

Course Syllabus

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GEA3704: People, Place, and Environment of East Asia (Section RVAA 18122)



Dr. Young Rae Choi

Instructor Information

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- **Office:** SIPA 308
- **Zoom Office Hours:** Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 pm or by Appointment
- **Zoom Meeting ID:** 819 8096 9766
- **Zoom Meeting Direct Link** [↗](https://fiu.zoom.us/j/81980969766)
(<https://fiu.zoom.us/j/81980969766>)
- **Instructor Biography** [↗](https://sipa.fiu.edu/people/faculty/global-and-sociocultural-studies/choi.young.html)
(<https://sipa.fiu.edu/people/faculty/global-and-sociocultural-studies/choi.young.html>)


Course Time Zone | Eastern Standard Time (EST).
Course due dates are according to this time zone.

General Information

Course Description and Purpose

Using critical geography perspectives, this course explores the social, economic, cultural, and geopolitical issues that shape East Asia today. While being a highly porous and fluid concept, East Asian countries form a world region for their geographical proximity as well as historical, ethnic, and cultural connections. In this course, with a particular focus on China, South Korea, and Japan, students will

explore and engage with various historical and contemporary issues through readings, case studies, discussions, and debates. Critical geography is concerned about the relations between space and society in terms of how knowledge-power is produced and enacted and is inevitably drawn into the questions of differences, unevenness, and inequality. With this in mind, students will learn and apply key theoretical lenses in geography, including modernity, uneven development, developmental state, (post)-colonialism, nationalism, neoliberalism, transnationalism, and geopolitics.

This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts towards your FIU Global Learning graduation requirement. GEA 3704 is designed to “provide an overview of East Asia from a critical geographic perspective. Students will explore various historical and contemporary issues on the region with geographic lenses and themes.” For more information on the Global Learning Initiatives and the Global Learning Graduation Medallion, visit <http://goglobal.fiu.edu>  (<http://goglobal.fiu.edu>).

- *This is a fully online Spring A course with no scheduled meetings EXCEPT the COIL meeting with Sophia U students on January 14. The course runs from January 6 to February 23. You are more than welcome to attend office hours if you have any questions about the class material.*

Global Learning Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes

1. *Global Awareness:* Students will identify current issues of each country in East Asia and explain their interconnectivity and interrelatedness on the local, national, and global levels to other parts of the world.
2. *Global Perspective:* Students will apply key geographic lenses to engage in and analyze major debates and transformations taking place in East Asia today.
3. *Global Engagement:* Students will demonstrate willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem-solving as it relates to the historical, political-economic, and cultural processes shaping the East Asian region.

Important Information

Policies

Before starting this course, please review the following sections on the [Policies](https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/217593/pages/policies-2) (<https://fiu.instructure.com/courses/217593/pages/policies-2>) page.

- University Policies
- Online Etiquette
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Required Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
- Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies

- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Academic Misconduct
- Copyright Statement
- Inclusivity Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Fair Use Policy

Course Policies


Communication

Announcements will be posted on Canvas, which will also be automatically sent to your FIU email address. If you have any questions or concerns, **send me an email (raechoi@fiu.edu)** or use the message function on Canvas. I will respond to all correspondences within a day or two. Be polite and responsible when you communicate with your professor, TA, and classmates.

Late submission

Late work will be accepted up to **20 days with the penalty of -5%/day**. All assignments must be submitted by the end date of the course.

Academic misconduct

Do not cheat or act dishonestly in order to gain an advantage. Any more-than-a-sentence-long texts directly copied and pasted from external sources (i.e. not from your brain) are considered plagiarism, which is a serious academic offense that I must report to the FIU Academic Integrity Committee. Using AI (e.g., Chat GPT) for research is allowed but you should never copy and paste the texts generated by AI for written assignments, which will also be considered plagiarism. To avoid this, **always paraphrase in your own words. If you need to cite others' words, use quotation marks and add reference(s). Both in-text and full citations are required.** Visit <https://library.fiu.edu/plagiarism>  (<https://library.fiu.edu/plagiarism>) for more resources.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Textbook and Course Resources

This class does not have a required textbook. Readings for each week will be announced and posted on Canvas in advance.

Readings for this class (subject to change):

Jones, R. (2022). *The Japanese Economy: Strategies to Cope with a Shrinking and Ageing Population*. Routledge.

Manabe, N. (2015). *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Protest Music After Fukushima*. Oxford University Press.

Robinson, Michael Edson. (2007). *Korea's twentieth-century odyssey*. University of Hawaii Press.

Shin, H. (2022). *North Korean Defectors in Diaspora: Identities, Mobilities, and Resettlements*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Sze, Julie. (2015). *Fantasy islands: Chinese dreams and ecological fears in an age of climate crisis*. Univ of California Press.

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Ainslie, M. J. 2016. K-dramas across Thailand: Constructions of Koreanness and Thainess by contemporary Thai consumers. *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 14 (7).

Bartal, O. (2016). From Hiroshima to Fukushima: Comics and Animation as Subversive Agents of Memory in Japan. *Interdisciplinary Handbook of Trauma and Culture* (pp. 101–115).

Golley, J. (2016). China's environmental challenges: under the dome with no way out? *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Volume 14, Issue 22, Number 3.

Otmazgin, N. 2016. A New Cultural Geography of East Asia: Imagining A'Region'through Popular Culture. *The Asia-Pacific Journal| Japan Focus* Volume 14 (7).

