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From Sheriff of the World to Imperialist... Where America Goes After Trump's Election

Lim Jae-heuk

1. Why America's Choice Is Turning Back to Trump

In the last election, Trump pledged to impose a 10–20% tariff on all imports under the slogan "Make America Great Again (MAGA)." He won North Carolina and Georgia, secured Pennsylvania, one of the largest swing states, and ultimately won the election by gaining the upper hand in seven key states. According to the Associated Press, Trump weakened the coalition of Democratic supporters and increased his vote share among young people of color. This was due to strong support for Trump and the Democratic Party's failure to address important issues.

Recently, controversies have arisen over transgender participation in women's sports, the use of restrooms according to gender identity, and politically correct perspectives on gender identity. As a reaction, more people have begun to view "woke" politics as excessive. Trump recognized this sentiment and immediately incorporated it into his campaign, particularly focusing on transgender issues. Trump recognized this sentiment and immediately incorporated it into his campaign, particularly focusing on transgender issues.



by the white house

He capitalized on this by questioning "political correctness" and gaining support from those concerned about the left-leaning shift in cultural debates. Rep. Susan Wild (D-N.Y.) said her party's approval ratings only rose early on and stagnated because Democrats focused on LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, which were perceived as less directly important to everyday life.

and stagnated because Democrats focused on LGBTQ rights and abortion rights, which were perceived as less directly important to everyday life. Anthony Salvanto, CBS Executive Director of Elections and Surveys, stated that some Democrats felt their efforts to promote gender and racial equality had become excessive.

In addition, Americans' perceptions of immigrants have worsened. A 2024 CNN poll showed a sharp rise in concerns about illegal immigration compared to 2020. Support for Trump, who promised a tough stance on immigration, increased as public anxiety over immigrant-related crime grew.



Inflation surged after President Biden took office, especially as food prices rose, making life more difficult for ordinary citizens. Rising oil prices further exacerbated the situation.

Moreover, higher interest rates have made it harder for citizens to manage credit card debt. As a result, Trump's credibility strengthened, given his emphasis on economic issues.

2. A Policy Implemented After Trump Took Office

Shortly after the Trump administration was inaugurated, it declared a national energy emergency. Trump announced that he would replenish the U.S. oil reserves to secure affordable and reliable energy sources. He also actively pursued oil and gas drilling under the slogan "Drill, baby, drill," aiming to expand employment, lower oil prices, and stabilize the economy. An executive order titled "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential" was issued, outlining plans to develop natural resources such as oil and gas in Alaska to boost domestic supply and exports.



by the white house

In his inaugural address, President Trump also declared a state of emergency concerning national borders, stating that U.S. sovereignty was under threat. "All illegal entry will be suspended immediately, and we will implement the process of returning millions of criminal aliens to where they came from," he said. This declaration also sought to end the birthright citizenship system, which automatically grants U.S. citizenship to children born on U.S. soil to illegal immigrants. The Catch and Release system, which allowed illegal aliens not involved in violent crimes to be released pending immigration court hearings, was also targeted for elimination by Trump. Additionally, Trump suggested that full tariffs could be imposed on China, Canada, and Mexico.



On the international stage, he withdrew from the Paris Agreement, criticizing the "Green New Deal" in his inaugural speech, and signed an executive order to withdraw the U.S. from the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, citing dissatisfaction with its handling of COVID-19.

These announcements, made shortly after Trump took office, complicated the social situation. Trump's nationalist moves unsettled the international community, showing a very different pattern from the previous world order. The United States, once a central pillar of the capitalist world, appeared to step back from its traditional leadership role, shaking the credibility of the economic and security frameworks it had helped establish.

3. Trump's Card Game with the World

President Trump and his aides clashed with Ukrainian President Zelenskyy during his visit to the White House. Trump reportedly told Zelenskyy, "Without us, you have no cards... Ukraine should be thankful to the U.S." The two countries agreed to jointly develop Ukrainian mineral resources and share the profits, but no detailed security guarantees for Ukraine were included, exposing Trump's imperialistic tendencies.



by the white house

Trump had earlier proposed purchasing Greenland, the world's largest island, roughly 10 times the size of the Korean Peninsula. Historically, Greenland was part of the Kalmar Union led by Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, and later belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway. After the Treaty of Kiel, Greenland remained Danish. Although Greenland has autonomy today, Denmark retains control over its diplomacy and defense.



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Why was the U.S. suddenly interested in Greenland? Greenland borders the Arctic Ocean, and the U.S. has long seen it as a key military and strategic asset.

During World War II, the U.S. and Denmark signed a defense treaty allowing U.S. bases in Greenland. The island's strategic value continued through the Cold War, especially for monitoring Moscow. President Truman even attempted to purchase Greenland during his administration.



Trump revived the idea of purchasing Greenland during his first term and again during his second. As Arctic glaciers melt, enabling submarine and warship movement, control over new Arctic routes would allow the U.S. to better position itself against China and Russia. In 2018, China published an Arctic policy white paper, signaling its ambitions in the region. Chinese companies have also started exploration projects in Greenland. The Arctic Ocean offers economic advantages, potentially reducing the shipping time between East Asia and Europe by 10 days. China's interest stems from securing trade routes and countering U.S. and Canadian influence.

routes and countering U.S. and Canadian influence.
Despite its autonomy, Greenland struggles economically and cannot easily resist Chinese investments. Trump saw acquiring Greenland as vital to protecting U.S. security interests.

Similarly, the Panama Canal became a focus for Trump. Completed by the United States in 1914 during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, the Panama Canal connected the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and offered immense economic and military advantages. After helping Panama achieve independence from Colombia, the U.S. gained permanent control over the canal. However, under growing Panamanian nationalist pressure, President Jimmy Carter signed the Torrijos–Carter Treaties in 1977 to gradually transfer control back to Panama.

After Trump's election, he stated he would seek to regain control over the Panama Canal. The canal currently handles 4–5% of global trade, with the U.S. as its primary customer and China as the second-largest. China's increasing investments in the canal and Panama's diplomatic shift from Taiwan to China have fueled U.S. concerns about losing influence in Latin America. Trump emphasized the strategic importance of the canal and pledged to reassert American control.

Following Trump's election, the European Union responded quickly to his tariff threats. Trump announced tariffs worth $28 billion against the EU, and the EU retaliated with tariffs worth €26 billion. Canada also announced retaliatory tariffs worth 30 trillion won.

