

SM5355: KOREAN CINEMA

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Korean Cinema

Subject Code

SM - School of Creative Media

Course Number

5355

Academic Unit

School of Creative Media (SM)

College/School

School of Creative Media (SM)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

In Korean Cinema, students will explore the history and theory of South Korean cinema through the framework of national/transnational cinema discourse, auteur/genre theory, globalization, the North/South division system, and the problem

of nation/state which evokes the question of identity. In this chronologically structured module, each student will learn the cinema of Korea through a set of key films, directors, and dominant genres by lectures, screenings, and intensive and engaging discussions throughout the semester. Such critically and historically important films as *The Aimless Bullet*, *The Housemaid*, *Shiri*, *Peppermint Candy*, *Oldboy*, and *Parasite* will be screened. Through readings, discussions, in-class screenings, and presentations, our goal is to develop a broad understanding of Korean cinema exploring their wide-ranging impact and asking how they participate in the transnational production and circulation of culture, ideology, modernity, politics, and tradition in both regional and international contexts

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	To develop analytical tools for understanding South Korea's film cultures and industry	15	x	x	
2	To describe a greater cultural, historical, and industrial understandings of cultural and creative industries in South Korea	15	x	x	
3	To formulate research questions and evaluate the appropriateness of relevant theoretical and methodological approaches	15	x	x	x
4	To be able to advance structured arguments about South Korea, utilizing academic discourse, through several course assignments	20	x	x	x
5	To identify and critically examine the primary texts and contexts of cinema and creative/cultural industries in South Korea, and to compose his/her own credible, original research paper	35	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture	The organization of the module is broadly historical/theoretical and case-specific/practical, outlining overall trends illustrated by clear examples. A 90-minute lecture will follow each week's assigned viewing of a specific film. The lecture will set up the class for discussing themes and theories relating to the film.	1, 3, 4	
2	Discussion	This module will include a series of in-depth, rigorous, and engaging discussions. For dynamic and engaging in-class discussions, challenging and thought-provoking questions will continuously be given to the students each week in tandem with in-class presentations and writing duties.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
3	Group Project	Each student is expected to work with their group member to create a video essay as a collaborative media art project. This video should center around the group discussing relevant themes, terms, theories, and concepts outlined in class.	3, 4, 5	
4	Individual Research Paper	Each student is expected to conduct further research on the subject and write a research paper at the end of the semester. With the readings, lectures, intensive and engaging discussions, each student should be able to compose his/her own credible, original research paper.	3, 4, 5	

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Participation and Attendance	1, 2	10	Regular attendance in lectures and tutorials is expected. Students are also expected to do required readings and participate in class discussion.	No
2	Research Paper	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	Students are required to write a research paper engaging the issues discussed during the semester of Korean cinema studies.	No
3	Midterm Quiz	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	A closed-book quiz test. No books, lecture notes, handouts or photocopies are permitted into the venue. Each student will be tested how he/she understands the assigned readings, lectures, and films shown in the class.	No
4	Presentation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	Each student is expected to work with their group member to deliver a presentation and also submit a video essay as a collaborative project.	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

Participation and Attendance (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

This module will include a series of in-depth, rigorous, and engaging discussions. For dynamic and engaging in-class discussions, challenging and thought-provoking questions will continuously be given to the students each week.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Active class engagement, pose excellent questions in class, strong ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Positive listening, interpret others' views with an open mind and ready to negotiate opinions and views.
- Prepared well for class, showcase in-depth familiarity and understanding of course materials.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- High class engagement, pose good questions in class, show ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Positive listening, interpret others' views constructively.
- Prepared for class, showcase adequate familiarity and understanding of course materials.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Satisfactory class engagement, pose questions in class, show average level ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Satisfactory level of participation in class discussions.
- Rarely prepared for class, average level of familiarity with or understanding of course materials.

Marginal

(D)

- Low class engagement, rarely pose questions in class, rarely show ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Rarely participate in class discussions.
- Almost always unprepared for class, little sign of familiarity with or understanding of course materials.

Failure

(F)

- Poor class engagement, pose no question in class, show no ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Not participate in class discussions.
- Unprepared for class, no sign of familiarity with or understanding of course materials.

