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UTSA's East Asia Institute Presents "Aging Issues in Korea"



(April 5, 2012) - The East Asia Institute (EAI) will host the "Aging Issues in Korea" lecture from 12:30 -1:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 5, 2012 in the Hidalgo room (UC 2.214) at UTSA's main campus. This presentation is free and open to the public.

Dr. Seok Kang, assistant professor in UTSA's Department of Communication, will be presenting his research from a recent study. The study explores the importance of the communication

network for Korean elders and the impact it has on community engagement and quality of life. Dr. Kang has approached the project while keeping the lack of elderly welfare program infrastructure in mind. Similar studies on the elderly population's quality of life have been conducted, but few have focused on the importance of communication.

Recently, the population in Korea has been declining due to a low fertility rate. This has also caused a rapid increase in the number of senior citizens. The Korean government has had difficulties matching their welfare programs to that growth. While the number of welfare programs has increased, the quality has not risen to good standards.

The elderly population faces many issues such as solitary living, isolation, and lack of welfare programs. While looking at their daily lives and how they participate in their community, Dr. Kang will show how the communication network helps combat those problems. He will emphasize that belonging to a community is important to being healthy psychically and socially.

The study takes many variables into account and Dr. Kang looks at specific activities and examples of involvement among the elderly population. For instance, the study first focuses on communication in everyday life, such as media, family and neighborhoods, and membership in organizations. It then looks into elements such as a senior citizen's status of residency in relation to their community involvement. This study will also attempt to offer suggestions on welfare program policy.

The UTSA East Asia Institute's mission is to promote appreciation and understanding of East Asian societies and cultures both on campus and in the community through

research, outreach, networking, education, student/faculty exchange, and business development and cooperation. The East Asia Institute organizes seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, film festivals, visual art exhibitions as well as bringing in performing art groups from China, Japan, Korea, and other Asian nations. It also encourages faculty research collaborations both within UTSA and with participating East Asian university researchers.

For more information regarding this event, please contact the East Asia Institute at 210.458.4943, eai@utsa.edu, or visit the EAI homepage at <http://www.utsa.edu/eai>.