Meanwhile, East Asia harbors fears about Trump's escalating tariff wars. India and the Philippines are considered less vulnerable due to their strong domestic economies and export portfolios that do not

heavily compete with U.S. products. However, they are exposed through service exports such as outsourcing and software services, which could be affected if Trump targets the services trade. Malaysia and Thailand, important players in semiconductor and automotive supply chains, have benefited from supply chain shifts and may partially offset the impacts.

Nevertheless, deeper dependence on China suggests that ASEAN economies could face indirect impacts. ASEAN economies are tightly linked to China through trade and investment agreements, placing them within Trump's tariff range.



Within Asia, China, Korea, and Vietnam have large trade surpluses with the United States and rely heavily on external demand. In particular, North Asian economies such as China, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan are more vulnerable to tariffs than South Asian countries like India and Southeast Asian nations like the Philippines. By industry, Trump's drive to expand domestic production of high-tech products could significantly impact Asia's semiconductor, AI, and new energy sectors.

4. Where Should Korea Stand in the Meantime?

The impact of the Trump administration's tariff policies on the Korean economy cannot be overlooked. It is crucial for Korean companies and the government to take preemptive measures, such as diversifying export markets and strengthening industrial competitiveness, to ensure economic sustainability amid rising global protectionism.

First, Korea must diversify its export markets. Korea's heavy reliance on China and the U.S. makes it vulnerable to their intensifying trade conflicts. Expanding exports to emerging markets like ASEAN and Europe and strengthening the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) network are necessary steps. This would secure a more stable export base and reduce dependence on any single country.

Second, Korea must enhance industrial competitiveness and invest in future technologies. As protectionist trends grow, Korea should focus on fostering high value-added industries and developing new industries to maintain international competitiveness.

In conclusion, faced with the new challenges of Trump's protectionism, the Korean economy must respond strategically on multiple fronts—including diversifying export markets, stabilizing exchange rates, boosting industrial competitiveness, and expanding domestic demand—to ensure long-term resilience and growth.

Blunder of Ukraine

Kim Young-jun

"He is not ready for peace."
"Come back when you are ready for peace."

On February 28, 2025, at the White House in Washington, D.C., U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy held a summit that ended in an unprecedented diplomatic clash.

President Trump demanded monetary compensation, including a share of Ukraine's mineral revenues, in return for the military aid the U.S. had provided. President Zelenskyy firmly refused, citing the absence of future security guarantees from the U.S. as a dealbreaker. As a result, the summit ended without agreement.

This was more than a failed negotiation—it devolved into a shouting match and mutual accusations. What unfolded was far from a diplomatic meeting between world leaders. Ukraine's national dignity was left in tatters.

0. Tension Before the Talks Even Began

Zelenskyy visited the White House to sign a mineral agreement. However, he arrived wearing only a black shirt, rather than formal attire. Trump, in front of reporters, sarcastically remarked, "Dressed up for the occasion, I see!"

Zelenskyy is known for wearing military fatigues or black shirts even at official events. According to several media outlets, Trump had requested he not wear military garb, but the Ukrainian president declined to comply.

The dress controversy escalated during the press Q&A. A reporter asked mockingly, "Why aren't you wearing a suit? Do you even own one?" The room, including the Vice President, broke into laughter.

Zelenskyy calmly responded, "I'll wear a suit when the war is over. It may be cheaper than yours, or it may be more expensive."

1. "To Achieve Peace, Follow America"

The summit began with polite formalities, but about 40 minutes in, U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance said that the path to peace and prosperity lay in diplomacy. Though seemingly benign, the statement sparked tension, as Zelenskyy publicly criticized its implications. "What kind of diplomacy are you referring to?" Zelenskyy asked Vance. He then brought up Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and the full-scale invasion three years ago. "No one stopped Putin," he added.

The atmosphere in the White House grew visibly tense. Zelensky's public criticism of the U.S. in front of American media drew accusations of rudeness. Vance responded sharply, saying, "It's disrespectful to come to the White House and lecture us," and added, "You should start by thanking the President."

2. "America Must One Day Feel the Fear of War"

Zelenskyy further inflamed tensions, saying, "America has the luxury of a beautiful ocean, the Atlantic. You may not feel threatened now, but someday you will. May God help you then."

Later in the conversation, he said, "Since the war began, we have been alone—but we are grateful." Many interpreted this as a veiled threat: that the U.S. would one day experience the threat of war itself.

Trump became visibly angry. "Don't tell us what we're going to feel," he snapped back. "We've given you $350 billion. Ukraine was never alone." He added, "Ukraine has no cards to play. You're in deep trouble, and you are not winning."

Accusing Zelenskyy of recklessness, Trump declared, "You're gambling with World War III. What you're doing is deeply disrespectful to America." Vice President Vance joined in: "Have you thanked us even once today? No. Not a single word of gratitude during this meeting."

The Ukrainian ambassador to the U.S., who was observing the exchange, reportedly hung his head in silence. In the end, the mineral agreement was shelved, the joint press conference canceled, and Zelenskyy departed the White House without a deal.



3. "Zelensky Doesn't Want Peace"

Shortly after the meeting, the White House posted on social media, stating, "Gratitude is a virtue. The President's office is not the place for such disrespect."

Senator Lindsey Graham praised Trump's conduct as a "masterclass in leadership," while Secretary of State Marco Rubio demanded an apology from Zelenskyy for "ruining the summit."

Following the incident, Trump halted all aid to Ukraine—not only military support but also intelligence sharing—seriously undermining Ukraine's war-fighting capabilities.

Checkmate Ukraine



Zelenskyy quickly took a step back, signaling his willingness to sign the mineral agreement. He expressed regret over the clash with Trump and pledged to work toward peace under the President's "strong leadership."

Under this draft, a "Reconstruction Investment Fund" will be established by both countries to manage Ukraine's natural resources.

The agreement outlines control over all critical minerals listed under U.S. energy law—including rare earth elements, lithium, titanium, and aluminum—as well as related infrastructure.

Fifty percent of all mined resources in Ukraine would go to the U.S., along withoperational control of their extraction facilities.

Ukraine gained nothing from this war. It lost 20% of its territory and thousands of young soldiers. In exchange for waging war with borrowed resources, it now must hand over half of its own.

This was a blunder. Ukraine has lost its pawns—its people—and its rooks—its territory. It never had bishops or knights—it borrowed them—and now it has lost its queen: its infrastructure and natural resources. Pride alone could not protect the nation.

As Professor Moon-young Lee of Seoul National University put it,

"The age of elegant hypocrisy is over. The era of honest savagery has begun."