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Each student is expected to conduct further research on the subject and write a research paper at the end of the semester. With the readings, lectures, intensive and engaging discussions, each student should be able to compose his/her own credible, original research paper.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Excellent level of analytical ability, demonstrates an optimal level of conceptual understanding and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Excellent level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates an optimal level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Excellent level of use of language and diction, demonstrates an optimal level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Good level of analytical ability, demonstrates a sufficient level of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Good level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a sufficient level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Good level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a sufficient level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Satisfactory level of analytical ability, demonstrates an average level of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Satisfactory level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates an average level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Satisfactory level of use of language and diction, demonstrates an average level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Marginal

(D)

- Attempts in exercising analytical ability, demonstrates a rudimentary level of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Attempts in research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a rudimentary level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Attempts in the use of language and diction, demonstrates a rudimentary level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Failure

(F)

- Poor level of analytical ability, demonstrates a lack of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Poor level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a lack of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Poor level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a lack of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Assessment Task

Midterm Quiz (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

The quiz test will assess each student's knowledge of the material covered up to the point. Content of this test will be drawn from class lectures and discussions, readings, and audio-visual materials

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Demonstrate an exemplary cognizance of, and awareness of and insight into the subject
- Demonstrate an exemplary analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Exemplary understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- More than sufficient apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Demonstrate of a sufficient cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Demonstrate a sufficient analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Sufficient understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- Sufficient apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Demonstrate an average cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Demonstrate an average analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Average understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- Some apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Marginal

(D)

- Demonstrate a rudimentary cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Rudimentary understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- Demonstrate a rudimentary analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Limited apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Failure

(F)

- Demonstrate a total lack of cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Lack of analysis; no indication of any concepts or theories
- No understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts

Assessment Task

Group Presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Each student is expected to work with their group member to deliver a presentation and also submit a video essay as a collaborative project.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Describe and sum up the examined phenomenon precisely, concisely, and clearly.
- Showcase that a lot of research has conducted. The discussion of the examined phenomenon closely connects with the content of the course.
- Have in-depth analysis and insights, arguments are strongly supported via rich examples.
- Exemplary use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Exemplary deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Describe the examined phenomenon precisely, and clearly.

- Showcase that adequate research has conducted. The discussion of the examined phenomenon fairly connects with the content of the course.
- Have in-depth analysis, arguments are adequately supported via certain examples.
- Good use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Good deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Satisfactory description of the examined phenomenon, with tautology.
- Showcase that some research has conducted. The discussion of the examined phenomenon has some connection with the content of the course.
- Have fair analysis and arguments stated.
- Adequate use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Adequate deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Marginal

(D)

- Fair description of the examined phenomenon yet with some incorrect information.
- The discussion of the examined phenomenon has some connection with the content of the course.
- Have some analysis and point of views.
- Limited use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Some deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Failure

(F)

- Poor description of the examined phenomenon.
- The discussion has no connection with the content of the course.
- No analysis and viewpoints.
- No use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. No deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Assessment Task

Participation and Attendance (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

This module will include a series of in-depth, rigorous, and engaging discussions. For dynamic and engaging in-class discussions, challenging and thought-provoking questions will continuously be given to the students each week.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Active class engagement, pose excellent questions in class, strong ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Positive listening, interpret others' views with an open mind and ready to negotiate opinions and views.
- Prepared well for class, showcase in-depth familiarity and understanding of course materials.

Good

(B+, B)

- High class engagement, pose good questions in class, show ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Positive listening, interpret others' views constructively.
- Prepared for class, showcase adequate familiarity and understanding of course materials

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Low class engagement, rarely pose questions in class, rarely show ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Rarely participate in class discussions.
- Almost always unprepared for class, little sign of familiarity with or understanding of course materials.

Failure

(F)

- Poor class engagement, pose no question in class, show no ability to stimulate class discussion and comment on others' points.
- Not participate in class discussions.
- Unprepared for class, no sign of familiarity with or understanding of course materials.

Assessment Task

Research Paper (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Each student is expected to conduct further research on the subject and write a research paper at the end of the semester. With the readings, lectures, intensive and engaging discussions, each student should be able to compose his/her own credible, original research paper.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Excellent level of analytical ability, demonstrates an optimal level of conceptual understanding and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Excellent level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates an optimal level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Excellent level of use of language and diction, demonstrates an optimal level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Good

(B+, B)

- Good level of analytical ability, demonstrates a sufficient level of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Good level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a sufficient level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Good level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a sufficient level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Attempts in exercising analytical ability, demonstrates a rudimentary level of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.
- Attempts in research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a rudimentary level of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
- Attempts in the use of language and diction, demonstrates a rudimentary level of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.

