

Beginning Korean

KORE-1003-1503 (3 credits)

South Korea: Society & Culture

South Korea: International Relations and Security

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Course Description

This course includes an introduction to Korean: both spoken language and the written Hangul script. Students will learn grammatical rules, vocabulary, structure, and methods of forming sentences. Students will use Korean to express themselves in daily life, and to develop a deeper understanding of Korean culture through different applications of the language.

Language Levels

Students are placed into appropriate language course levels based on oral proficiency interviews and written exams (placement tests) conducted during orientation in Korea.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Read and write the Hangul alphabet
- Formally introduce others and use appropriate leave-taking expressions;
- Share basic information about themselves and other people.
- Use common vocabulary such as weather, time, numbers, kinship terms, dates, and locations in conversation.

Languages of Instruction

Korean; English

Instructional Methods

This course is designed around the principle that learning is an active, holistic process that extends well beyond the classroom. Seminars introduce key concepts and interpretive frameworks that are then examined, complicated, and enriched through direct engagement with people, places, and contexts — field visits, expert briefings, guided observation, and community-based learning. Field-based learning is integrated into course design rather than treated as enrichment: faculty prepare students for each engagement, guide interpretation on location, and facilitate the reflection that connects experience to course themes. Students move through cycles of experience, observation, and analysis, progressively taking greater ownership of their own inquiry. This process is not always linear, and that is by design —

developing the capacity to learn from unpredictable, context-dependent situations is itself a transferable skill and a foundation for lifelong learning.

Required Texts

Students are responsible for completing all required readings. Students should be prepared to discuss these in class. Readings enable students to challenge and engage lecturers, to generate questions for class discussions, and to frame their daily experiences outside of class.

Cho, Y., Schulz, C., Sohn, H.-M., & Sohn, S.-O. (2020). *Integrated Korean 1*. University of Hawaii Press.

Be sure to use accompanying audio resources at https://klearntextbook.com/category/f_media/a_audio/.

Course Schedule

**Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.*

Week 1

Learning Goals:

- Be introduced to the Hangul script
- Start recognizing the letters of the Hangul alphabet in different positions within words;
- Greet and be greeted in a culturally appropriate way;
- Learn and use common daily expressions

Textbook:

- Introduction, especially "Hangul and Pronunciation", p. 16-40 and "Useful Classroom Expressions" p. 40
- Lesson 1: Greetings

Conversation Practice:

- Greet your classmates and teacher, with title/honorific as needed.
- Introduce yourself to your classmate. Ask for their year in school.

Week 2

Learning Goals:

- Continue Hangul practice each week.
- Introduce a friend to someone else.
- Ask the location of people and objects.
- Make basic, polite requests and inquiries using proper formality based on age, kinship, social status.

Textbook:

- Lesson 2: The University Campus

Conversation Practice:

- Create your own business card. Introduce yourself to your classmates, exchanging business cards with each other.
- Role play: It's your first week in Seoul. On campus, you meet a friendly student, Minji. She offers to help you get around campus. Ask Minji four questions using the vocabulary you have learned so far. (Ex: Where is the library? Where is the cafeteria? How is the food?)

Week 3

Learning Goals:

- Ask other people basic questions about themselves.
- State your major, and ask someone else's.
- Describe others simply with kinship terms and common adjectives.

Textbook:

- Lesson 3: Korean Language Class

Conversation Practice:

- Break into pairs. Ask your partner questions about themselves, i.e., hometown, family, major. Switch.
 - Note: if you do not want to use personal details, fictional friends may be described instead.
- Role play: Minji introduces you to her parents. Introduce yourself to them. Note how this may differ from introductions to Minji and other peers.

Week 4

Learning Goals:

- Ask and tell the time.
- Ask and indicate the quantity of something.
- Count from 1-100. Begin to practice larger numbers.
- Ask where others are going.

Textbook:

- Lesson 4: At School

Conversation Practice:

- Role play: you run into another new Korean friend on campus. You are still trying to figure out where everything is. Ask him for detailed questions about where he's going: to which class? In which building? At what time? After completing the dialogue, switch roles with your partner.
- Look up the closest local movie theater. Pick two movies playing this weekend and tell your practice partner at what time the showings are.

