Discover Korea: Korean Culture & History
Prof. Youngah GUAHK, IN-EAST School of Advanced Studies,
University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

SHORT COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed as an introductory overview of Korean history, culture and society from ancient times to the present. It will also help students, who do not have prior knowledge, to understand the cultural norms, values and attitudes of contemporary Korean society. The course is divided into three themes: History & Politics, Culture & Society and Contemporary Issues. The ‘History & Politics’ theme will explore Korean ancient and modern history, with a focus not only Korean history, but also developments in East Asia including China and Japan related to the Korean peninsula. In this context, the Korean political system will also be discussed, including attention to Korean authoritarianism, democratic movements, and citizens’ participation. The second theme will focus on the current ‘Culture & Society’ issues such as cultural norms and values, language, religion and interpersonal relations in Korean society. In the final week, the third theme on contemporary Korean pop culture will include, for example, discussion of current music, TV dramas, and movies in Korea. In this course, we will also discuss Korea's global synergy in the society and politics for the future. The class lectures will be supplemented with films, video clips, slides and other visual materials.

READING MATERIALS
- No prior reading is required.
- Other reading materials will be distributed during the course, if they are needed.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
This course aims primarily to provide a basic understanding of Korean history, culture and society for foreign students and therefore no previous knowledge is required. However, all students are expected to participate actively throughout the course and those who do not attend and participate risk failing to course. This course will be evaluated based on a group project.

1. Group project proposal (30%)
2. Group final presentation (50%)
3. Active participation (20%)
4. The presentation attendance is mandatory for everyone

SKKU regulations require students to attend at least 80% of all classes.

COURSE SCHEDULE

– WEEK I –

Tuesday (27 June)
Course Introduction & the beginning

Wednesday (28 June)
Korean ancient & medieval history

Thursday (29 June)
Korean modern history
Friday (30 June)
Republic of Korea since 1948

– WEEK II –

Monday (3 July)
Contemporary Korean politics

Tuesday (4 July)
Culture: Code & Communication 1

Wednesday (5 July)
Culture: Code & Communication 2

Thursday (6 July)
Culture: Code & Communication 3

Friday (7 July)
Religions in Korea

– WEEK III –

Monday (10 July)
Economic development of Korea

Tuesday (11 July)
Modern Korean Culture 1

Wednesday (12 July)
Modern Korean Culture 2

Thursday (13 July)
Final assessment

Friday (14 July)
Final assessment

– WEEK III –

Monday (17 July)
Final assessment