

KONKUK UNIVERSITY

International Summer Program 2026

Course Title

K-Music and K-Classics: Music as a Cultural Bridge

Course Subtitle

Understanding Cultural Identity, Aesthetics, and Communication through Music and Listening

Instructor

Dr. Amy Dahm Huh

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Office Hours

By appointment

Class Time

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Program Period

July 1 – July 25, 2026

Course Description

This course explores Korean music and Western classical music as cultural expressions and forms of communication. Through guided listening, discussion, multimedia materials, and live musical experiences, students examine how music reflects cultural identity, historical context, aesthetic values, and social roles.

Designed for international students, this course does not require prior musical training. Music is approached not only as sound, but as a cultural language that carries values, memories, and collective identity. By comparing Eastern and Western musical traditions, students gain insight into how music functions as a bridge between cultures and how listening deepens cultural understanding.

Course Objectives

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

- Understand how music represents cultural identity, roots, and historical background
- Identify key characteristics of Korean traditional music and Western classical music
- Compare musical elements, structures, and aesthetic approaches across cultures
- Examine how Korean composers integrate traditional Korean elements into Western

classical forms

- Understand the social and cultural role of musicians in different societies
 - Develop listening, reflection, and discussion skills through live and recorded musical examples
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Teaching Methodology

This course is conducted through lectures, guided listening sessions, group discussions, multimedia materials, and interactive classroom activities. Throughout the course, most class sessions include short live performance demonstrations presented by invited active performers or by the instructor.

These live performance components allow students to experience musical sound, expression, and communication directly in the classroom rather than solely through recordings. Live demonstrations are integrated as part of the instructional design rather than as formal performances and are used to support deeper listening, cultural understanding, and reflection.

No prior musical background is required, and all musical concepts are introduced in an accessible and inclusive manner.

Course Materials

There is no required textbook for this course.

All course materials, including audio recordings, video clips, live performance demonstrations, and handouts, will be provided by the instructor.

Course Schedule

Day 1 (July 3)

Music as a Cultural Bridge

How Music Tells Stories of Identity, Memory, and Belonging

Day 2 (July 6)

Korean Traditional Music and Western Classical Music

Listening to Two Musical Worlds and Their Cultural Roots

Day 3 (July 7)

Musical Elements and Aesthetic Differences

How Rhythm, Form, and Sound Shape Cultural Expression

Day 4 (July 9)

Korean Songs Beyond Translation

Why Some Musical Meanings Cannot Be Translated into Words

Day 5 (July 11)

Tradition and Change in Korean Music
How Korean Music Evolves from the Past to the Present

Day 6 (July 13)

Korean Composers and Western Classical Forms
Blending Tradition and Innovation in Contemporary Works

Day 7 (July 14)

Music Across Time and Style
How History, Society, and Music Influence One Another

Day 8 (July 16)

Musicians and Society
The Role of Music and Musicians in Social Life

Day 9 (July 17)

East Meets West in Music
Collaboration, Exchange, and Cross-Cultural Creativity

Day 10 (July 20)

Music as Storytelling
How Music Communicates Emotion, Narrative, and Meaning

Day 11 (July 22)

Live Music and Student Reflections
Experiencing Performance and Sharing Cultural Perspectives

Assessment and Grading**• Attendance and Active Participation – 30%**

Regular attendance and active engagement in class discussions, guided listening sessions, and in-class activities

• In-Class Listening and Reflection Activities – 25%

Short in-class written or discussion-based reflections responding to listening examples and live demonstrations

• Short Reflection Assignments – 15%

Brief written reflections completed outside of class, focusing on cultural interpretation and musical understanding

• Final Presentation or Reflection Project – 30%

A final presentation or written reflection project synthesizing course content and personal insights on music and culture