Week 5

Midterm Assessment

Textbook:

- Review Week – no new material this week.

Conversation Practice:

- Review textbook dialogues from the past few weeks. Continue practicing Hangul writing.
- Example writing practice: you've heard that your apartment manager wants to meet the new international students in the building. Write them a 1-2 paragraph note to introduce yourself. Mention 6 key details about yourself based on what you have learned so far.

Week 6

Learning Goals:

- State how long an activity takes.
- Describe your daily activities.
- State where someone or something is within the districts of Seoul.
- Name different types of housing (on/off campus, apartment/house, etc.)

Textbook:

- Lesson 5

Conversation Practice:

- Role play: you and your friend are chatting about your activities. You'd like to try something new in the evenings after class. Ask your friend questions about what they usually do each day, and at what time those activities happen.
- Read a notice for available housing in Seoul. Take note of all the details you can and describe the housing to your classmate. If possible, find two different ones to compare and contrast.

Week 7

Learning Goals:

- Make and receive phone calls.
- Describe your weekend plans, likes, and dislikes.
- Express dates in proper format (year-month-day).

Textbook:

- Lesson 6: The Weekend

Conversation Practice:

- Small group activity (Textbook p. 229). You are organizing a birthday party. Break into groups of 3-4 and decide whose birthday it is, the date/time/place of the party, and which activities you will do. Group members should give opinions on the activities they (or the birthday person) do or do not like.

Week 8

Learning Goals:

- Ask and answer questions about your or someone else's background.
- Talk about the weather.
- Ask for and give directions.

Textbook:

- Lesson 7: In Seoul

Conversation Practice:

- Role play: You are going to a friend's birthday party (perhaps the one planned last week). It's in a part of the city you haven't been to before and you need to navigate a couple of Seoul subway lines to get there. On your way, ask someone for directions to confirm you are on the right track. Which line(s) do you take? Where do you turn to get to the subway entrance?
- Weather report: in pairs, choose a city in Korea or anywhere in the world and deliver a short weather statement in Korean.

Week 9

Review Week – no new material. Prepare for final exam.

Assignments and Evaluation

Assignment Descriptions and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. In addition to this, students are required to attend class and will be graded on attendance and daily participation (absences must be cleared with the instructor ahead of time). Students are also expected to fully participate in all activities.

Assessment:

- Attendance and participation - 10%
- Weekly assignments - 40%
- Midterm - 20%
- Final exam - 30%

Grading Criteria:

All grades assigned will take into account the students' special circumstances and challenges they face as foreign students. An "A" grade for an assignment entails superior (not just "very good") performance in terms of not only technical correctness, but also in structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logic of writing, and consistency.

Participation is assessed based on consistent, informed engagement in class sessions, simulation activities, and experiential learning. This includes preparation for discussions, constructive collaboration within teams, responsiveness during simulations, and professional conduct during site visits and guest engagements. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully, listen actively, and engage respectfully with peers and external partners throughout the course.

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64	F

Note on Attendance and Participation:

Consistent participation in classes, site visits, and required program activities is essential to the academic experience. Students are expected to participate fully and may not opt out of required components, as these activities are integral to course learning and collective discussion. If circumstances such as illness affect attendance, students must communicate promptly with the Center Director or a designated staff member. Absences may affect academic performance and course grades, and repeated or unexcused absences may result in additional academic or programmatic consequences. When absences are unavoidable, alternative academic work may be required.

Program Expectations

To support a respectful, engaging, and academically rigorous learning environment, students are expected to approach this program with professionalism, preparation, and openness. Because this is an intensive, field-based program, individual conduct directly shapes the quality of the shared academic experience.