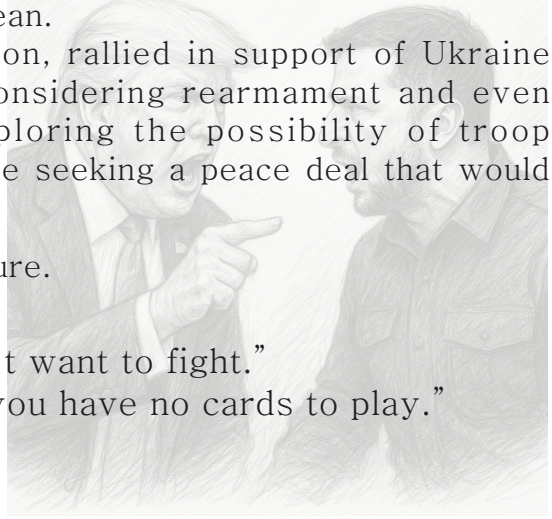
That one sentence cuts to the heart of today's geopolitical landscape. Human rights and peace were always hypocritical tools for the logic of power. But now, even that hypocrisy is no longer needed. What remains is raw, honest self-interest. Ukraine has no cards left. The U.S. and Russia are apex predators, each with a full deck. Ukraine, with nothing left to bluff, has become prey. The rabbit was devoured—its people and land taken by the bear, and its resources by the eagle.

There is no reason to cease fire.

Russia has no incentive to end the war now. The tide is in its favor. The U.S., too, is ready to exit. Trump sees continued support for Ukraine as a waste of taxpayer money.

Russia is now actively avoiding serious ceasefire talks and signaling its intent to fight on. Meanwhile, European reactions are increasingly divergent from those of the U.S. For countries on the same continent as the war, the threat feels far more immediate than for those across a peaceful ocean.

European leaders, in contrast to Washington, rallied in support of Ukraine following the failed summit. Germany is considering rearmament and even conscription. France and the UK are exploring the possibility of troop deployment. Russia, for its part, appears to be seeking a peace deal that would amount to Ukraine's surrender.



But Trump, like Putin, is turning up the pressure.

"Don't tell Putin what to do," Trump said.

"Just say you want peazce. Say you don't want to fight."

"People are dying. And you, Zelenskyy—you have no cards to play."



10th Anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement: Broken Promises and the Reality We Face

Kim Ga-young

In the age of the climate crisis, the promise we must keep — 10th anniversary of the Paris Climate Agreement

Record-breaking heat waves, localized heavy rainfall, and unusual seasonal shifts make it clear that our climate has drastically changed. The climate crisis has become a part of our daily vocabulary and is no longer a distant future threat.

In this context, the Paris Climate Agreement, in which the entire world made a single promise to respond to climate change in December 2015, celebrated its 10th anniversary this year.

What have we protected and missed over the past 10 years? We interviewed Jeong Il-woong, a professor in the Department of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences at Gangneung-Wonju National University to discuss the scientific and policy significance of the Paris Climate Agreement, the current status of implementation, the reality of Korea's climate policy, and the attitude that university students, the future generation, should have in the era of climate crisis.

Paris Climate Agreement: A Historic Turning Point That Became Everyone's Promise

Professor Jeong Il-woong explained the starting point of the Paris Climate Agreement as follows.

"Unlike the previous Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement is the first global agreement in which all countries, not just developed countries, voluntarily participate in climate action. This framework, which empowers each country to define and periodically update its own Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for greenhouse gas reduction, represents a significant advancement from the previous top-down, mandatory reduction model."

The agreement goes beyond a mere commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, setting forth more specific and quantitative targets: limiting the global average temperature rise to within 2° C above pre-industrial levels and striving to further restrict it to 1.5° C. Professor Jeong described the difference between 1.5° C and 2° C as "not just a numerical distinction, but a critical threshold for the survival of ecosystems."

"A 2° C rise in global temperatures could result in the loss of 99.5% of the world's coral reefs. However, scientific evidence indicates that limiting the increase to 1.5° C could preserve approximately 50 - 70% of these ecosystems. This distinction is significant because the threshold for climate action is not merely about achieving lower temperatures; it directly impacts biodiversity and the conditions necessary for human survival."

Professor Jeong further emphasized that "the adoption of the IPCC's Special Report on 1.5° C is not merely a recommendation but a policy guideline that

has been deliberated and approved by governments and scientists worldwide." He highlighted that this report served as a pivotal moment for the international community to collectively recognize and share the urgency and severity of the climate crisis.

Climate Crisis: Promises Still Unfulfilled

Ten years after the Paris Agreement, Professor Jeong does not hide his concerns about the current situation.

"There have certainly been efforts to address the climate crisis. However, when we look at the outcomes, the level of implementation remains seriously lacking and has yet to produce meaningful results."

Indeed, according to a recent report published by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the IPCC, the average global temperature is projected to exceed 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels by 2024. Citing data from Japan's Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW), Professor Jeong noted that the concentrations of major greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), and nitrous oxide (N_2O)—are continuously rising.

"The greatest concern is methane. Methane's short-term warming effect is nearly 80 times stronger than that of carbon dioxide, yet it receives minimal policy attention. The CO_2 concentration at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii increased by more than 2.3 ppm in just one year. This clearly shows that climate policies are not translating into real reductions."



The Reality in Korea: Strong Declarations, Weak Implementation

In 2020, the Korean government announced its goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 and set a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030 compared to 2018. However, the current pace of implementation falls far short of that goal.

"We've only managed a reduction of about 7.6% over the past five years. That means we must reduce the remaining 33.4% in the next five years, which is virtually impossible at the current pace."

Professor Jeong emphasized that meaningful reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is nearly impossible without renewable energy, especially since the energy sector accounts for 94% of Korea's total emissions. He also pointed out problems such as Korea's renewable energy share—about 21.6%, the lowest among OECD countries—and the nuclear-focused energy policy reinforced under President Yoon Suk-yeol.

"There is a lack of consistency and direction in our energy policy. Even considering industry resistance, the government must provide clear reduction guidelines and incentives for businesses. I'm concerned that economic interests are taking precedence over the principle of carbon neutrality."

The international climate policy analysis group Climate Action Tracker currently

rates Korea as "Highly Insufficient," projecting that if current policies persist, they could contribute to a global temperature increase of 2 to 3° C by 2100.

College Students and the Climate Crisis: The Crisis of Indifference

Professor Jeong also identified the lack of awareness among university students as one of the most serious challenges.

"The climate crisis is no longer just an environmental issue—it's a matter of survival, linked to food, energy, the economy, and public health. Yet among students, it is still often seen as something abstract or distant."

Despite large-scale wildfires in Uljin and Gyeongnam and repeated heatwaves, Professor Jeong expressed concern that many students still fail to recognize the climate crisis as an immediate threat.

