I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The main goal of this course is to introduce students to premodern Korea, from earliest recorded history to the Chosŏn Dynasty (1392-1897), and to examine the roles played by China and Japan in shaping Korean history. Through readings and group discussion, as well as through viewing and analyzing the popular depictions of Korean history portrayed in various mainstream Korean films/dramas, the class will explore social, political, economic, intellectual, and cultural dimensions of the premodern period. Readings will include secondary source material, as well as English-translations of primary sources, shedding light on the following themes: traditional social structures; local society and culture; religions and ideology; governing institutions; foreign relations; gender and family; encounters with Western civilization; marginalized groups; and indigenous reforms for social and economic development. In consultation with the instructor, students will be offered the option for creative alternatives to assigned exams and presentations.

Students will develop skills to read, contextualize, and interpret historical texts to gain a broad understanding of pre-modern Korea, and to apply historical knowledge and tools of analysis to understand and engage with the world in which we live today. Student input and active engagement are highly valued. No knowledge of Korean language is required.
II. COURSE POLICIES & REQUIREMENTS

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<th>Categories</th>
<th>Grading %</th>
<th>Dates (subject to change)</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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| 1. Class Attendances & Participation| 10%       | Attendance will be taken every day. | - Students are expected to attend every class and to complete all exams and assignments on time. No extensions, substitutions, make-ups, etc., will be allowed, except in extremely unusual circumstances or serious illness (verified in writing by a licensed physician or approved health provider).  
- Students must inform the instructor in advance if they need to miss class. If it is necessary to miss class for medical reasons, please see the University at Albany Medical Excuse Policy: [http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtm](http://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtm) |
| 2. Quizzes                          | 25%       |                           | - Reading assignments must be completed before each class.  
- Unannounced quizzes will be given at the start of various classes.  
- Optional readings will not be covered in quizzes. |
| 3. Midterm Exam                     | 25%       | Mon, 10/15                | - A one-hour midterm exam will take place in class.  
- Alternatively, in consultation with instructor, any student may propose a creative project based on rigorous historical research and argument. |
| 4. Class Presentation               | 10%       | Wed, 10/17 & Fri, 10/19   | - In the first two weeks of class, students will be asked to select one weekly topic on pre-modern Korea listed in the syllabus (see “Course Schedule” below)  
- Each student will be asked to do a 10-minute PPT presentation, either individually or in groups (at least 2 people), that will explore selected topics.  
- Presentations must clearly demonstrate an understanding of the main content of assigned readings for that topic, with time allotted for questions and discussion following the PPT (10-min presentation + 5 min for discussion).  
- Grading will be based on the following criteria: (1) effective summarization of the contents of the assigned readings on the topic; (2) visual aid and artistic factors in the PowerPoint Presentation; (3) preparations of 2-3 discussion questions based on your presented material. |
| 5. Take-home Final Exam             | 30%       | Due by 8 PM on Fri, 12/14 | - Questions for the final exam will be distributed in class on the last day of the course, Monday, 12/10.  
- Students must submit exams as email attachments with file name, “yourlastname_EAK389.doc(x),” by 8 PM on 12/14.  
- For any exam submitted late, from the final score, a penalty will be deducted as follows: one-third of a grade per every 24 hours or portion thereof past the due date and time (i.e., A to A-, B+ to B). Thus, for example, an “A” paper that is submitted at 9:00 PM on Saturday (12/15) would receive a “B+” (down two-thirds of a grade). |
Letter grades are assigned according to the following scale:

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<th>Grade</th>
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*Work never turned in counts as a zero (0).

III. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
- I ask any student with a documented disability requiring academic accommodations or other adjustments to speak with me privately at the start of the semester. All such discussions will remain confidential. For further information, please visit Disability Resource Center (http://www.albany.edu/disability/index.shtml).

IV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
- “Every student has the responsibility to become familiar with the standards of academic integrity at the University. Faculty members must specify in their syllabi information about academic integrity, and may refer students to this policy for more information. Nonetheless, student claims of ignorance, unintentional error, or personal or academic pressures cannot be excuses for violation of academic integrity. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the standards and behaving accordingly, and UAlbany faculty are responsible for teaching, modeling and upholding them. Anything less undermines the worth and value of our intellectual work, and the reputation and credibility of the University at Albany degree.” (University’s Standards of Academic Integrity Policy, Fall 2013) http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

V. READING MATERIALS
- The following books are required for the course:
- Other readings will be distributed via Blackboard.
- Note: Textbooks can be expensive. If there are financial or other reasons for difficulty purchasing required texts, please arrange to speak with me. All conversations will remain confidential.
COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision)

WEEK 1: Introduction
How did civilization originate in the Korean peninsula?
Mon, 8/27: Course Policies / Main Themes of Korean History
Wed, 8/29: Origins of Korean Civilization (I)
   • Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 1–27 (Ch. 1: The Origins)
Fri, 8/31: Origins (II)
   • Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 3–17 (Origins of Korean Culture)
* A Korean historical drama will be played in class (15 minutes).

