



CU/FH 220 K-STYLE LAB: KOREAN FASHION, BEAUTY, AND DESIGN

IES Abroad Seoul

DESCRIPTION:

This course explores how Korean fashion, beauty, and design shape both global trends and everyday life in Seoul. From streetwear to skincare and digital branding, students examine how visual culture expresses identity, status, and social values. Through media, spaces, and styles, the course highlights the cultural forces behind Korea's rise as a global style leader.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

COURSE FREQUENCY: Two - three sessions per week

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

INSTRUCTOR: Aram Sim

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Lectures and seminar discussions
- Group Case Studies
- Analysis of visual representations
- Course-Related Trip
- Students presentations and peer critique
- Academic readings, journals
- Guest speaker lecture

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Participation - 10%
- Weekly Journal Assignments - 20%
- Final Project Presentation- 20%
- Midterm Exam - 25%
- Final Exam - 25%

1. Course Participation

Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before class and participate actively in seminar discussions. Participation includes in-class contributions, group work, and engagement during course-related site visits. It reflects not only speaking in class but also sustained, thoughtful interaction with course materials.

Students should be prepared to use observations from site visits, audiovisual materials, and readings to support discussions. They are encouraged to review their notes regularly and maintain personal study notes for in-class activities or oral presentations.

Active participation is strongly encouraged as an essential part of the learning experience.



2. Weekly Journals

Students will submit a total of 5 weekly journals based on independent visits to sites introduced through class case studies, as well as engagement with audiovisual materials and in-class discussions. Each journal must be submitted before the beginning of the following class session.

The journal should analyze (not simply describe) how the visited site, media examples, or audiovisual materials connect to the themes discussed in the previous week's lectures, readings, seminar discussions, or class activities. Students are expected to consider how these visual and spatial elements reflect or shape culture and everyday life in Seoul. Photo images or sketches may be included to support observations and visual analysis.

Each entry should demonstrate critical reflection, raise thoughtful questions, and/or meaningfully connect course concepts to site-based observations, media analysis, and class discussions. Students may be randomly selected to share their findings in class during a seminar discussion.

Length: One page, single-spaced (drawings/sketches excluded)

3. Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be a written exam given in Session 8, and it will last 1.5 hours.

4. Final Presentation

In response to the guest speaker's lecture, students will develop a group presentation that explores strategies for sustaining K-Style through consumption, media, and cultural practices. This assignment is designed as an open-ended, research-informed project that integrates insights from course lectures, assigned readings, audiovisual materials, site observations, and the guest speaker's perspective. Students will present their projects in Session 14, with a 15–20 minute presentation that includes both a visual component (PowerPoint slides) and an oral presentation.

5. Final exam

The final exam will be a written exam given in the last week and will last 1.5 hours.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze how Korean fashion, beauty, and design are visually constructed across media, spaces, and everyday life in Seoul, and how these representations communicate identity, status, and social values.
- Interpret historical, social, and cultural contexts through the analysis of past and contemporary media related to K-fashion, beauty, and design.
- Evaluate the cultural and industrial forces that have contributed to Korea's emergence as a global style leader within the fashion, beauty, and design industries.
- Apply visual and media analysis to assess why K-Style resonates with global audiences and how cultural meanings are translated across different markets and platforms.
- Critically examine the sustainability and future global potential of K-Style by considering strategies for long-term relevance, ethical practices, and continued international expansion.



ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Attendance is mandatory for all IES Abroad Seoul classes and course-related excursions. One unexcused absence is allowed without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence lowers your final course grade by one-third of a letter grade (e.g., A → A- → B+ → B, etc.)

Unexcused absences include travel, oversleeping, non-emergency appointments, or failure to notify the instructor in advance. Only documented illness, family emergencies, or prior instructor-approved absences will be excused.

Arriving more than 10 minutes late or leaving early may count as an unexcused absence.