"We're still at the level of thinking, 'There must be a fire in some distant mountain.' But the abnormal weather events we see today are already deeply connected to our everyday lives."

He emphasized the importance of using terms like "global heating" or "climate crisis" instead of the more passive "global warming." According to him, the change has already begun—and we are no longer in the phase of responding, but rather in an emergency.

"What we need most now is interest and participation. Read books like Final Warning: Extinction at 6 Degrees, share your thoughts with others, and take action in your own way. Even small steps—like social media campaigns, joining climate clubs, or choosing an environmental topic for your graduation project—can make a difference. Action is closer than you think, and small actions can shift culture and society."

Keeping Our Promises Secures Our Future

The Paris Agreement marked a turning point in the global response to the climate crisis. But promises only matter when they are fulfilled. Over the past decade, there have been numerous declarations, but implementation has been slow—and as a result, we are edging closer to a tipping point.

The next ten years are more critical than ever. Governments, businesses, and each of us as citizens must take more concrete and practical steps. Above all, today's university students—who will shape the society of tomorrow—must no longer turn a blind eye to the climate emergency.

The climate crisis is not a distant problem. It's already here, affecting our lives today. The choices we make now will determine the future of our planet. Keeping our promises is the key to protecting that future.



The Secret of Bamboo: A Tree That Dies After Blooming Once!

Shin Su-jin



Did you know that bamboo isn't actually a tree? Despite its name, bamboo is technically a type of grass! Many people assume it's a tree simply because its name includes the word "tree" in Korean ("대나무"), but bamboo is botanically classified as grass. You can even spot bamboo growing right here on our school campus. Although it's such a familiar plant in our daily lives, there are still many common misconceptions about it. common misconceptions about it. Let's explore some fascinating and lesser-known facts about bamboo.

First, although bamboo looks like a tree, it has very different characteristics. Bamboo has a stem that may resemble a tree trunk and branches, but its internal structure is different. Bamboo stems are hollow inside, and unlike trees that grow wider over time with annual rings, bamboo doesn't increase in thickness once it's fully grown. This is one of the reasons bamboo is classified as grass, not a tree.

So, if bamboo flowers, when does it happen? Bamboo blooms only once every 10 to 120 years! After spending such a long time preparing to flower, all the bamboo in that area dies. This phenomenon is called "bamboo flowering disease" (대나무 개화병).

To understand this, we need to look at the life cycle of bamboo.

Bamboo is known for growing rapidly—up to 1 meter in a single day. There are even old execution methods where a person was tied above bamboo shoots, and the rapid growth would eventually cause fatal injury. But before bamboo reaches that rapid growth stage, it grows very slowly while establishing deep roots. After a few years, it suddenly begins to grow rapidly. Then, once it blooms, all the bamboo in the area dies. This is because what seems like individual plants are actually part of the same organism, connected by a shared root system. So when one flowers, the whole grove dies with it.



Now, let's talk about another fascinating trait of bamboo. Bamboo thrives in extreme environments. It can grow with less water and fewer nutrients than most other plants, making it incredibly resilient. Bamboo performs well in hot, humid climates and windy regions. Thanks to this hardiness, it grows all over the world—not only in Asia, but also in parts of Africa and South America. Moreover, since bamboo establishes deep roots early in life, even if a nuclear bomb were to go off, the roots could survive and regrow.

How does bamboo reproduce? There are two main ways: sexual and asexual reproduction. In asexual reproduction, genetically identical offspring are produced from the parent, allowing for rapid population growth. This method is efficient, using fewer resources and enabling fast recovery even after disasters like wildfires or floods.

In sexual reproduction, bamboo flowers and produces seeds. The major advantage here is genetic diversity. Asexual reproduction doesn't allow for variation since the offspring are clones, but sexual reproduction combines genes from two parents to create genetically

diverse offspring. Bamboo flowers are often unisexual—meaning individual plants bear either male or female flowers, not both—so pollination typically occurs through the wind.

As mentioned earlier, bamboo stems are hollow and cylindrical. This unique structure allows bamboo to grow tall quickly while staying lightweight. Though light, bamboo stems are reinforced with strong fibers, making them extremely durable. This design helps bamboo withstand strong winds and even typhoons. The flexibility of its hollow stem also enables bamboo to bend without breaking and return to its survival and strength.



What happens to the environment when bamboo flowering disease causes an entire grove to die? The impact extends beyond just the bamboo population. Because bamboo flowers so infrequently and dies en masse afterward, the surrounding ecosystem is greatly affected. If a large bamboo grove suddenly disappears, it creates a ripple effect across the local environment. Other plant species may move in, and animals that depend on bamboo may have to relocate, leading to ecological imbalance. This shows how quickly nature can change.

Just like this story about bamboo, there may be many things we think we know that are actually misconceptions. Learning more about bamboo reminds us to re-examine to re-examine what we take for granted. While its rapid growth is well-known, the fact that bamboo dies after flowering and how it adapts to extreme environments are lesser-known but significant aspects of its life cycle.

Hopefully, this article offers a deeper understanding of natural phenomena we often overlook. The more we uncover nature's secrets, the more our perspective on the world evolves. Not everything we consider common knowledge is true, and being open to learning new things is essential. In our daily lives, maintaining a critical mindset and being open to diverse viewpoints is more important than ever.

Monkeys Following the Evolutionary Path like Humans: Animals Entering the Paleolithic Age

Shin Su-jin

Have you ever heard of animals that create and use tools? As you may know, this trait was once thought to be unique to humans, first appearing in the Paleolithic era. However, scientists have discovered that there are animals today that not only use tools but also intentionally craft them—a groundbreaking behavior previously unseen outside of humans. The animal demonstrating this is the capuchin monkey.



Capuchin monkeys are primarily found from Nicaragua in Central America to northern Argentina in South America. So, how exactly do these monkeys make tools? They mainly use hard stones like quartzite. This indicates that capuchin monkeys are able to distinguish between hard and soft stones, selecting the right materials to make tools. After selecting a suitable stone, they strike it with another hard rock, resulting in sharp fragments remarkably similar to the chipped stone tools (like hand axes)made by early humans during the Paleolithic era.

Let’s now compare capuchin monkeys to humans. The tools created by capuchins resemble some of the earliest stone tools humans made, such as unifacial axes or choppers. Humans used such tools to evolve culturally and develop language, gradually building civilization. So what kind of evolutionary path might capuchins follow? While capuchins do cooperate and communicatewith each other in ways similar to early humans, they have not yet developed languageto the level required for complex civilization.

If capuchin monkeys were to develop language and societal structures like humans did, could a new intelligent specieseventually emerge? According to some experiments, if humans were to intervene and guide their development, capuchins could enter an agricultural society within 2 million years.

