

George Mason University
The Proficiency Guidelines for the Basic Korean Language Program
(Updated in Fall 2021)

The Korean Studies Program at George Mason University currently offers four levels of basic Korean language courses as below:

1. KORE 110 Elementary Korean (6 Credits)
2. KORE 201 Intermediate Korean I (3 Credits)
3. KORE 202 Intermediate Korean II (3 Credits)
4. KORE 301 Advanced Korean Language & Culture (3 Credits)

Learning objectives are expressed as brief statements describing what students should know and be able to do by the end of each course. The learning objectives are stated in terms of both their language skills and their performance in class. First, you can find the descriptions of what learners can do in Korean in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations, based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines. In conjunction with such major language skills, the learning objectives are also described in terms of learners' performance at each level by three different modes of communication (i.e., Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational), following the ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners. Finally, language-specific learning goals in terms of vocabulary and grammar as well as cultural knowledge at each proficiency level in Korean have also been included.

1. KORE 110 Elementary Korean (6 Credits)

Speaking	Students can communicate minimally by using memorized words and phrases in learned contexts. They can handle some basic daily tasks, but their conversation is restricted to a few predictable topics necessary for survival needs. Students can respond to simple, direct questions with two or three words at a time and ask a few formulaic questions, but their language consists primarily of short and sometimes incomplete sentences. Students may be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to nonnatives, with repetition or rephrasing. Interpersonal skills: Given a pair or group activity in class, students can communicate in simplified conversations on familiar and everyday topics, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions. Presentational skills: Students can orally present some basic information to the class on learned topics, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences but will often pause and resort to their first language.
Writing	Students can reproduce some memorized words and phrases in learned contexts to supply basic biographical information, such as names, numbers, and nationality. Their writing includes frequent misspellings and may be difficult to be understood by natives not accustomed to non-natives. Interpersonal skills: Students can communicate each other by text messages in very simplified conversations on familiar and everyday topics, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions. Presentational skills: Students can present some basic information to the class on learned topics through posters and PowerPoints, using practiced or

	memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences but may only partially communicate their intentions due to inadequate vocabulary and grammar.
Listening	Students can recognize and understand high-frequency and highly contextualized words and phrases. Typically, they can understand one utterance at a time, and repetition may be required. Students may understand speech dealing with areas of practical needs, as well as highly standardized classroom instructions, where the related vocabulary has been learned. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can identify the general topic in familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and short sentences.
Reading	Students can recognize the letters or symbols of a syllabic writing system and identify highly contextualized words and phrases. Rereading is often required. Students may understand written texts dealing with basic biographical information and daily school life, where the related vocabulary has been learned. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can identify the general topic in familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and short sentences.
Vocabulary/ Grammar	Students can conjugate about 30 basic verbs and 20 basic adjectives in polite ending in present tense and can make use of about 20 basic time expressions and adverbs. They can identify the stem of a given verb or adjective in root form and conjugate it in present tense and past tense. In addition, students can understand about 10 basic Sino-Korean morphemes, from which semantically related compound words derive. At this level, students partially understand the use of varied particles in Korean sentences and different word order in Korean.
Cultural Knowledge	Students begin to identify different speech styles in Korean depending on the relationships between interlocutors. They can use some appropriate forms of address and titles in Korean in learned contexts. Students become familiarized with some culturally appropriate gestures and greetings. At this level, students can understand some of the basic aspects of Korean culture, including food, manners, customs, and holidays and can discuss how they differ from their own.