- 0 to 10 minutes = late
- Over 10 minutes = 1 absence

Multiple late arrivals or early departures may add up to a full absence. Missed exams, presentations, or assignments cannot be made up without valid documentation. After four total absences (excused or unexcused), you will be referred to the Academic Program Manager and Center Director for review, and your home institution will be notified.

Students are responsible for tracking their attendance and communicating proactively.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 1 Session 1	Course Overview, expectations, Introduction to K-Style Fashion	Documentary to watch before class - Dress History of Korea (64 min) Reading before class - Kendall, Laurel. "Introduction" in <i>Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class, and Consumption in the Republic of Korea</i>, (2001), pp.1-19. (19 pages) - Lynn, Hyung Gu. "Fashioning Modernity: Changing Meanings of Clothing in Colonial Korea," in <i>Journal of International and Area Studies 11(3)</i>, (2004), pp. 75–93.(19 pages)
Week 1 Session 2	Modern Fashion, Identity and Visual Culture	Documentary to watch before class - An Ancient Korean Tradition is Making a Comeback (5 min) Reading before class - Han Bin, Yoo & Ji-soo, Ha. "What is K-Fashion? Understanding Thematic Components of the Idea of K-Fashion," in <i>Asian Culture and History. Vol.15, No.2</i>, (2023) pp.21-28.(8 pages) - Yoo Jin Kwon & Yhe-Young Lee "Traditional Aesthetic Characteristics Traced in South Korean Contemporary Fashion Practice", Fashion Practice in <i>the Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion Industry, 7:2</i>,(2015), pp.153-174. (22 pages)
Week 2 Session 3	Streetwear and Dongdaemun - a Fashion Ecosystem of Korea	Weekly Journal Due #1 Reading before class - Min Jeong Seo, Minjeong Kim & Kyu-Hye Lee, "Supply chain management strategies for small fast fashion firms: the case of the Dongdaemun Fashion District in South Korea", in <i>International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology & Education, 9(1)</i>, (2016), pp. 51–61 (11 pages) - Tsai, Eva. "Sourcing and Tapping South Korea's Fast Fashion: The Transnational Trade and Trade-Offs of Taiwanese Fashion Entrepreneurs in the Early 2010s." in <i>Situations, Vol. 16, No. 1</i>, (2023) pp. 77–103. (27 pages)

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 2 Session 4	K-Beauty as Cultural Identity, and its Transformation	Documentary to watch before class - How K-Beauty Took Over Global Skin Care (8 min) Reading before class - SEON, Suk-Hyun. "The Marketing Strategy of K-Beauty Product to Enhance Economic Growth in South Korea" in <i>Journal of Industrial Distribution & Business Vol 13 No 8</i>, (2022), pp.9-18. (9 pages) - RakGun Hwang, and MinKyung Lee. "Korean Fashion and Beauty Livestreaming Commerce before and after COVID-19." in <i>Businesses 2022, 2</i>, (2022), pp.339–354. (16 pages)
Week 3 Session 5	K-Beauty Aesthetics and Marketing	Weekly Journal Due #2 Documentary to watch before class - The Hidden Cost of Korea's Beauty Industry (12 min) Reading before class - Young Won Park, Paul Hong & Geon-Cheol Shin, "Rising and Thriving in the Post COVID-19 Era: A Case Study of COSMAX, a Leader of the Korean Cosmetic Industry." in <i>Asia Pacific Business Review</i>, 29:4,(2023), pp. 1105–1124. (20 pages) - Lee, Sean. "Communicating Authenticity in Packaging of Korean Cosmetics," in <i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i>, vol. 48, (2019), pp. 202–214. (13 pages) - Sunwoo Kim, and Sujin Yang. "What Promotes Adolescent Girls' Makeup in South Korea? Fashion Leadership, Social Support from Friends, and Self-Esteem." in <i>Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles</i>, Vol. 47, No. 2, (2023), pp.256–276. (21 pages)