With human involvement, they could evolve into a highly advanced species—or, alternatively, human interference could hinder their natural evolution.



What do you think about the possibility of another species evolving to become like humans? As the top predator in the natural world, humans have the power to influence the fate of other species. If left alone, capuchin monkeys will continue to adapt and evolve within their own environment, following their own natural path. The outcome of such evolution is impossible to predict.

So, what exactly is the role of humans in nature? Humans have the power to alter nature at will, and yet, at times, we are helpless in the face of natural disasters. Some argue that these disasters are consequences of our own actions. Does that make humanity a negative force in nature? As the Earth continues to warm, we fear the environment will become unsuitable for human life. But the Earth has gone through fiery agesand ice agesbefore. From nature’s perspective, climate change is just another phase in Earth’s long history. For us, however, it means slow and inevitable change that could spell disaster for our species.

Humans are just one species within nature, yet we possess the unique ability to coexist with natureand sustain our species over the long term. If we use this ability wisely, we can continue to benefit from the Earth for generations. In the case of the capuchin monkeys, if human involvement can lead to mutual benefit for humans, monkeys, and nature, that would be an ideal outcome. But the side effects of such involvement are unpredictable. Just as the extinction of bees could lead to the extinction of humans, the emergence or disappearance of a single speciesin nature can have enormous consequences.

Therefore, we have a responsibility to observe what is happening in nature and preparefor the outcomes. Evolution and extinction are not isolated events—they are deeply connected to the entire ecosystem, including us.

Worsening Poverty and Rising Homelessness in the Wake of COVID-19: A Serious Increase

Kwon Hyun-hee

Economic Recession and Rising Homelessness After COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected economies worldwide, and South Korea was no exception. The lockdown measures and social distancing policies implemented in the early stages of the pandemic dealt a severe blow to small business owners, self-employed individuals, and many workers. Unemployment and economic instability resulted in more people falling into homelessness.



According to data from the Ministry of Health and Welfare and local governments, the current number of homeless individuals in South Korea is estimated to be around 8,900, including roughly 1,595 street dwellers. Notably, the number of homeless women has been rising, and among those living in shelters, individuals in their 60s represent the largest proportion. This indicates that economic instability among the elderly has worsened.

Additionally, the issue of homelessness is becoming increasingly serious in Gangneung. The number of homeless individuals is rising, concentrated around Gangneung Station and the bus terminal. Given Gangneung's economy relies heavily on tourism, many irregular and temporary workers are at high risk of unemployment. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the downturn in the tourism industry has forced some of these workers into homelessness. Local residents are concerned about hygiene issues in public spaces and potential social conflicts due to the increase in homelessness, highlighting the need for a systematic response to address the problem.

The increase in homelessness is not merely an individual issue but has broader social implications. A thorough analysis and effective countermeasures are urgently needed.

Major Causes of Increasing Homelessness

1. Economic Hardship Due to COVID-19

The most direct cause is unemployment and business failures triggered by the pandemic. After COVID-19, South Korea's economy experienced a sharp downturn, with small business closures surging. According to the Bank of Korea, approximately 900,000 self-employed individuals closed their businesses in 2020 alone. Daily workers and non-regular employees faced higher risks of dismissal, exacerbating job insecurity and ultimately forcing more people onto the streets.

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2. Job Instability and Insufficient Social Safety Nets

South Korea's labor market has a significant gap between regular and non-regular workers, and job insecurity among non-regular workers has worsened after COVID-19. Many homeless individuals struggle with long-term unemployment and financial hardship. Furthermore, The failure of the existing welfare system to serve as an effective safety net has pushed more individuals into homelessness.

3. Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

Mental disorders and alcohol or drug addiction are also cited as significant causes of homelessness. Many homeless individuals suffer from mental illnesses and continue to live on the streets without receiving proper treatment. These personal factors contribute significantly to the growing homelessness crisis

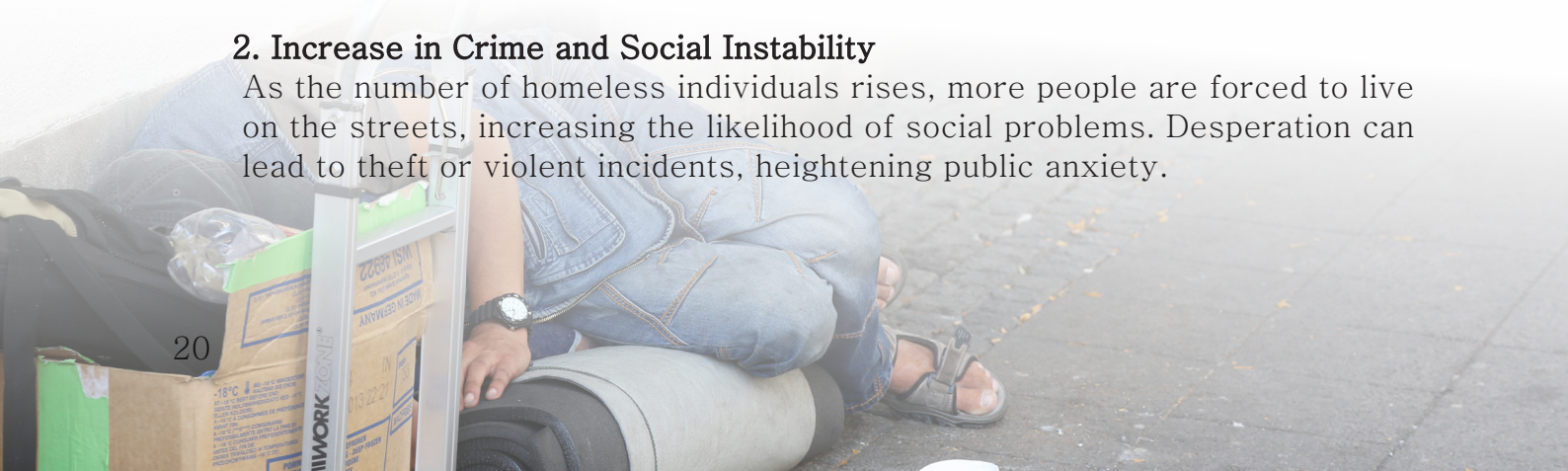
Social Issues Resulting from Increased Homelessness

1. Worsening Public Health and Increased Mortality

Homeless individuals often suffer from extreme health deterioration due to poor living conditions and malnutrition. With inadequate medical support, they are vulnerable to infectious diseases and chronic illnesses, leading to higher mortality rates. According to the Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs, the average life expectancy of homele ss individuals is more than ten years shorter than that of the general population.