WEEK 2: Korea’s Ancient Ties with Japan and China
How should we approach ancient Korean-Japanese relations? Was there a distinct sense of “Korea” and “Japan” in the respective regions? Was ancient Korea a “colony” of Lelang (China)?
Mon, 9/3 (No class; Labor Day)
Wed, 9/5: China-Korea Connections
Fri, 9/7: Japan-Korea Ancient Ties

WEEK 3: Three Kingdoms / Indigenization of Buddhism
How did Confucian and Buddhist ideas tie into Korean state formation during the Three Kingdoms and Unified Silla periods? (question also applies to Week 4 topic)
Mon, 9/10 (No class; Rosh Hashanah)
Wed, 9/12: The Three Kingdoms
   • Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 29–51 (Ch. 2: The Period of the Three Kingdoms, Fourth Century to 676)
Fri, 9/14: Introduction of Buddhism
   • Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 34-56 (Introduction of Buddhism)

WEEK 4: Unified Silla and Hwarang
How should historians characterize the ruling system in Unified Silla? What was Hwarang?
Mon, 9/17: Late Silla and Unification War
   • Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 53-81 (Ch. 3: Late Silla, 676 to 935)
Wed, 9/19 (No class; Yom Kippur)
Fri, 9/21: Hwarang (“The Flower Knights”)
* A Korean historical drama (Hwarang, Ep. 1) will be played in class (10 minutes).
WEEK 5: Koryŏ Dynasty

How did Koryŏ unify the peninsula and consolidate power? Can we identify Koryŏ as a "Buddhist" state? How should we define Koryŏ’s relationship with China?

Mon, 9/24: Koryŏ
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 83–109 (Ch. 4: Koryŏ, 935 to 1170)

Wed, 9/26: The State and Buddhism in the Koryŏ Period / Syncretism and Ten Injunctions
- Selections from Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 154-156 (Wang Kŏn: Ten Injunctions); 156-167 (Development of Confucian Polity I); 167-168 (Ch’oe Sungno: On Buddhism); 216–244 (Buddhism and other religions)

Fri, 9/28: Koryŏ’s Foreign Relations
- Selections from Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 161–63 (Ch’oe Sŏngno: On Current Affairs); 170-171 (Koryo’s Foreign Relations); 171–74 (Sŏ Hŭi: Arguments on War); 174–75 (Kim Puŭi: Relations with Chin); 175 (Memorial on Relations with Sung)

WEEK 6: Military Revolt and Mongol Invasions

What caused the rise of civil-military conflict in Koryŏ? How did the period of military rule and Mongol invasions impact Koryŏ?

Mon, 10/1: Military Rule (I)
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 111–118 (beginning of Ch. 5)

Wed, 10/3: Military Rule (II)
- Selections from Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 193–194 (The 1170 military Coup); 194-196 (Ch’oe Ch’unghon: The Ten Injunctions); 198-200 (Civilians under Military Rule)

Fri, 10/5: Mongol Invasions
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 118-133 (Ch. 5, read from “The Mongol Invasions” to the end of the chapter)

WEEK 7: Koryŏ-Chosŏn Dynastic Change

What led to the fall of the Koryŏ? What explains the decline of Buddhism in late Koryŏ? Was there an influx of “social newcomers” into the elite circles during the Koryŏ-Chosŏn transition?

Mon, 10/8: Change or Continuity?

Wed, 10/10: Late Koryŏ
- Sources of Korean Tradition, vol. 1, pp. 205-215 (Late Koryŏ Reforms); pp. 382–387 (“Buddhism” and Kihwa’s “Treatise on Manifesting Righteousness”)

Fri, 10/12: The Rise of a New Dynasty / Review Session for Midterm Exam
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, only pp. 135–139 (beginning of Ch. 6: The Neo-Confucian Revolution and the Chosŏn State, 1392 to the Eighteenth Century)
WEEK 8: MIDTERM WEEK

Mon, 10/15: Midterm Exam
Wed, 10/17: Group Presentation I
Fri, 10/19: Group Presentation II

WEEK 9: The Chosŏn Government and Politics
What was the relationship between the monarchy and bureaucracy in Chosŏn Korea? What was the influence of Neo-Confucian ideology in Chosŏn’s state formation and politics?