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 3 Session 6	Consumption, Taste, and Everyday Practice of Citizens of Seoul	Documentary to watch before class 'Frugal spending' rising as new consumption trend in S. Korea (22min) Reading before class - Jane Yeonjae Lee, "Assessing happiness policies in Seoul: citizen participation in urban planning," in <i>Planning Practice & Research</i>, Vol. 38, No.3, (2023), pp. 464–475. (12 pages) - Vladislav Vorotnikov, "South Korea's Coffee Market: Optimistic Yet Intensely Competitive, in <i>Tea & Coffee Trade Journal</i>, April 2024, pp. 36,37,39(3 pages) - Yoon-joo Kim, Jung-in Yu, "Olive Young, Daiso and Musinsa Are the New Power Trio for Korea's Major Outlets." <i>The Chosun Ilbo (English Edition)</i>, July 4, 2025. (About 3 pages)
Week 3 Session 7	Course-Related Trip Seongsu Dong: The Brooklyn of Seoul (Meeting location TBD)	Reading before class - Kyung-min Kim, (Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Seoul National University), and Su-hyeon Park, "Seongsu-dong is a hotspot built on purpose, not chance," in <i>The Chosun Daily, English Long Reads</i>, April 27, 2025. (About 4 pages) - Hae-rin Lee, "K-pop industry enriches Seongsu, 'Brooklyn of Seoul.'" in <i>The Korea Times</i>, October 12, 2023 (updated October 13, 2023). (About 6 pages)
Week 4 Session 8	Midterm Exam	The midterm exam will be a paper exam. Please bring a pen on the midterm day.

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 4 Session 9	K-Media: Shaping Desire and Consumer Behavior	Weekly Journal Due #3 Reading before class - Juha Park, and Jaehoon Chun. “The Consumer Socialization Process: How Social Media Affects Youth Luxury Consumption,” in <i>Journal of Global Fashion Marketing, Vol. 16, No. 2</i> (2025), pp. 156–172. (16 pages) - Jean-Paul Baldacchino, and Eun-Jee Park. “Between Fantasy and Realism: Gender, Identification and Desire among Korean Viewers of Second-Wave Korean Dramas,” in <i>European Journal of East Asian Studies</i>, (2020), pp. 1–22. (22 pages).
Week 4 Session 10	Guest Speaker Lecture: Seoul, the next trend capital?	Final Project: In response to the guest speaker’s lecture, students will develop a group project to be presented in Session 14. The project must be delivered in a visual and oral presentation format. Groups will be assigned after the guest speaker’s lecture. Reading before class Allen John Scott, “Beyond the creative city: Cognitive–cultural capitalism and the new urbanism,” in <i>Regional Studies</i>, 48:4, (2014), pp.565–578. (14 pages)

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 5 Session 11	Tradition Meets Modern Culture / Spaces & Lifestyle of K-Style	Weekly Journal Due #4 Documentary to watch before class - Why Korea's Architecture May Be Its Next Big Thing (24 min) Reading before class - Dobin Choi, "Artistic Motives in Korean Art Traditions: Self-Cultivation, Self-Enjoyment, and Self-Forgetting," in <i>The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism</i> 80,(2022): pp. 362–367.(6 Pages) - Meong Jin Shin, Thomas Cassidy & E.M. Moore, "Cultural reinvention for traditional Korean bojagi", in <i>International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology & Education</i>, 4:3,(2011), pp. 213-223. (11 Pages) - Jiashu Bu, "How The 'Miracle of The Han River' Came into Being: From The Perspective of a Developmental State to Explore the Economic Transformation of South Korea," in <i>Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences</i>, Vol.23,(2023), pp. 492-497. (6 Pages)
Week 6 Session 12	Brand Experience and Engagement	Reading before class B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore, "Welcome to the Experience Economy." in <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, (1998), pp. 1-19. (19 pages) - R Ananyaa and Shobana, T. "How Consumer Brand Experience Drives Engagement on Instagram", in <i>The IUP Journal of Brand Management</i>, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2025), pp. 62–80. (19 pages) - Cindy Chen and Genesis Okken, "The Rise of Pop-Up Retail: Investigating the Success of Experiential Design within Pop-Up Stores." in <i>Journal of Undergraduate Research</i>, Vol. 22 (2020), pp. 1–15. (15 pages)