2. KORE 201 Intermediate Korean I (3 Credits)

Speaking	Students can handle successfully a limited number of basic communicative tasks, but their conversations are restricted to predictable daily topics relating to personal information needed for survival. Students can respond to direct questions and request for information. They can also combine what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors into short sentences. Students can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used to nonnatives, with repetition or rephrasing, but their speech is characterized by frequent pauses and self-corrections. Interpersonal skills: Given a pair or group activity in class, students can communicate in simplified conversations on familiar and everyday topics in different tenses, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions. Presentational skills: Students can orally present some basic information to the class on learned topics in different tenses, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, and sentences.
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Writing	Students can meet some limited practical writing needs. They can formulate simple statements and questions based on familiar materials, such as personal preferences and daily routines. They can write short and simple conversational-style sentences with basic word order, often with repetitive structures. Their writing may show some control of basic sentence structure, which is mostly framed in present time but may contain references to other time frames. Their writing can be generally understood by natives used to the writing of non-natives, but there may be basic errors in grammar, word choice, and spelling. Interpersonal skills: Students can communicate each other by text messages or emails in simplified conversations on familiar and everyday topics in different tenses, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions. Presentational skills: Students can present some basic information to the class on learned topics in different tenses through posters and PowerPoints, using practiced or memorized words, phrases, and sentences.
Listening	Students can understand some basic information from simple, sentence-length speech in personal and daily life contexts, although comprehension is often uneven. Typically, their comprehension will be most often accurate with highly familiar and predictable topics, although frequent misinterpretations may occur. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the general topic and very basic information in familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and short sentences.
Reading	Students can understand some information from short and simple texts that convey basic information dealing with personal and daily life topics, although frequent misinterpretations may occur. They may also comprehend some meaning from short connected texts featuring very familiar topics. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the general topic and very basic information in familiar and everyday contexts by recognizing practiced or memorized words, phrases, and short sentences.
Vocabulary/ Grammar	Students can conjugate about 50 basic verbs and 30 basic adjectives in polite ending and deferential ending and can make use of about 30 basic time expressions and adverbs. They can identify the stem of a given verb or adjective in root form and conjugate it in three different tenses. Students also begin to understand the three different types of conjugation in Korean and irregular conjugation which works accordingly. In addition, students can understand about 20 basic Sino-Korean morphemes, from which semantically related compound words derive. At this level, students become more familiarized with the use of varied particles in Korean sentences and different word order in Korean.
Cultural Knowledge	Students understand the use of different speech styles (i.e., intimate, polite, deferential) in Korean depending on the relationships between interlocutors. They also begin to use honorifics in learned contexts and to understand the difference between speech styles and honorifics. Students can use appropriate forms of address and titles in Korean and demonstrate basic writing etiquettes when writing an email or card in Korean. At this level, students can understand diverse aspects of Korean culture, including Korea family system, Korean education system, and Korean ethos and can discuss how they differ from their own.

3. KORE 202 Intermediate Korean II (3 Credits)

Speaking	<p>Students can handle successfully a variety of simple communicative tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to their work, school, and recreation. Students can function reactively by responding to direct questions or requests for information. They can express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining known elements and conversational input to produce responses at a sentence-level. Students can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although their speech may contain pauses, reformulations, and self-corrections. They will have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating time and aspect, and fail to maintain paragraph-length discourse.</p> <p>Interpersonal skills: Given a pair or group activity in class, students can communicate in spontaneous conversations on a variety of familiar topics in different tenses by creating sentences to ask and answer questions. Presentational skills: Students can orally present information and express their thoughts to the class about a variety of familiar topics in different tenses, using series of connected sentences.</p>
Writing	<p>Students can meet most of practical writing needs and can write simple summaries related to school and work experiences, in addition to personal preferences and daily routines. They can narrate in different time frames when writing about everyday events and situations in about a paragraph length. Their writing can be understood readily by natives used to the writing of non-natives. However, their writing may be inconsistent in the use of appropriate major time markers and their vocabulary and grammar may still correspond to oral discourse.</p> <p>Interpersonal skills: Students can communicate by text messages or social media in spontaneous conversations on a variety of familiar topics in different tenses by creating sentences to ask and answer questions. Presentational skills: Students can present information and express their thoughts to the class about a variety of familiar topics in different tenses, using series of connected sentences through PowerPoints or online discussion boards.</p>
Listening	<p>Students can understand a variety of information from simple, sentence-length speech in basic personal and social contexts. They can derive substantial meaning from some connected texts, although there often will be gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary and structures of the spoken language.</p> <p>Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the main idea and some of the supporting details on a variety of familiar topics in different tenses from a paragraph-length spoken text.</p>
Reading	<p>Students can understand short, non-complex texts that convey basic information dealing with personal and social topics. They may also understand some short, connected texts featuring description and narration, although there will be occasional gaps in understanding due to a limited knowledge of the vocabulary, structures, and writing conventions of the language.</p> <p>Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the main idea and some of the supporting details on a variety of familiar topics in different tenses from a paragraph-length written text.</p>
Vocabulary/ Grammar	<p>Students can conjugate about 80 basic verbs and 50 basic adjectives in different speech styles (i.e. intimate, polite, deferential), and can use about 50 basic adverbs and time expressions. They become familiarized with the three different types of conjugation in Korean and irregular conjugation which works accordingly. In</p>

