

KORN 410A
Readings in Modern Korean Short Fiction
Term 1, 2025-2026
Monday and Wednesday, 2-3:30

Instructor: Bruce Fulton
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Office hours: Monday, 5-6; Tuesday, 3-4; or by appointment

This course will be offered entirely **in person**; your physical presence in class is mandatory.

Course Materials

1. texts, grammar notes, vocabulary, and translations: these materials are available online at the KORN 410 Interline Reader: <https://interlinereader.herokuapp.com/>; note, though, that it is not possible to print out these materials; I suggest that you have printed copies of the materials that you can bring to class and make notes on; I can email you pdf files of these materials for you to print.
2. supplementary materials: available from instructor
3. Korean-English dictionary (*must be brought to every class*)
4. (optional) Korean-Korean dictionary

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This is a course in reading and translating modern Korean short fiction. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Parse sentences in Korean literary short fiction, distinguishing among topic particles, subject particles, modifiers, adverbials, and other elements of Korean grammar.
2. Grasp subtext—the content of a story that is implicit rather than explicit.
3. Complete the necessary research to be able to contextualize historical, ideological, and cultural content of Korean stories.
4. Prepare a viable (as a work of English-language literature) translation of an as yet untranslated Korean short story.

Course Requirements

class participation and performance: 25% of final grade
quizzes: 15%
midterm exam: 15%
final exam: 15%
translation: 30%

Extra Credit (adds 4 or 5 points to your final course grade)

1. Win an award for your translation, for example in the *Korea Times* Modern Korean Literature Translation Award competition (Leo-Thomas Brylowski is a KORN 410 veteran):
https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/culture/2021/07/262_278030.html
2. Secure publication of your translation in a literary journal or anthology, for example *Ricepaper*, a journal of Asian Canadian culture: <https://ricepapermagazine.ca/submission/>

3. Prepare a story that could be taught in KORN 410A or KORN 410B in the future: select the story in consultation with the instructor, develop grammar notes and a vocabulary list, and produce a draft translation.

The class participation and performance component of your grade is based on:

1. the extent to which you show improvement during the course (I will take into account your prior knowledge of or exposure to Korean)
2. the extent to which your performance in the course is consistent with the background statement you supplied at your placement interview with Ms. Shin and/or myself
3. the importance you give to the course
4. how well you communicate your needs and circumstances to me
5. the degree and quality of your participation in class
6. your class attendance and the quality of your preparation: **for each class you must prepare a paper copy of a draft translation of ¼ of the Korean story assigned for that day**

quizzes and exams: translation of phrases and sentences from the Korean stories

translation: each of you will translate a modern Korean short story not previously translated; you must have your story approved by me by the day of the midterm exam) at the latest, before you begin your translation (**note:** late notification will result in a 5-point-per-class deduction from your grade for the translation); I will be happy to make suggestions about works and authors worth translating. The translation will be **due the day of the final exam**. The grade you earn on the translation will be based primarily on the extent to which the Korean story comes alive in English—that is, the extent to which the translation succeeds as a work of English-language literature. I will distribute guidelines to which you may refer.

Be aware that you may **not** use AI resources in your translation. If you are found to have done so you earn a zero for your translation.

Classroom Etiquette

1. Please turn off and stow cell phones, laptops, and tablets BEFORE arriving in class, unless you are using one of these to access the course materials.
2. Please take care of bathroom needs BEFORE class.
3. Please remove sunglasses, caps, or hats and lower hoods unless their use is dictated by medical necessity.

More About the Course

We will read one story every two to three weeks in the original Korean. The stories range from the 1920s to the 1990s and most are representative pieces by major authors. In our Online Textbook/Interline Reader each story is accompanied by a set of detailed grammar notes and vocabulary and in most cases by an existing English translation (note that the translation is to *supplement* your reading of the original Korean rather than to serve as a basis for your draft translation of the story that you prepare for each class). In class we will pay close attention to grammatical patterns and vocabulary encountered primarily in literary Korean; matters of literary style; the cultural and historical context of the stories; and the many challenges we confront in literary translation.

Language Level and Background

This course caters to a broad range of students, including:

1. second-generation Korean Canadian students and non-Korean students who have learned Korean "the hard way" and/or taken Korean 300 at UBC.
2. "1.5-generation" Korean Canadians who, though perhaps orally fluent in Korean, have had little or no formal instruction in Korean and little or no exposure to authentic Korean literary materials.

Each type of student faces different challenges in this class, and both types of students have different contributions to make to the class. The key is to work together and have some fun wrestling with Korean stories in the original Korean. If everyone pitches in, we'll all learn a lot of language and improve our language skills (both Korean and English).

No knowledge of Chinese characters is necessary for this course.