Session	Content	Assignments
Week 6 Session 13	K-Style's Cultural Sustainability in a Global World	Weekly Journal Due #5 Documentary to watch before class - Has Korean soft power peaked? - Asia Specific podcast, BBC World Service (19 min) Reading before class - Dal Yong Jin, Kyong Yoon, and Wonjung Min, "Evolution of the Korean Cultural Industries," <i>in Transnational Hallyu: The Globalization of Korean Digital and Popular Culture</i>, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, (2021) pp.23–40 (18 pages) - Pao-Li Chang, Iona Hyojung Lee, "Cultural preferences in international trade: Evidence from the globalization of Korean pop culture" in <i>Economics and Statistics Working Papers 5-2018</i>, Singapore Management University, School of Economics, (2017), pp.1-43. (43 pages)
Week 6 Session 14	Final Project Presentation/Review for the Final	Note for this class: Be prepared to ask questions and participate in the discussion with your peers.
Week 7 Session 15	Final Exam	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Seongsu district

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Ananyaa, R. and Shobana, T. "How Consumer Brand Experience Drives Engagement on Instagram", in *The IUP Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (2025), pp. 62–80.
- Baldacchino, Jean-Paul and Eun-Jee Park. "Between Fantasy and Realism: Gender, Identification and Desire among Korean Viewers of Second-Wave Korean Dramas," in *European Journal of East Asian Studies*, (2020), pp. 1–22.
- Bu, Jiashu, "How The 'Miracle of The Han River' Came into Being: From The Perspective of a Developmental State to Explore the Economic Transformation of South Korea," in *Journal of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol.23,(2023), pp. 492-497.
- Chang, Pao-Li and Iona Hyojung Lee, "Cultural preferences in international trade: Evidence from the globalization of Korean pop culture" in *Economics and Statistics Working Papers 5-2018*, Singapore Management University, School of Economics, (2017), pp.1-43. (43 pages)
- Chen, Cindy and Genesis Okken, "The Rise of Pop-Up Retail: Investigating the Success of Experiential Design within Pop-Up Stores." in *Journal of Undergraduate Research*, Vol. 22 (2020), pp. 1–15.
- Choi, Dobin, "Artistic Motives in Korean Art Traditions: Self-Cultivation, Self-Enjoyment, and Self-Forgetting," in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 80,(2022): pp. 362–367.
- Hwang, RakGun and MinKyung Lee. "Korean Fashion and Beauty Livestreaming Commerce before and after COVID-19." in *Businesses* 2022, 2, (2022), pp.339–354.