	<p>addition, students can understand about 30 basic Sino-Korean morphemes, from which semantically related compound words derive. At this level, students become comfortable with the use of varied particles in Korean sentences and different word order in Korean. Students are also introduced to the written form in Korean, although they are still used to the spoken form and they begin to understand the usage of varied indirection expressions in Korean.</p>
Cultural Knowledge	<p>Students can use appropriate speech styles in Korean (i.e. intimate, polite, deferential) depending on contexts and the relationships between interlocutors. They can also use honorifics appropriately in different tenses and distinguish the use of honorifics with speech styles. Students can use varied forms of address and titles in Korean, as well as culturally appropriate expressions and gestures. They also begin to understand the difference in written and spoken communication in Korean. At this level, students can understand diverse aspects of Korean culture in both traditional and modern societies and how they differ from their own and can discuss some of the major issues in Korea today.</p>

4. KORE 301 Advanced Korean Language & Culture (3 Credits)

Speaking	<p>Students can handle a variety of communicative tasks and participate in both informal and formal conversations on topics related to school, home, leisure activities, and employment. They can narrate across the major time frames and can combine and link sentences into a paragraph-length discourse. Students can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may require some repetition or restatement. Their speech is also marked by a certain grammatical roughness, irregular flow, and self-correction. Interpersonal skills: Given a pair or group activity in class, students can maintain spontaneous conversations and discussions across various time frames as well as different speech styles on a variety of familiar and some unfamiliar topics using series of connected sentences and probing questions. Presentational skills: Students can orally deliver an organized presentation to the class on familiar as well as some unfamiliar topics in paragraphs, using various time frames in deferential speech style.</p>
Writing	<p>Students can meet basic academic writing needs, in addition to practical needs. They demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in major time frames with some control of aspect. Students can combine and link sentences into texts of paragraph length and structure. However, their writing may resort to some redundancy and awkward expressions and rely on the writing style of their first language. Their writing can be understood by natives not accustomed to the writing of non-natives with some efforts. Interpersonal skills: Students can maintain spontaneous conversations and discussions by text messages or social media across various time frames as well as different speech styles on a variety of familiar and some unfamiliar topics using series of connected sentences and probing questions. Presentational skills: Students can present information and their organized thoughts to the class on familiar as well as some unfamiliar topics across various time frames in deferential ending or in written form using connected texts through PowerPoints or online discussion boards.</p>

Listening	Students can understand short conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things, and narrations about past, present, and future events. They can derive substantial meaning from connected texts, although their comprehension may primarily be from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the main idea as well as supporting details from connected spoken texts on a variety of familiar and some unfamiliar topics across various time frames in different speech styles.
Reading	Students can understand some connected texts featuring conventional narrative and descriptive texts, such as expanded descriptions of persons, places, and things, and narrations about past, present, and future events. Their comprehension may often derive from situational and subject-matter knowledge. Interpretive skills: Given authentic materials in class, students can understand the main idea as well as supporting details from connected written texts on a variety of familiar and some unfamiliar topics across various time frames in different speech styles.
Vocabulary/ Grammar	Students can conjugate about 100 basic verbs in different speech styles (i.e. intimate, polite, deferential) across the major time frames of past, present, and future. They can also make use of about 80 basic adjectives, as well as 80 basic adverbs and time expressions. In addition, students can understand about 40 basic Sino-Korean morphemes, from which semantically related compound words derive. At this level, students are familiarized with the written form in Korean and demonstrate understanding of indirect expressions and quotations in Korean, as well as of the subtle differences in similar expressions.
Cultural Knowledge	Students can use appropriate speech styles in Korean (i.e. intimate, polite, deferential) depending on contexts and the relationships between interlocutors. They can also use honorifics appropriately in different tenses as well as in different speech styles. Students can use varied forms of address and titles in Korean appropriately and can understand nonverbal cultural practices and the differences in written and spoken communication in Korean. At this level, students can understand diverse aspects of Korean culture in both traditional and modern societies and can discuss cultural differences related to people's values and behaviors, and lifestyles. They can also discuss some major social and political issues in Korea today, which are increasingly reflective of authentic cultural practices and perspectives.