North Korea is the world’s most closed society and the regime presents a vexing security challenge with a growing arsenal of nuclear weapons, but many of the country’s 25 million residents are merely trying to go about their lives. This course goes behind the superficial media coverage of North Korea to allow students to learn about North Korea from the inside out, addressing the state’s Cold War origins, its continuously evolving economy, shifting gender roles, the palace intrigue of the Kim family leadership, and the dramatic influence of K-pop, South Korean dramas, and fashion. After completing the course, students will be able to intelligently discuss and critically analyze issues related to North Korea’s state, society, diplomacy, and security. Students engage analytically with the material, steered by weekly guided questions to comprehend the different sides of issues and develop an informed perspective.

The instructor, Jonathan Corrado, is Director of Policy for The Korea Society in New York City, where he produces programming and conducts research on security, diplomacy, and socioeconomic issues impacting the Korean Peninsula. He has been a columnist for NK News and a Korean-to-English translator for a digital newspaper called Daily NK that is staffed by North Korean defectors and utilizes secret sources on the ground inside North Korea. He received an MA from Georgetown University’s Asian Studies Program in the Walsh School of Foreign Service and a BA in anthropology from the University of Maryland College Park.

Instructor: Jonathan Corrado
M/W: 4:00-5:20 pm
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