- Jin, Dal Yong, Kyong Yoon, and Wonjung Min, "Evolution of the Korean Cultural Industries," in *Transnational Hallyu: The Globalization of Korean Digital and Popular Culture*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, (2021) pp.23–40.
- Kendall, Laurel. "Introduction" in *Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class, and Consumption in the Republic of Korea*, (2001), pp.1-19.
- Kim, Kyung-min, (Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Seoul National University), and Su-hyeon Park, "Seongsu-dong is a hotspot built on purpose, not chance," in *The Chosun Daily, English Long Reads*, April 27, 2025.
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- Kim, Yoon-joo, Jung-in Yu, "Olive Young, Daiso and Musinsa Are the New Power Trio for Korea's Major Outlets." *The Chosun Ilbo (English Edition)*, July 4, 2025.
- Kwon, Yoo Jin & Yhe-Young Lee "Traditional Aesthetic Characteristics Traced in South Korean Contemporary Fashion Practice", Fashion Practice in *the Journal of Design, Creative Process & the Fashion Industry*, 7:2,(2015), pp.153-174.
- Lee, Hae-rin, "K-pop industry enriches Seongsu, 'Brooklyn of Seoul.'" in *The Korea Times*, October 12, 2023 (updated October 13, 2023).
- Lee, Jane Yeonjae, "Assessing happiness policies in Seoul: citizen participation in urban planning," in *Planning Practice & Research*, Vol. 38, No.3, (2023), pp. 464–475.
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- Lynn, Hyung Gu. "Fashioning Modernity: Changing Meanings of Clothing in Colonial Korea," in *Journal of International and Area Studies* 11(3), (2004), pp. 75–93.
- Park, Juha and Jaehoon Chun. "The Consumer Socialization Process: How Social Media Affects Youth Luxury Consumption," in *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2025), pp. 156–172.
- Park, Young Won, Paul Hong & Geon-Cheol Shin, "Rising and Thriving in the Post COVID-19 Era: A Case Study of COSMAX, a Leader of the Korean Cosmetic Industry." in *Asia Pacific Business Review*, 29:4,(2023), pp. 1105–1124.
- Pine II, B. Joseph and James H. Gilmore, "Welcome to the Experience Economy." in *Harvard Business Review*, (1998), pp. 1-19.
- Scott, Allen John, "Beyond the creative city: Cognitive-cultural capitalism and the new urbanism," in *Regional Studies*, 48:4, (2014), pp.565–578.
- Seo, Min Jeong, Minjeong Kim & Kyu-Hye Lee, "Supply chain management strategies for small fast fashion firms: the case of the Dongdaemun Fashion District in South Korea", in *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology & Education*, 9(1), (2016), pp. 51–61.
- SEON, Suk-Hyun. "The Marketing Strategy of K-Beauty Product to Enhance Economic Growth in South Korea" in *Journal of Industrial Distribution & Business* Vol 13 No 8, (2022), pp.9-18.
- Shin, Meong Jin, Thomas Cassidy & E.M. Moore, "Cultural reinvention for traditional Korean bojagi", in *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology & Education*, 4:3,(2011), pp. 213-223.
- Tsai, Eva. "Sourcing and Tapping South Korea's Fast Fashion: The Transnational Trade and Trade-Offs of Taiwanese Fashion Entrepreneurs in the Early 2010s." in *Situations*, Vol. 16, No. 1, (2023) pp. 77–103.
- Vorotnikov, Vladislav, "South Korea's Coffee Market: Optimistic Yet Intensely Competitive, in *Tea & Coffee Trade Journal*, April 2024, pp. 36,37,39
- Yoo, Han Bin & Ji-soo, Ha. "What is K-Fashion? Understanding Thematic Components of the Idea of K-Fashion," in *Asian Culture and History*. Vol.15, No.2, (2023) pp.21-28.

DOCUMENTARIES:

- **Session 1: Dress History of Korea**
Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCraL67-KoQ>
- **Session 2: An Ancient Korean Tradition is Making a Comeback**
Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hIk4Df4o_sl
- **Session 4: How K-Beauty Took Over Global Skin Care**



Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rS6lfm_YecQ

- **Session 5: The Hidden Cost of Korea's Beauty Industry**

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0n8QJAG1FE>

- **Session 6: 'Frugal spending' rising as new consumption trend in S. Korea**

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCqejhuBm7c>

- **Session 11: Why Korea's Architecture May Be Its Next Big Thing**

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NP7SBmDsxrM>

- **Session 13: Has Korean soft power peaked? - Asia Specific podcast, BBC World Service**

Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YEaz1xMU59U>

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY:

Aram Sim received her MPS degree in Fashion Marketing from LIM College in New York. She has over seven years of professional experience in the fashion industry, with a background spanning design, product development, trend analysis and personal selling.

She is currently an instructor in the Fashion Business Management Department at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), SUNY Korea campus. Her teaching focuses on bridging industry practice and academic frameworks, with courses including *Innovation in Product Development*, *Strategies of Selling*, and *Fashion Forecasting & Trend Analytics*