AN INSIGHT INTO NORTH KOREAN SOCIETY  
Course Number: EASTASN 189K/289K  
Spring 2013

Instructor: Katharina Zellweger, Pantech Fellow in Korean Studies  
Office: Encina Hall, E317  
Office Hours: By appointment through email  
Office Phone: 650 725 2375  
Email: kzellweger03@gmail.com or kzellweger@stanford.edu

Time: Wednesdays, 2:15 PM–4:05 PM  
Classroom: Building 260 of Main Quad, Room 004

Description and Learning Objectives:  
The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), better known as North Korea, is frequently written about in the international media as it presents a serious challenge to stability at regional and international levels. Although more information is available today, analyses are often still based on guess-work and speculation.

The course intends to increase students’ knowledge about North Korea, enabling them to understand and to be able to analyze critically the contemporary issues facing the country, its society and the regime. The course materials are mainly based first person accounts (the instructor lived and worked in North Korea for five years, 2006-2011), but also include scholarly works, news reports and North Korean propaganda. Social and cultural issues, humanitarian aid and development cooperation, economics and also history and politics, are among the topics to be offered for discussions.

Requirements:  
Students are not expected to have a background in international relations, history, politics or sociology, nor a background on North Korea studies, but are required to complete the reading assignments prior to class, participate actively during class discussions and submit a paper (see below for details).

Grading:  
Attendance and contributions to class discussions: 40%  
Final paper: 60%

A term paper on a pre-approved topic relating to the course theme will be due at the start of week 9 (29 May 2013) and is to be 10 to 12 pages in length. The paper is not an academic research paper; the purpose of the paper is to provide students with an opportunity to present their views and opinions on issues facing North Korea, taking into account the class discussions and readings throughout the quarter. Research beyond class-material is permitted. The paper can be mailed directly to kzellweger03@gmail.com.  
Students will be asked to present their paper during the final class.
Course Schedule – Lectures with Class Discussions:

April 3 – Week 1
• Introductory class and course overview
• Presentation of facts, figures and images

April 10 – Week 2
• The history of North Korea – the foundation of North Korea up to present
• Inter-Korean relations – a divided peninsula and prospects for unification

April 17 – Week 3 – Guest Speaker: Professor John W. Lewis, CISAC
• North Korea and the role of China and other outside powers
• North Korea’s political system

Note: Students chose their paper topics this week in consultation with the instructor.

April 24 – Week 4
• US-DPRK relations – Guest Speaker: David Straub, APRAC
• The North Korean military and the nuclear weapons program

May 1 – Week 5
• Everyday life – for the North Korean people and for aid workers
• Education and health care system in the DPRK

May 8 – Week 6 – Guest Speaker: Jerome Sauvage, former UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to the DPRK
• The role of the UN in the DPRK
• The need for humanitarian assistance and development cooperation

May 15 – Week 7
• The planned economy and the increase of market activities
• Agriculture, food security and coping strategies

May 22 – Week 8
• The North Korean media, propaganda and poster art
• Covering North Korea for the international Media – Guest Speaker: Melissa Chan, Al Jazeera China Correspondent/Stanford John S. Knight Fellow

May 29 – Week 9
• Human rights violations in North Korea, camps and fleeing North Korea
• The future of North Korea

June 5 – Week 10
• Presentation of papers
**Required Readings:**

A course reader will be made available for purchase in class and the following 3 books, available at the Stanford Bookshop, are other required readings:


**Suggested Readings:**


Required Readings for:

April 3 – Week 1
No required readings.

April 10 – Week 2
Bruce Cumings, Korea’s Place in the Sun, (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2005)
(Chapter 8: “Nation of the Sun King: North Korea, 1953-Present”)


(Chapter 11, “Changes and Continuities in Inter-Korean Relations”, Haksoon Paik)

[ONLINE] Living with Two Nations Under One Roof by Ra Jong-Yil, 7 January 2013 38North.org/2013/01/jyra010713/print/

[ONLINE] Chinese Perspectives on North Korea and Korean Unification by Sunny Lee, Korea Economic Institute, 24 January 2012

April 17 - Week 3

(Chapter 2, “The Power and Poverty of Ideology” and Chapter 4, “The Leader, His Party, and His People”)


[ONLINE] Kim Jong Un’s Domestic Record in His First Year: Surprisingly Good by Alexandre Masourov, 15 January 2013 38north.org/2013/01/amansourov0116513/print/

[ONLINE] Assessing Political Stability in Post/Kim Jong Il North Korea by Hyung-Gu Lynn, Korea Academic Institute, 4 December 2012

Further readings to be recommended by guest speaker.

April 24 - Week 4

(Chapters 11 to 16, “Joining the Nuclear Issue”, “Withdrawal and Engagement”, “Showdown over Nuclear Weapons”, “Death and Accord”, “North Korea in Crisis”, “Turn Toward Engagement”)
Mike Chinoy, Meltdown: The Inside Story of the North Korean Nuclear Crisis, (St. Martin’s Press, New York, 2008)  
(Chapters 5 to 8, “Meltdown”, “War Games”, “Read My Statement”, “We Don’t Negotiate with Evil. We Defeat It”)


(Chapter 5, “The Military: Pillar of Society”)

May 1 - Week 5
John Everard, Only Beautiful, Please: A British Diplomat in North Korea, (APRAC Stanford, 2012)  
(Chapter 1, “DPRK Society”)

Ministry of Public Health, MDGs Progress and Annual Report on Health Status, (Ministry of Public Health, DPRK 2011)


May 8 - Week 6
Andrew S. Natsios, The Great North Korean Famine: Famine, Politics, and Foreign Policy  
(Chapter 1, “Roots of the Crisis”)

[ONLINE] UN Overview of Needs and Assistance in DPRK 2012  
http://kp.one.un.org/content/uploads/2012/06/UN-Overview-Funding-Document/2012/pdf

[ONLINE] UN North Korea Webpage http://kp.one.un.org

[ONLINE] Edward P. Reed, The Role of International Aid Organizations in the Development of North Korea: Experience and Prospects, Asian Perspective 29, no. 3, 2005

Further readings to be recommended by the guest speaker.

May 15 - Week 7
(Chapter 3 and 4, “The Economic System” and “The Economy of Everyday Life”)
(Chapter 8, “Low-Profile Capitalism: The Emergence of the New Merchant/Entrepreneurial Class in Post-Famine North Korea” Andrei Lankow)

(Chapter 6, “The Diplomacy of Famine”)


**May 22 - Week 8**
(Chapter 5, “The Information Environment”)

**May 29 - Week 9**


(Chapter 9, “The End Comes Slowly”)

(Chapter 13, “North Korea in Transition: Evolution or Revolution?” Scott Snyder and Kyung-Ae Park)

**5 June - Week 10**
No readings required. **Presentation of papers**

**Other Remarks:**

Some reading material might be handed out or assigned a week prior to class.
Guest speakers will be invited and therefore some topics might be shifted to other dates.

**Useful Websites:**


Korean Central News Agency (English language news from the government of Korea)
http://www.kcna.kp

Naenara (The official web portal of the DPRK)

Daily NK (a conservative anti-North Korea news source based in Seoul)
http://www.dailynk.com/english

Network for North Korean Democracy and Human Rights
http://nknet.org/eng/

North Korea Economy Watch
http://www.nkeconwatch.com

38North Bulletin is a program of the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies
http://38north.org