- **Learning Community:** Students are expected to engage respectfully with differing perspectives, including those of classmates, guest speakers, and local partners. Agreement is not required, but attentive listening, intellectual openness, and respectful dialogue are essential.
- **Content Considerations:** Course materials and activities may engage sensitive or challenging topics. The classroom is a space for thoughtful, respectful engagement with complex ideas. When possible, faculty will flag particularly intense content in advance. Students who find that course content affects their ability to participate or keep up with coursework are encouraged to communicate with faculty and seek appropriate support.

- **Participation and Engagement:** Students are expected to come prepared and to engage actively in classes, discussions, and site-based learning. This includes contributing thoughtfully to discussion, asking questions, and engaging respectfully with faculty, peers, and guest speakers. Meaningful participation supports collective learning and is an essential part of the program experience.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Because this is a multi-country, field-based program, schedules and activities may change in response to local conditions or logistical realities. Students are expected to approach such adjustments with flexibility and professionalism. Adaptability is considered part of meaningful engagement in the program.
- **Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to complete all work honestly and ethically, in accordance with academic integrity standards outlined in course and program policies.
- **Managing Academic Work:** Students are responsible for maintaining reliable access to their academic work by keeping multiple copies using secure storage methods (e.g., cloud-based platforms or the learning management system). Technical issues such as lost files or device failures do not excuse late or missing work.
- **Personal Technology Use:** Personal devices may be used for note-taking and course-related activities. Off-task use is not acceptable, particularly during discussions, site visits, or guest presentations, as it detracts from collective engagement.
- **Course Communication:** Course materials, assignments, and updates will be posted on Canvas. While the course calendar provides a general structure, adjustments may occur based on program flow or site-based learning opportunities. Students are responsible for checking the course site regularly and communicating promptly about access issues.
- **Recording Policy:** To support open discussion, recording of classes or program activities is not permitted without prior written approval from the instructor. Approved recordings are for personal academic use only. Documented academic accommodations may supersede this policy.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Accessibility Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.

Credit Hours: SIT adheres to the standard that 1 credit hour equals no less than 45 hours of coursework. The calculation is based on the standard 50-minute academic hour. The number of credits each course carries determines how many total hours each course involves in a semester. Of the 45-hours for 1-credit hour, one third is designated for direct faculty instruction. Direct faculty instruction includes all learning activities led by the faculty whether in the classroom or in the field — lectures, guest speakers, site visits, hands-on field activities, etc.

Note on Late Assignments: Because this program integrates classroom learning with site visits and debriefs, assignments are designed to build on one another and connect directly to learning on location. *Timely submission is therefore important for maintaining continuity and full participation in the academic experience.* Extensions may be granted *in limited circumstances and on a case-by-case basis* with approval from the Program Director or a designated staff member. Requests should be made in writing as early as possible and no later than 12 hours before the posted due date. Students are expected to communicate proactively if challenges arise. Work submitted after an approved extension period may receive a reduced or failing grade, depending on the circumstances.

Note on the Use of Generative AI Tools: In this course, students may use generative AI tools only in ways that support their own intellectual work. Acceptable uses may include brainstorming questions, organizing notes, clarifying concepts, or supporting revision at the sentence or structure level. Students may not use AI tools to generate substantive analysis, strategic arguments, written sections, or oral responses that are presented as their own work. Because assignments emphasize applied reasoning, comparative judgment, and place-based analysis, students are expected to remain the primary source of ideas, interpretation, and decision-making.

Expectations for AI use may vary by assignment and will be discussed explicitly with faculty. In some cases, students and faculty may collaboratively establish guidelines for appropriate AI use for a particular task. Students are responsible for following the agreed-upon expectations and for seeking clarification if boundaries are unclear.

When generative AI tools are used in the preparation of an assignment, students are expected to acknowledge their use clearly and transparently, noting the tool used and the nature of its contribution (e.g., brainstorming, outlining, or language revision). This acknowledgment supports academic transparency and does not, on its own, imply inappropriate use. Policies on AI use may differ across courses and instructors within the program. Students should attend carefully to course-specific guidance and understand that responsible AI use is defined at the course level.

Sample AI Acknowledgment Statement: I used [tool name] for [purpose, e.g., brainstorming or sentence-level revision]. All analysis, interpretation, and conclusions are my own.