Mon, 10/22: State Formation (1)
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 140–150 (Ch. 6, read from “Chosŏn State”)

Wed, 10/24: State Formation (2)

Fri, 10/26: Politics, Factionalism, and Foreign Affairs
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 150-163 (Ch. 6, read from “Military and Foreign Affairs”)

WEEK 10: Neo-Confucian Transformation of the Chosŏn Korea
What explains the efflorescence of Neo-Confucian ideology and tradition in Chosŏn? How did Neo-Confucianism influence Chosŏn’s relations with China?

Mon, 10/29: The Confucianization of Korean society
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 163-165 (Ch. 6, “Korea in Global Perspective: Chosŏn as an ideological driven state”); pp. 167-168 (beginning of Ch. 7)
- Watch YouTube clip on:
  - Korean Confucianism
    [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPSGxnMC3qw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPSGxnMC3qw)

Wed, 10/31: Neo-Confucianism and Social Change

Fri, 11/2: Chosŏn Korea under Neo-Confucian World Order

WEEK 11: Chosŏn Society, Social Stratification, and Marginalization
What was yangban and how this group distinguish itself from commoners? What was the extent of "marginalization" in late Chosŏn Korea? Did Chosŏn Korea have a burgeoning “civil society”?

Mon, 11/5: Chosŏn society
- Seth, A Concise History of Korea, pp. 168-200 (Ch. 7: Chosŏn Society)

Wed, 11/7: Slavery in Chosŏn
  *A clip of Korean drama (“The Slave Hunters”) will be viewed in class
Fri, 11/9: Civil Society in Chosŏn Korea?

**WEEK 12: Family and Gender in Chosŏn**

*How useful is the term “Confucian patriarchy” for describing Chosŏn society?*

Mon, 11/12: The impact of Confucianization on Women/Family
- *Sources of Korean Tradition*, vol. 1, pp. 316–326 (Confucianization of Chosŏn and its impact on Women/Family)

Wed, 11/14: Women in Chosŏn (1)
- Martina Deuchler, “Propagating Female Virtues in Chosŏn Korea,” in *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea, and Japan*, pp. 142-169.
- Class participation in International Cultural Fair

Fri, 11/16: Women in Chosŏn (2)

**WEEK 13: Korean Spirituality / Encounter with Christianity**

*What is unique about the Korean indigenization of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Catholicism? What explains the Chosŏn state's virulent resistance to Catholicism?*

Mon, 11/19: Religious Traditions in Korea
- Watch YouTube clip on:
  - Korean Shamanism
    [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3rRIXOSxog](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3rRIXOSxog)
  - Buddhism
    [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SXf_V18wQU&t=1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SXf_V18wQU&t=1s)

*In class reading of Miam Ilki, “Geomancy and Other Folk Customs”

Wed, 11/21 (No class; Thanksgiving Break)

Fri, 11/23 (No class; Thanksgiving Break)

*Please read over the break:

**WEEK 14: Social and Economic Changes/Rebellions**

*What problems did the Chosŏn Dynasty face in the late 19th century? What types of economic and social changes were occurring?*

Mon, 11/26: Late Chosŏn
- Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, pp. 201–235 (Ch. 8: Late Chosŏn, Early Eighteenth Century to 1897)

Wed, 11/28: Economic Changes
- *Sources of Korean Tradition*, vol. 1, pp. 327–41 (Ch. 17: Economy)

Fri, 11/31: Rebellions

**WEEK 15: Late-19th Century Imperialism**

*How did Western imperialism in the late-19th century affect Korea? Was Chosŏn truly a “hermit kingdom”?*

**Mon, 12/3: Imperialism**
- Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, pp. 241-262 (beginning of Ch. 9: Korea in the Age of Imperialism, 1876 to 1910)
- Young Ick Lew, “Late-Nineteenth Century Korean Reformers’ Receptivity to Protestantism,” in *Early Korean Encounters with the United States and Japan* (Seoul: Royal Asiatic Society, Korea Branch, 2008), pp. 53-88.

**Wed, 12/5: Korean Reform Efforts (1)**
- Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, pp. 262-271 (Ch. 9, read from “Kabo Reforms”)
- Selections from *Sources of Korean Tradition* vol. 2, pp. 207-211 (Introduction); 245-247 (Learning from the West); 248-253 (Yu Kilchun); 255-260 (Kim Okkyun, Pak Yŏnghyo); 272-273 (Reforms from Above, 1894-1895).

**Fri, 12/7: Reform Efforts (2)**
- Seth, *A Concise History of Korea*, pp. 271-280 (Ch. 9, read from “The Protectorate, 1905-1910”)

**WEEK 16: Final Week**

**Mon, 12/10 (Last Day of class): Final Review**
*The Final Exam questions will be distributed to students in class.*

**Fri, 12/14: TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE AT 8:00 PM.* Submit your paper as an email attachment with the file name, “yourlastname_389.doc(x),” to Prof. Kwon.*