

01:574:350 / 16:217:550 North Korea in the Socialist & Post-Socialist Worlds

Spring 2017
TTH 2:50-4:10 PM
Murray 211

Professor Kim
Email: suzykim@rci.rutgers.edu
Office: Scott 336
Office Hours: T 4:15-6:00 PM & by appointment

Course Description

Using both historical and contemporary sources including short stories and films, this course examines the social, political, economic, and cultural developments in North Korea before and after the social revolution (1945-1950) that so radically transformed its society. How did the revolution affect gender relations and the status of women, the economy, domestic and international politics, cultural production, and other aspects of everyday life? Why does North Korea insist on self-reliance even while espousing Third World internationalism? What is “our style” socialism when most other socialist states have either disappeared or adopted market reforms? By situating North Korea within the context of regional and global developments, including the history of colonialism, modernity, and socialism, the course seeks to understand North Korea’s past, current predicaments, and its future prospects.

Course Goals

- Understand North Korean history, politics, culture, and society, leading to critical analyses of contemporary issues surrounding the region.
- Examine key historical concepts such as colonialism, revolution, socialism, and modernity.
- Read and interpret texts as historical sources for the past and the present, critically assessing their reliability and credibility.
- Write clearly and concisely, synthesizing multiple texts, to make persuasive and insightful arguments.

Course Structure

Classes will include combinations of lectures, discussions, and student presentations. Each week, students are responsible for submitting one weekly written response no later than noon the day of class (Tuesday or Thursday), which should lay out a critical understanding and analysis of the readings, and 1 or 2 questions to bring up for class discussion. Students are also required to make one oral presentation on an aspect of North Korea that is relevant to understanding the issues raised by the week’s readings.

Requirements & Grade Distribution (based on a maximum of 100 points)

Class Attendance & Participation 10 Points
Oral Presentation 10 Points
Weekly Responses 25 Points
Mid-term Paper (5-6 double-spaced pages, 12 pt font) 25 Points
Final Paper (6-8 double-spaced pages, 12 pt font) 30 Points

For graduate students, the paper lengths are amended as follows:
Mid-term Paper (6-8 double-spaced pages, 12 pt) 25 Points
Final Paper (8-10 double-spaced pages, 12 pt) 30 Points