Pow, C. P. (2018). Building a Harmonious Society through Greening: Ecological Civilization and Aesthetic Governmentality in China. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 108(3), 864–883.

Shin, H. B., & Kim, S. H. (2016). The developmental state, speculative urbanisation and the politics of displacement in gentrifying Seoul. *Urban Studies*, 53(3), 540-559.

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World Bank. (1993). *The East Asian Miracle*. World Bank Policy Research Report, 1, 1–347.

World Bank and The Development Research Center of the State Council, P. R. China. (2014). *Urban China: Toward Efficient, Inclusive, and Sustainable Urbanization*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

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Gregory, D., Johnston, R., Pratt, G., Watts, M., & Whatmore, S. (Eds.). (2011). *The dictionary of human geography*. John Wiley & Sons.

Marston, S. A., Knox, P. L., & Liverman, D. M. (2016). *World regions in global context: Peoples, places, and environments* (6th ed.). Prentice Hall.

Additional readings are mandatory unless labeled as "optional" and will be announced in advance. Optional readings are for your self-study. I don't use them for evaluation.

Other useful resources

Regional News media:

South China Morning Post <https://www.scmp.com/> ↗ (<https://www.scmp.com/>)

The Korea Herald <http://www.koreaherald.com/> ↗ (<http://www.koreaherald.com/>)

NHK World-Japan <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/> ↗
(<https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/>)

The Asia-Pacific Journal Japan Focus <http://apjff.org/> ↗ (<http://apjff.org/>)

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US & Global News media:

NPR <http://www.npr.org/sections/news> ↗ (<https://www.npr.org/sections/news/>) (Also, listen to NPR Radio on WLRN 91.3 FM)

New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com> ↗ (<http://www.nytimes.com/>) (Go to www.nytimes.com/FIU ↗ (<http://www.nytimes.com/FIU>) for free one-year access)

The Conversation <https://theconversation.com/us> ↗ (<https://theconversation.com/us/>)

Le Monde Diplomatique <https://mondediplo.com> ↗ (<https://mondediplo.com/>)

BBC News <http://news.bbc.co.uk> ↗ (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>)

Al Jazeera <https://www.aljazeera.com> ↗ (<https://www.aljazeera.com/>)

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World Data:

Our World in Data (Oxford) <https://ourworldindata.org> ↗ (<https://ourworldindata.org/>)

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Software:

Google Earth: <http://www.google.com/earth/index.html> ↗ (<http://www.google.com/earth/index.html/>)

Google Maps: <https://maps.google.com/maps/myplaces> ↗ (<https://maps.google.com/maps/myplaces/>)


QGIS: <http://www.qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html> ↗
(<http://www.qgis.org/en/site/forusers/download.html/>)

Microsoft PowerPoint & Word (available for free to all FIU students)


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Film/documentary:

- Rachel Carson Council's list of environmental film festivals:
<https://rachelcarsoncouncil.org/environmental-film-festivals/> ↗
(<https://rachelcarsoncouncil.org/environmental-film-festivals/>)

- Culture unplugged: <http://www.cultureunplugged.com/festival/films.php#view=thumb> 
(<http://www.cultureunplugged.com/festival/films.php#view=thumb>)

Center for Excellence in Writing

As an upper-level course in geography, you will be required to make your arguments clearly and coherently. The FIU Center for Excellence in Writing offers various services that will help improve your writing skills. If you feel you need assistance, visit their [website](http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/)  (<http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/>) to make an appointment.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the getting started page** located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **log in** to the course at least 1 time per week;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified;
- **respond** to **emails** within 5 days;
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course at least 2 times per week;
- respond to questions within 2 days;
- respond to other emails within 3 days;
- grade assignments within 10 days of the assignment deadline.

Course structure

Canvas: This course uses Canvas as a course webpage. All the readings, lecture slides, class activities, assignment instructions, the latest version of the syllabus, and other announcements will be posted here. If you experience problems with accessing Canvas, contact ETS in the Green Library for support (GL 152a).

Class material: You must read all the mandatory readings. Links to these materials will be available on Canvas in advance. Additional readings will complement, not repeat, the lectures.

Assignments/Discussions & Grading

Grade Table

Graded Item	No.	%	Total (%)	Due
Weekly assignments	7	6	42%	Every Sunday 11:59 PM
Class activities	9	6	54%	Every Sunday 11:59 PM
COIL Zoom meeting attendance	1	4	4%	Jan. 14 7:30-9:30 PM

1. *Weekly assignments:* For each module, you will write a concise, specific, and coherent essay that integrates the main arguments of the readings and videos. The essay should contain your critical opinion/argument/reflection on the topic of the week. Specific prompts will be given in advance regarding how to structure each week's assignments. The required readings and videos for each week will be announced and posted in advance on Canvas. Assignments are due by the end of the respective module week (Sundays by 11:59 PM).

- *Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.*

2. *Class activities:* Class activities consist of individual assignments of various types (e.g., virtual fieldwork, media analysis, Google worksheet activity, etc.). Activities (except the ones related to COIL meetings) are also due by the end of the respective module week (Sundays by 11:59 PM).

3. *COIL Zoom meeting attendance:* There is one COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) synchronous Zoom meeting with students from Sophia University in Japan. Students are required to attend the meeting and complete one pre-meeting activity and one post-meeting class activity (see their

due dates on Course Calendar). If you cannot attend the synchronous meeting, contact me in advance to arrange an alternative assignment.

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less