perusall assignment linked in module
7/15	Genre Across Borders	Watch: Dir. Yeon Sang-ho, <i>Train to Busan</i> (2016)
7/16		Read: Kyle Bishop, "Raising the Dead," <i>Journal of Popular Film and Television</i>, 33.4: 196-205 Posting #9: See discussion prompt
7/17	Film Production and Capital	Read: Rebecca Sun, "From "Parasite" to BTS: Meet the Most Important Mogul in South Korean Entertainment," <i>The Hollywood Reporter</i>, Feb 7 2020. Darcy Paquet, <i>New Korean Cinema: Breaking the Waves</i>, London: Wallflower Press, 2009: 44-60 Posting #10: See discussion prompt
7/20	Drama, Image, Place	Watch: Dir. Kim Sung-hoon, <i>Kingdom</i> Ep. 1-2, Netflix (2019) Read: Exploring Joseon Kingdom through Filming Sites
7/21		Read: Youjeong Oh, <i>Pop City: Popular Culture and the Selling of Place</i>, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018. 33-100. (Intro, Chap 1-2) Posting #11: See discussion prompt
7/22	Soft (?) Power (?)	Read: Joseph Nye, "Soft Power and the Korean Wave," in <i>The Korean Wave: Korean Media Go Global</i>, 31-42. Kim Hun Shik, "When public diplomacy faces trade barriers and diplomatic frictions: The case of the Korean wave." <i>Place Branding and Public Diplomacy</i> 14(4), Nov 2018: 234-244. Posting #12: See discussion prompt
7/23	Part 2 Review	Film Techniques Quiz
7/24	Part 2 Review	Review Essay #2: see essay prompt
Part 3	Online and Digital Entertainment	
7/27	Transmedia Storytelling	Read: Webtoon <i>Cheese in the Trap</i>, Ep. 0 (Prologue) - Ep. 10 Keung Yoon Bae, "From underground to the palm of your hand: The spatiality and cultural practice of South Korean webtoons," <i>East Asian Journal of Popular Culture</i> 3(1), April 2017: 73-84 Posting #13: See discussion prompt

Date	Topic	Reading, Notes, due dates, and more
7/28		Watch: tvN drama <i>Cheese in the Trap</i>, Ep. 1 Read: Park Ji Hoon, Lee Jeehyun, Lee Yongsuk, "Do webtoon-based TV dramas represent transmedia storytelling? Industrial factors leading to webtoon-based TV dramas," <i>International Journal of Communication</i> Vol. 13, May 2019: 2179-2198. Posting #14: See discussion prompt
7/29	Gaming, Esports, Infrastructure	Watch: <i>Eyes on Worlds</i> Ep. 3-4, LoL Esports Youtube Channel (2017) <i>OGN 2018 LCK Summer Split Opening Title (LoL Champions)</i>, OGN Youtube channel (2018) <i>Phoenix (ft. Cailin Russo and Chrissy Costanza), Worlds 2019 - League of Legends</i>, League of Legends Youtube channel (2019) Read: Keung Yoon Bae, "Visualizing the Invisible," in ed. Youna Kim, <i>Introducing Korean Popular Culture</i>, Routledge, 2023. Posting #15: See discussion prompt
7/30	Platform and Media, Platform as Media	Watch: "Cheer Up" by TWICE "What is Love" by TWICE "Likey" by TWICE Read: excerpt from Marshall McLuhan, <i>Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man</i>, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964. Posting #16: See discussion prompt
7/31	Part 3 Review	Read: Pick one of the articles linked in the review module. Review Essay #3: See essay prompt Students should also schedule their final oral examination slot
8/3 - 8/5	Final oral examinations	Final grades are not made available on the registrar until the full summer term is over. However, your grades should be available to view in Canvas before then, as soon as grading is complete.