2. Increase in Crime and Social Instability

As the number of homeless individuals rises, more people are forced to live on the streets, increasing the likelihood of social problems. Desperation can lead to theft or violent incidents, heightening public anxiety.



3. Urban Aesthetic and Hygiene Issues



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An increase in homelessness can lead to the deterioration of urban environments. According to Yoo Seung-hyun from the Daesiseogi Comprehensive Support Center, "When homeless individuals meet their basic needs in public areas, it often results in sanitation problems and the buildup of personal items, which can degrade the urban environment and discourage foot traffic discourage foot traffic in localbusinesses." This situation can reinforce negative perceptions, reduce foot traffic in commercial areas, and contribute to economic downturns in places like Seoul Station. Additionally, the concentration of homeless individuals in certain areas leads to sanitation problems, affecting both city aesthetics and public health.

Government and Society's Response Efforts

To address homelessness, both government and private organizations are making various efforts:

Expansion of Government Support PoliciesThe government is strengthening policies aimed at social reintegration and economic independence. It is providing public rental housing, implementing employment support programs, and creating opportunities for the homeless to reintegrate into society.

Active Involvement of Private OrganizationsNonprofit organizations and religious groups are actively involved in providing food, medical assistance, and shelters for the homeless. However, these efforts still face limitations, necessitating more systematic cooperation.

Improving Public AwarenessHomelessness is not just an individual issue but a structural social problem, making public awareness crucial. Continuous campaigns are needed to reduce prejudice against homeless individuals and emphasize the necessity of social solidarity.



Policy Improvements for Addressing Homelessness

1. Enhancing Employment Support and Reemployment Programs

Preventing homelessness requires ensuring stable employment for those at risk. Policies should focus on creating public jobs, expanding reemployment programs, and providing comprehensive vocational training to help homeless individuals achieve independence.

2. Strengthening Housing Welfare Policies

The fundamental solution to homelessness lies in ensuring housing stability. Some countries, including the U.S. and parts of Europe, have successfully implemented the "Housing First" approach, which provides stable housing before addressing other issues like employment and addiction. South Korea should actively consider adopting similar policies.

3. Expanding Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Support

Mental illness and substance abuse are significant factors leading to homelessness and perpetuating the cycle. Free mental health counseling and treatment programs should be offered to homeless individuals, along with rehabilitation programs for those struggling with addiction.

4. Reinforcing the Social Safety Net

Preventive measures are crucial to stopping individuals from falling into homelessness. Unemployment benefits and the basic living security system should be improved, and rapid assistance should be provided to those at risk of losing their homes. Additionally, the government should expand accessible counseling centers and shelters.

Conclusion

The increase in homelessness after COVID-19 is not just a welfare issue but a structural problem resulting from economic inequality and a lack of social safety nets. Unless unemployment and poverty issues are addressed, homelessness will continue to rise. Government and society must take proactive measures to prevent this crisis from worsening.

The government should strengthen practical housing support and job creation policies while working with private organizations to establish a system that helps homeless individuals regain independence. Furthermore, public awareness must be improved, and mental health and addiction treatment services should be expanded to fundamentally resolve homelessness.

Homelessness is not merely an individual problem but a collective societal responsibility. With continuous attention and effective policy improvements, more individuals can escape homelessness and regain stability in their lives.

Special thanks to Yoo Seung-hyun from the Daesiseogi Comprehensive Support Center for providing valuable insights and contributions.

Because It’s a National University, We Can Do It!

Kwon Hyun-hee, Jo Hyo-im

Have you noticed that the Green Hydrogen Energy project and the LINC 3.0 project, once visible all around campus, have been discontinued while walking?

According to the Ministry of Education’s September 2023 report on the status and future plans of the Regional Innovation-Centered University Support System (RISE), programs such as RIS (regional innovation , which in our university’s case involved green hydrogen energy), LINC 3.0 (industry-academia cooperation), LIEF (lifelong education), HiVE (vocational training), and other regional university revitalization projects are scheduled to end by the end of 2024. However, students interested in industry-academia cooperation and entrepreneurship support have no reason to worry. The same report explains that beginning in 2025, these projects will be integrated and managed on a provincial basis under the RISE framework.

“There’s also the Glocal University 30 Project, and this year, the RISE project is expected to be promoted again. If we are selected, a significant budget could become available for students,” said one interviewee. With high expectations, let’s take a closer look.

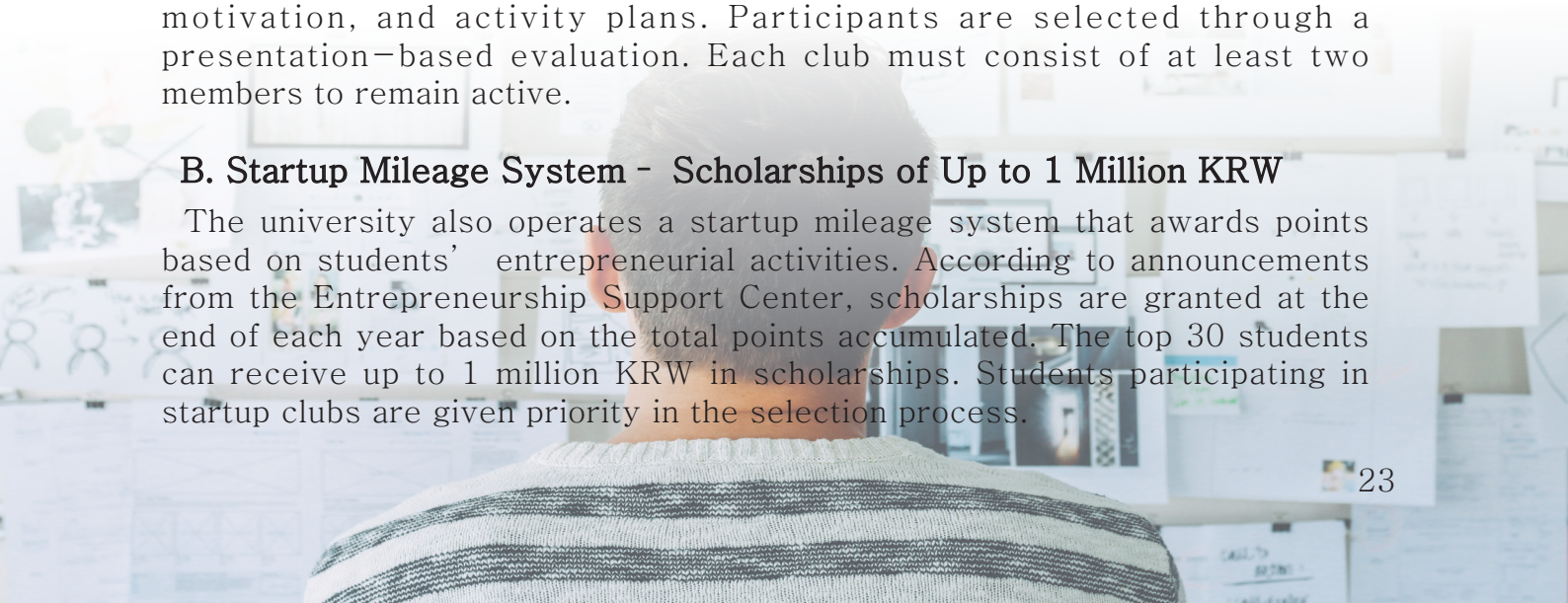
A. Startup Clubs - Up to 1.5 Million KRW in Support

