UTSA East Asia Institute Presents

Student Forum

Current East Asian Events and Issues
Event Schedule

1:00 p.m. – Opening Address
Dr. Wan X Yao
Director, East Asia Institute

1:05 p.m. – Session A

2:00 p.m. – Session B

3:00 p.m. – Session C

3:50 p.m. – Closing Address
Nagisa Isono
Intern at East Asia Institute

Observers

Dr. Makiko Fukuda – Professor of Japanese

Dr. Deukhee Gong – Professor of Korean

Dr. Ying Li – Professor of Chinese

Dr. Anne Hardgrove – Professor of History

Dr. Thomas Bellows – Professor of Political Science

Dr. Mikiko Oliver – Independent Scholar at UTSA
1 The suffering of North Korea and Tales of Survivors

By Ashleigh Carson, Jenna Scott

Brief History of North Korea and stories about survivors that were brave enough to share their stories in leaving their whole world to come to start in a land of freedom.

2 Japanese Political Culture

By Savannah Watson, Anthony Elmore

Since the 1990’s Japan experienced a great deal of change in the political atmosphere. The Liberal Democratic Party has been a domineering factor in the rapid reform of Japan’s political ideology. As of 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan has taken over as the dominant political party. In order to better understand Japanese politics, this presentation will discuss the political opinions of today’s Japanese citizens, the relationships between Japan’s citizens and government, and possibly the future of Japanese politics and the impact of political parties on the opinions of its citizens as well.

3 The Asian Group Me & Venmo

By Kenny Tang, Jessica Chiu

Red envelopes known as “Hongbao” in Chinese, are given to family and friends during eventful celebrations such as New Years and weddings. Today, Chinese people are using new technology to keep old traditions, specifically through WeChat’s feature of ‘Lucky Money’ that distributes the red envelopes amongst friends. The “Lucky Money” function comes in handy during the rest of the year as well, similar to America’s version of the Venmo app. The ‘Lucky Money’ feature is similar to Venmo because it allows friends to easily pay back small loans in exact amounts. However, many users do not solely use the app to transfer money, but for communicative purposes as well, similar to the popular American app Groupme. WeChat allows people to create large group chats despite whether or not people own a certain kind of phone or where in the world they are located. The rise of WeChat is a very intriguing technology application to study.

4 Economics of the Tokyo Olympics

By Christopher Brown, Greg Lecca

Historically, the Olympics has been an economic catalyst for the host city. However, in order for the event to be held, a vast amount of resources must be utilized. For this presentation,
identifying the extent of spending in preparation for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics will be reviewed, as well as the return profit. The research will address the effect building Olympic facilities has Tokyo’s communities, the effect massive spending has on the region, and the expected economic outcome of the games. A comparison of past Japanese Olympics will also be included in order to note economic changes over the years.

5 A Changing Military in Japan

By Vanetta Coker

In 2015, the largest protects in Japanese history broke out against security bills Prime Minister Shinzo Abe bought before parliament. These bills would allow for a new reading of article 9 of Japan’s constitution. After WW2, Japan took on a pacifist role. Their small military is only for defensive proposes as stated in the article. Japan has kept that role for the last 70 years. Some say that the new bills will threaten that role. The bills would allow for the Japanese military to take action on foreign soil but only if the Japanese people are at risk.

6 Chinese Dating Standards: City vs Rural

By Jacqueline Ma, Mitchell Ilag

The dating culture in China is significantly different than of the Western Society. In Western Society, we look for love and someone who is destined to be our partner, while in China they look at marriage as a plan and safety net for their future lifestyles. Specifically the “leftover women” in China are those that are urban women with high education who choose luxury over love, and there are “bare-branch men” that are rural men with low education that cannot provide for those women’s desires. This dating epidemic in China has stagnated the average age of marriage and marriage success.
7 The Korean War

By Reid Giesere

The Korean War is a war that not many people in the United States knows about. It happened over the course over three years from 1950 to 1953, and is only ever briefly mentioned in History books and classes. But the Korean War was not just some little event that should be tucked under the rug of History; The Korean War is significant even to this day, and affects not only North and South Korea, but also China, Japan, and the United States. It seems that every other week North Korea is spouting warlike rhetoric towards South Korea and the U.S., or we hear about defectors going to the South, and how many missiles the North could or could not launch. If it was not for the Korean War, a conflict that is technically still going on, the reality of North Korea possibly starting World War 3 would not exist.

8 Japan’s Negative Population Growth

By Joseph Lupardus

Japan's birth rate has been in a steady decline since the 1970's as various external influences such as the rejection of the "housewife" archetype by contemporary Japanese women as well as a greater focus on job security over relationships becomes commonplace. This, in conjunction to a changing cultural atmosphere contending with age-old Japanese values, breeds a climate which is perpetuating this negative population growth. My presentation will explore in depth the specific causes of this phenomenon, how it will impact Japan's economy and culture in the coming decades, and possible solutions to reversing this trend.

9 Japan’s Aging Population “Gray Generation”

By Tristan Marzalek

Japan's elderly population makes up at least a quarter of the total population, and this portion is expected to increase rapidly over the years. The proportional increase of Japan’s elderly population is leading to a crisis where elderly care cost is drastically increasing due to the lack of support economically and socially. The disproportioned population can be contributed to due to a large population boom post World War II, followed by a natural decrease in birth-rates and a lack of immigration. Private sectors are developing new technologies to help care for the growing elderly population while public sectors are developing new social and economic structures to help combat this crisis.