Failure

(F)

- Poor level of analytical ability, demonstrates a lack of conceptual understanding, and ability to make sophisticated, coherent and warranted conceptual distinctions.

- Poor level of research activity and quality of activity, demonstrates a lack of engagement with a wide range of relevant research resources, and aptitude for making creative and/or rational and sophisticated thinking in locating, addressing or applying relevant information and ideas.
 - Poor level of use of language and diction, demonstrates a lack of the choice and use of words and phrases, vocabulary, fluency, terminology, idiom, style, or expression.
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Assessment Task

Midterm Quiz (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

The quiz test will assess each student's knowledge of the material covered up to the point. Content of this test will be drawn from class lectures and discussions, readings, and audio-visual materials

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Demonstrate an exemplary cognizance of, and awareness of and insight into the subject
- Demonstrate an exemplary analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Exemplary understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- More than sufficient apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Good

(B+, B)

- Demonstrate of a sufficient cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Demonstrate a sufficient analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Sufficient understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- Sufficient apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Demonstrate a rudimentary cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
- Rudimentary understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
- Demonstrate a rudimentary analysis by applying concepts and theories
- Limited apposite delineation, illustration or rendition

Failure

(F)

- Demonstrate a total lack of cognizance of, and awareness of the subject
 - Lack of analysis; no indication of any concepts or theories
 - No understanding of the relationship between content and aesthetic form/language or artifacts
-

Assessment Task

Group Presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Each student is expected to work with their group member to deliver a presentation and also submit a video essay as a collaborative project.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Describe and sum up the examined phenomenon precisely, concisely, and clearly.
- Showcase that a lot of research has conducted. The discussion of the examined phenomenon closely connects with the content of the course.

- Have in-depth analysis and insights, arguments are strongly supported via rich examples.
- Exemplary use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Exemplary deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere

Good

(B+, B)

- Describe the examined phenomenon precisely, and clearly.
- Showcase that adequate research has conducted. The discussion of the examined phenomenon fairly connects with the content of the course.
- Have in-depth analysis, arguments are adequately supported via certain examples.
- Good use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Good deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Fair description of the examined phenomenon yet with some incorrect information.
- The discussion of the examined phenomenon has some connection with the content of the course.
- Have some analysis and point of views.
- Limited use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. Some deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Failure

(F)

- Poor description of the examined phenomenon.
- The discussion has no connection with the content of the course.
- No analysis and viewpoints.
- No use of technological aids such as PowerPoint, video, Internet, etc. No deployment of such factors as body language, voice control and project, eye contact, the creation of an engaging atmosphere.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

- Introduction: Why We Study Korean Cinema
- Theory of National Cinema and its Discontents
- Beginning, Colonial Korea, and Cinema
- Korean Civil War and Its Aftermath
- The Advent of Korean New Wave
- Globalization and the Renaissance of Korean Cinema
- Making of a National Cinema: Im Kwon-taek
- Korean Independent Cinema
- Film Festivals and the Emergence of New Film Authors
- The Other Half: North Korean Cinema
- Arrivals and Departures: Korean Diasporas' Cinema
- Korean Cinema and Media in the Global Context

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Lee, Sangjoon, ed. 2019. Rediscovering Korean Cinema. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
2	Lee, Sangjoon, Jin, Dal Yong, and KJunhyoung Cho, eds. 2024. The South Korean Film Industry. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
3	Cumings, Bruce. 2005. Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History. W. W. Norton.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Choi, Jinhee. 2010. The South Korean Film Renaissance: Local Hitmakers, Global Provocateurs. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
2	An, Jinsoo. 2018. Parameters of Disavowal: Colonial Representation in South Korean Cinema. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
3	Kim, Dong Hoon. 2017. Eclipsed Cinema: The Film Culture of Colonial Korea. Edinburgh, UK: University of Edinburgh Press.
4	Lee, Hyangjin. 2000. Contemporary Korean Cinema: Culture, Identity and Politics. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
5	Paquet, Darcy. 2010. New Korean Cinema: Breaking the Waves. New York: Columbia University Press.
6	Shin, Chi-Yun, and Julian Stringer, eds. 2005. New Korean Cinema. New York: New York University Press.