Gangneung-Wonju National University operates approximately 30 startup clubs each year. According to a representative from the Entrepreneurship Support Center, “The startup clubs are categorized into Basic, Value-Up, and Outcome-Producing types, with funding amounts varying by category Especially from the Value-Up stage, additional support is available for product development costs.”

To participate in a startup club, applicants must submit details such as the name of their startup idea, the business field, and their advising professor’s lab number. The business plan should include participants’ competencies, motivation, and activity plans. Participants are selected through a presentation-based evaluation. Each club must consist of at least two members to remain active.

B. Startup Mileage System - Scholarships of Up to 1 Million KRW

The university also operates a startup mileage system that awards points based on students’ entrepreneurial activities. According to announcements from the Entrepreneurship Support Center, scholarships are granted at the end of each year based on the total points accumulated. The top 30 students can receive up to 1 million KRW in scholarships. Students participating in startup clubs are given priority in the selection process.



C. Startup Programs During Breaks

Various programs are offered during school breaks.

1. “Startup Basics A to Z Mastering Camp” provides practical startup education including information on support programs, investment, accounting, and marketing strategies. According to the Entrepreneurship Support Center, the program is expected to be offered again during this summer break.

2. Two Programs Announced by the Glocal Team:

- Startup Field Training Program:
  This program offers students hands-on experience at companies during the school break, with participants receiving approximately 1.7 million KRW. According to the announcement, the program runs for about a month. However, transportation and meal expenses must be covered by thee students themselves, and dormitory support varies depending on the number of applicants.

- Startup Academy:
  A 4-night, 5-day residential startup camp. Outstanding participants are given opportunities for overseas startup training. According to the Entrepreneurship Support Center, award-winning students from this program have had the opportunity to attend the CES() trade show in the United States alongside students from Kangwon National University.



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D. Startup Competitions: Support up to National Level

Kangwon National University at Gangneung-Wonju offers a variety of startup competitions to help students develop their entrepreneurial ideas. These competitions are organized in four sequential stages. The first stage is the on-campus startup competition, typically held around April. Evaluation is based on business potential and feasibility. Participants are allowed to submit an official class absence request for this event. The second stage is the Yeongdong Region Startup Challenge Camp, held in May or September. The third stage is the Gangwon Province Startup Camp, scheduled for October. The fourth and final stage is the National Startup Competition, with preliminary rounds in May and finals in November. These national-level events typically require a year of preparation and include a variety of competitions. Participation is strictly managed, and penalties such as permanent disqualification from future events may apply for non-attendance. (*The expected dates for the startup camps mentioned in this article are based on interviews with relevant personnel. If you're interested in participating, further research is recommended to obtain accurate information.)In addition, the on-campus Idea Competition provides an opportunity to improve ideas with expert feedback. To participate, teams must consist of at least two members, with a representative from the engineering department of Kangwon National University.

All team members must be enrolled students at the university, although students on a leave of absence may also join as team members. There is also a different type of startup camp aimed at students interested in global entrepreneurship. The Global Startup Camp, held this past winter in Tokyo, Japan, offers a memorable experience for participants. However, a passport number is required at the time of application, and eligibility is limited to students who have completed the "Startup Camp A to Z" program, which takes place during academic breaks. According to announcements from the Startup Education Center, the number of participants is limited to around 10.

Institutionally, there are also systems in place such as the Startup Credit Substitution Program and the Startup Leave of Absence System. The Startup Credit Substitution Program was also applied to the previously mentioned startup rotation internships. This program treats startup participation as academic coursework. The course classifications under [General Electives] include: Startup Practicum 1, Startup Practicum 2, and Startup Field Training 1. The Startup Leave of Absence System allows students to request up to three additional years of leave for startup purposes, in addition to the university's standard four-year general leave policy.

All of this information is based on interviews with staff from the university's Startup Support Center and official announcements issued by the Center. Additional contact information is provided at the end of the article for further inquiries.

Employment Outcomes of Gangneung-Wonju National University Graduates

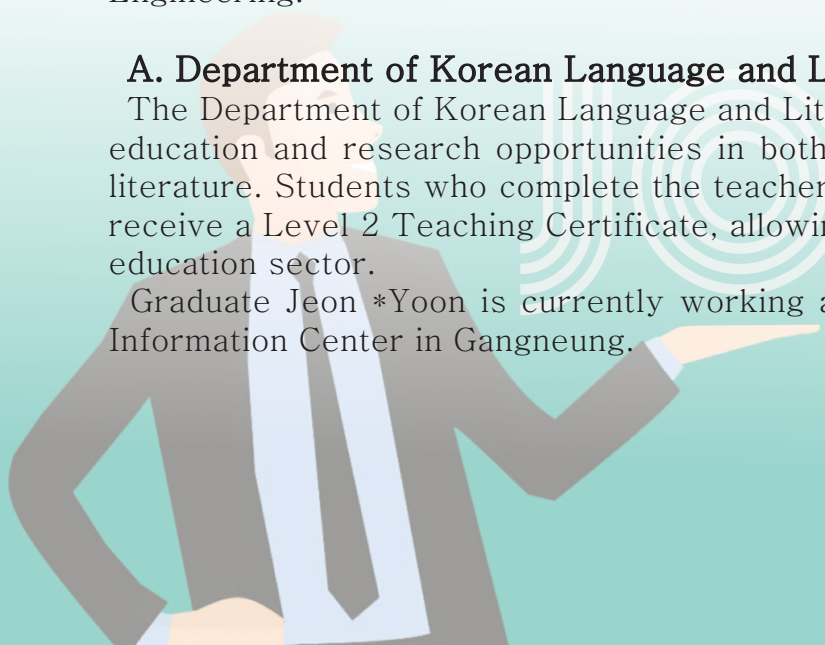
How are graduates succeeding in the job market? Gangneung-Wonju National University (GWNU) operates nine colleges, and employment rates vary by major.