10 Japanese Gaming Culture
Video games are becoming a standard in households in the developed world and Japan is one of the leading pioneers of the medium with companies like Nintendo and Sony. The success of these companies was due in part to the influences of Japanese culture, giving their games a unique Japanese touch unfound in games made by western game developers. However, Japanese gaming industries attempted to cater to the western audience by removing aspects of their games thought to be “too Japanese”, thus leading to a more recent decrease in the sale of games produced by Japanese companies.

11 Hallyu: The Reach of Korean Pop Culture

By Marcela Ornelas Mondragon, Maggie Zhang

Since the 90’s, Korean culture has spread to the far reaches of this world, hitting every continent and entertaining the masses. Ranging from Korean dramas to Korean pop songs and everything in between, people around the world are captivated by the richness of this country. The term Hallyu in Korean translates literally to the flow of Korea, and refers to the increasing popularity of South Korean culture around the globe. In this presentation, we aim to examine the impact of Hallyu and show the extent of its influence on new generations.

12 Standards for Ideal Partners in Urban and Rural China

By Michaela Almendariz, Christopher Brown, Juan Herrera

Partner characteristics are essential when courting, to both individuals and their families. Research on desirable attributes in urban and rural China can reflect economic conditions. Standards based on desirable traits are created within a gender binary and will be reflected within a Chinese society, differing from region to region. Identifying these standards in different economic settings for both sexes enhances an understanding of the region and social interactions. Once identified, a comparison of the desirable traits will give insight to the variety of differences in standards. If possible, connections can be created other cultural influences within the region as well.
13 Americanization of Chinese Food

By Daniela Navarro, Yun Jae Woo

There is an evident difference between commercialized Chinese food and authentic Chinese cuisine. Multiple traditional food dishes in China have been given an Americanized spin in restaurants such as Panda Express, P.F. Chang’s, etc. to adhere to the western culture. Westernized Chinese food has changed over the years to adapt to the westerners taste, and has become food that is nothing like the actual food from China. What exactly is the difference? In our presentation we will compare and contrast westernized Chinese food with authentic Chinese food, and see what American people and Chinese people think about the two.

14 LGBT in Japan

By Jahna Lacey

Despite the normalcy of homosexuality that spans throughout history, Japan’s LGBT community faces various obstacles due to no legal support against discrimination. Obstacles include limitations on banking and housing, rejected hospital visitations and overseas travel for marriage. The LGBT community in Japan seek recognition by pushing for same-sex unions and protection of their rights. As of today, two prefectures have supported Japan’s LGBT community by providing union certificates.

15 Japanese Same Sex Politics

By Christopher Brown, Rachel Bajers

As a hot topic of conversation, same sex policies are a subject of debate in many areas across the world. A look into Japan’s efforts shows one nation’s history and current policies. By creating a small timeline of events to exemplify the history of same sex politics, an understanding of modern conditions can be understood. Following this, research on the modern policies put into play and the attempts made by Japanese citizens to change current laws. For a better understanding of Japan’s progress, comparisons to other countries across the world and their particular same sex policies will also be created.

16 Japan’s Adoption of Negative Interest Rates

By Bilal Pazir

Japan’s adoption of the negative interest rates is the nation’s effort to pull themselves out of a recession by pushing more money into the economy. The policy of negative interest rates makes
Commercial banks have to pay for parking their money at central banks. The purpose of negative interest rates is to get commercial banks to lend more money to companies, who would then spend money and hire others. The move to negative interest rates also makes the yen weaker, which is something that the government wants to do. By doing so, this will deter investors from parking their money in Tokyo as a “safe haven”. Many Japanese corporations also hold large cash piles, which is not a good thing. Thus, the negative interest rates were aimed at getting corporations to do something different with their money, and in order to aid in putting liquidity back into the economy. By having their currency weaker and encouraging banks to lend more money, Japan hopes to bring its economy back up.

17 The Fear of Dying Alone

By Annie Ma

The kodokushi is a term that is very unique to Japan. The term came around the time that the Great Hanshin earthquake came about, forcing thousands of elderly Japanese people to move out of their homes. Many of these elderly Japanese people ended up dying alone. Considering the term is still being used in today’s society, it means the issue of the elderly dying alone in Japan is still a very prominent issue. This can be attributed to Japan’s aging society. However, little did we expect, the kodokushi reflects an even larger issue of our generation. There is a new term that is widely known in Japan called hikikomori. This term is often used for someone who does not leave their home and thus, isolates themselves from the rest of society. They are considered shut-ins, they are the outcasts of Japanese society. This lecture will focus on the kodokushi and hikikomori’s of Japanese culture and how this social phenomenon came to be and why this issue is significant, not just in Japan, but also on a broader spectrum.

18 Where Does North Korea Stand

By Andre Jeanjacques

The Korean War is a war that not many people in the United States knows about. It happened over the course over three years from 1950 to 1953, and is only ever briefly mentioned in History books and classes. But the Korean War was not just some little event that should be tucked under the rug of History; The Korean War is significant even to this day, and affects not only North and South Korea, but also China, Japan, and the United States. It seems that every other week North Korea is spouting warlike rhetoric towards South Korea and the U.S., or we hear about defectors going to the South, and how many missiles the North could or could not launch. If it was not for the Korean War, a conflict that is technically still going on, the reality of North Korea possibly starting World War 3 would not exist.