

## 875.532 Understanding East Asia

Fall 2025  
Wed 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.  
Building 140-1, Room 101  
GSIS, SNU

Instructor: Yoon Ah Oh (yoonah.oh@snu.ac.kr)  
Office Hours: Wed 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
TA: TBA

### Course Description

This course provides a graduate level introduction to the study of contemporary East Asia with a heavy emphasis on the region's economic, political, and foreign policy issues. While designed to get students introduced to basic concepts and key debates related to the region, this course is also structured with the goal of getting them familiarized with more common types of data work and academic writing specific to area studies. For the purposes of this course, the geographic scope of the region includes both Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia.

### Course Requirements and Evaluation

1	Attendance and participation	10 %
2	Weekly quizzes	20 %
3	Country comparison tables	10 %
4	Conference observation report	10 %
5	Student presentations	20 %
6	Final exam (closed-book, in-class)	30 %

1. Attendance and general participation

**2. Weekly quizzes:** Short quizzes will be administered weekly, based on the lectures and assigned readings.

**3. Country comparison tables:** Students will put together country information tables. Detailed instructions will be provided.

**4. Conference observation report:** Students will watch an online conference panel and submit a one-page report. Detailed instructions will be provided.

**5. Student presentations:** Each student will present an analysis of selected country-level indicators. Detailed instructions will be provided.

**6. Final exam:** Students will take a **one-hour, closed-book, in-class exam**. Instructions will be provided in due time.

## Course Reading

There is no single text for this course. The reading materials will be made available through eTL. This course includes selected chapters from the following works:

Perkins, Dwight H. 2013. *East Asian Development: Foundations and Strategies*. Harvard University Press.

Studwell, Joe. 2013. *How Asia Works: Success and Failure in the World's Most Dynamic Region*. New York: Grove Press

## Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Plagiarism, including presenting generative AI software content as your own, is a violation of academic integrity. It is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. It will result in lowered or failing grades as well as the possibility of more serious punishments.

## Use of Digital Devices for In-Person Classes

The use of electronic devices is **prohibited**. Violating this policy will negatively impact your participation grade. Students with approved accommodations from the Center for Students with Disabilities permitting the use of personal electronic devices must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance.

## Recording Policy

Video and/or audio recording of any class activity is **prohibited**. Students with approved accommodations from the Center for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present the accommodation letter to the instructor in advance of any recording being done.

## Attendance Policy

Students who are unable to attend class for legitimate reasons should contact the instructor and provide supporting documentation. Notify the instructor in advance unless it is an emergency. Students are responsible for making up any missed coursework or requirements. Accommodations will be provided for legally protected absences, such as those resulting from a student's participation in the Korean Reserve Forces training.

**Week 1: Introduction and Course Overview**

**Week 2: The Economic-Security Nexus in East Asia**

**Week 3: Historical Foundations I: World War II and Independence**

**Week 4: Historical Foundations II: The Cold War in East Asia**

**Week 5: Historical Foundations III: The Post-Cold War Order**

**Week 6: Online Conference Observation (Chuseok Holiday)**

**Week 7: Security and Development in East Asia**

**Week 8: Global Value Chains and East Asia I**

**Week 9: Global Value Chains and East Asia II**

**Week 10: China's Political Economy and Global Implications**

**Week 11: East Asia's Alignment Choices I**

**Week 12: East Asia's Alignment Choices II**

**Week 13: Global Maritime Governance and East Asia**

**Week 14: Economic Statecraft and East Asia**

**Week 15: Review and Final Exam**

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