Course Schedule

weeks 1-3 (September 3,8,10,15): 김동인 (Kim Tong-in), “감자” (Kamja, 1925)

weeks 3-5 (September 17,23,25,30): 황순원 (Hwang Sun-wŏn), “소나기” (Sonagi, 1959)

weeks 5-7 (October 1,6,8,13): 오정희 (O Chŏng-hŭi), “첫눈 오던 날” (Chŏnnun odŏn nal, 1991)

October 15: midterm exam

Weeks 8-9 (October 20,22,27,29): 김영하 (Kim Yŏng-ha), “도마뱀” (Tomabaem, 1997)

weeks 10-12 (November 3,5,17,19): 조정래 (Cho Chŏng-nae), “빙하기” (Pinghagi, 1974)

weeks 12-13 (November 24,26, December 2,4): 김지원 (Kim Chi-wŏn), “알마덴” (Almaden, 1979)

Suggested Reading

Fulton, Bruce. “Translating Korea,” Inaugural Lecture of the Young-Bin Min Chair in Korean Literature and Literary Translation, University of British Columbia, April 15, 2003.

Fulton, Bruce, “Every Translation Matters,” pp. 112-36 in *K-munhak ŭi T’ansaeng: Hanguk munhak ŭl K-munhak ŭro mandŭn pŏnyŏk iyagi* (The advent of K-literature: Talks on translation in making Korean literature into K-literature). Seoul: Kimyŏngsa, 2023. (A Korean translation of that essay appears on pp. 90-111 of that volume.)

King, Ross. 2003. Can Korean-to-English literary translation be taught? Some recommendations for Korean funding agencies. Korean Literature Translation Institute (eds.), *2002 Seoul Symposium on Literature and Translation*, pp. 211-225.

King, Ross. 2005b. Teaching Korean Language through Literature: Reflections on a Decade of Experience with Modern Korean Short Fiction. *Kugŏ kyoyuk yŏn’gu* (The Journal of Korean Language Education) 14, pp. 295-341. Seoul: Korean Language Education Research Institute, Seoul National University.

UBC Values and Policies Statement

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated, nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

Academic Integrity and Responsibility

As a member of this class, you are responsible for contributing to the course objectives through your participation in class activities and your written and other work and projects. In the process of coming into your own as an independent, responsible participant in the academic community, you are encouraged to seek advice, clarification, and guidance in your learning from your instructor. If you decide to seek help beyond the resources of this course, you are responsible for ensuring that this help does not lead you to submit others' work as your own. If an outside tutor or other person helps you, show this policy to your tutor or helper: make sure you both understand the limits of this person's permissible contribution.

Academic communities depend on their members' honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings that appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others' work as your own, or to have submitted work for which you have already received credit in another course, penalties may follow. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department, who may decide that you should receive zero for the assignment. The Head will report your case to the Dean's Office, where it will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and will forward your case to the Dean's Office. After an interview in the Dean's Office, your case may be forwarded to the President's Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Academic communities also depend on their members' living up to the commitments they make. By enrolling in this course, you make commitments to an academic community: you are responsible for meeting deadlines; attending class and engaging in class activities; working individually on the weekly quiz; and guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course.

Students with Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

In keeping with the University's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student requesting academic accommodations must meet with an Access and Diversity advisor. The Access and Diversity advisor will provide a letter detailing the academic accommodations to be made, and assist in case agreement between the student and instructor cannot be reached. Accommodations should be agreed to as soon as possible, in the first week of

class if not before. Retroactive accommodations are not permitted, so if this applies to you, be careful to seek assistance in this regard immediately.

Wellness

I am committed in my courses to offering a respectful classroom environment that not only enhances learning but also contributes to my students' overall wellbeing. In my classroom each student has an equal opportunity to thrive, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender orientation. If you experience medical, emotional, or personal problems within or outside of class that affect your attendance or academic performance, please feel free to notify me in my capacity as the Department of Asian Studies' faculty liaison to the UBC Mental Health and Wellness program and I can help direct you to appropriate resources on campus. You may also reach out to Arts Academic Advising or your home Faculty's Advising Office. If you are registered with Access and Diversity, please notify me if you have arranged with A&D for alternate examination dates. If you are planning to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other commitments, you should discuss your commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

If you haven't already done so, please visit <https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness> to familiarize yourself with the array of wellness resources available on campus.

A Wellbeing Bill of Rights for My Students

1. You have the right to a respectful and welcoming classroom environment.
2. You have the right to access your instructors for your learning needs.
3. You have the right to "me time" apart from social media.
4. You have the right to maintain mental as well as physical health.
5. You have the right to identify in the way that feels most comfortable and appropriate to you.
6. You have the right to living accommodations that are safe and secure, whether on campus or off.
7. You have the right to a respectful social environment.
8. You have the right to develop personally as well as intellectually and professionally.
9. You have the right to access campus advising and counseling services and to seek an accommodation if in need.
10. You have the right to thrive.