Students are encouraged to actively research career paths based on their majors and career goals. The university supports this process by collecting and sharing graduate interviews. The followings are excerpts from interviews in the series "Learning a Bit More About Myself," planned by the Student Success Support Division. This feature highlights the career journeys of GWNU alumni, with a recent focus on graduates from the Department of Korean Language and Literature and the Department of Automotive Engineering.

A. Department of Korean Language and Literature

The Department of Korean Language and Literature provides comprehensive education and research opportunities in both Korean linguistics and modern literature. Students who complete the teacher training program are eligible to receive a Level 2 Teaching Certificate, allowing them to pursue careers in the education sector.

Graduate Jeon *Yoon is currently working as an intern at the Korea Fiscal Information Center in Gangneung.

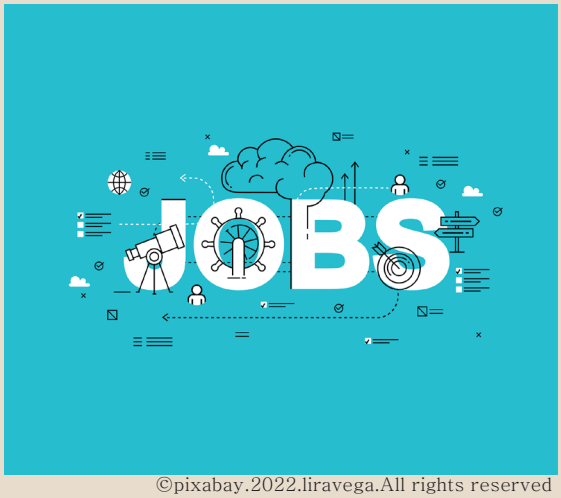




Interview highlights:
"I prefer working in environments with clear rules and structured procedures, which is why I became interested in an administrative position at a public institution."

a. Recruitment Process:
Most public institutions follow a multi-step hiring process: Document Screening → Written Test → First Interview → Second Interview. For internship positions, the process is usually simplified to Document Screening → Interview]. However, for "employment-type" internships, a written NCS (National Competency Standards) test may still be required.

b. Preparation for Employment:
To enhance her competitiveness, Jeon acquired additional certifications for bonus points and took job-related courses. She also interned at a public institution to gain practical experience and better understand the nature of the job.



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c. Helpful Certifications:
Certifications in Word Processing and Computer Proficiency are considered essential, as the job involves frequent document creation and data analysis.

d. Most Helpful Experience:
The internship proved to be the most valuable experience. It provided hands-on exposure to real job responsibilities, which was especially helpful in preparing for interviews and applications. It also positively influenced her job suitability evaluations.

e. Most Useful Extracurricular Activities:
Programs such as "Public Institution On-site Consulting" and "Writing Applications Together" were particularly beneficial. These activities offered insights into public institution hiring processes, preparation strategies, and effective application writing.

B. Department of Automotive Engineering

The department of Automotive Engineering covers automotive design, assembly, and simulation, aiming to develop creative and technically skilled engineers. The curriculum emphasizes practical skills that are in high demand in the industry Graduate Kim *Jun is currently employed in the Equipment Team of the Mid-size Business Division at Hyundai Steel Industry, where he is (responsible for) managing and operating construction equipment.

Interview highlights:
"After several interviews, I realized that what really matters is the company environment and the passionof its employees. That was the moment I knew — ' I want to grow and accomplish something like them, and this is the company where can do that.' "

a. Recruitment Process:

When a position becomes available due to a resignation, team expansion, or the creation of a new team, a T.O (hiring request) is submitted. The HR director confirms the number of openings with the relevant departments, followed by public recruitment process. The standard hiring steps are: Document Screening → First Interview with Field Staff → Second Interview with Executives.

Document Screening	Each HR manager or relevant staff member likely applies their own criteria for document screening. At the company, I' ve heard that holding at least two technical certifications is considered the basic requirement.
First Interview	Through the practical (field) interview, final candidates and alternates are selected for the second round.
Second Interview	Although slight variations may occur, the results of the first interview are generally maintained and confirmed during the executive interview.

If you' re interested in more success stories or would like to request an interview with a specific department, the Student Success Support Division is here to help (you). Contact details can be found at the end of this article.

Contact Information

Startup Education Center — the Leaders in Industry-university Cooperation (LINC)Project Group Collaboration : (033-640-1585)

Startup Education Center — Glocal Team Collaboration : (033-640-1740)

Startup Education Center — non-curricular programs (promoted via Instagram) : (033-640-2728)

Startup Education Center — curricular programs (promoted via Instagram) : (033-640-2727)

Instagram ID of the Startup Education Center at Gangneung-Wonju National University: startup_gwnu

Startup Lounge (Office Location)
Industry-Academia Cooperation Building, N10-20, Gangneung Campus

Student Success Support Division : 033-640-2746

Mistrust Over Budget Between Students and Student Council

Jo Hyo-im

At both the beginning and end of every semester, discussions about student self-government budgets always arise on campus. New and transfer students, in particular, show interest in whether the budget was used appropriately, whether expenditures were justified, and whether the budget usage was disclosed. Cases of embezzlement or improper spending by general student councils have occurred not only at other universities but also at ours. Given this reality, it's understandable that students are wary.

However, even considering all this, there's a hot topic every March. Every year around this time, keywords such as "department association fee management," "necessity of the department fee," and "refund of department association fees" flood the student community app Everytime. Department association fees are distinct from general student council fees. These fees belong to each department's student council and vary in specific rules, including refund guarantees, dependingnot only on the department but also on the composition of the student council each year. Each plan is established by individual department councils based on the general bylaws of the student council. This means that small, diverse student bodies operate under different standards, making controversy inevitable. This year, complaints among students have grown louder than ever. Users on Everytime at Gangneung-Wonju National University (GWNU) frequently exchange views suggesting that paying department fees is a foolish choice. To better understand the situation, our English newspaper conducted a "GWNU- Department Fee Transparency Satisfaction Survey" through Everytime. It ran from March 29 to April 1, with 23 students participating. Among them, 17 responded that they paid the department fee, and 6 said they had not. Since only a small number of students participated, this survey serves less as a full-scale census and more as a temperature check on a sensitive, often-overlooked issue. When asked, "Did your department collect the fee for one year or for four years in advance?", 15 students answered that they paid for four years. Seven said they paid for one year, and one student said they paid for two years. When asked whether they had ever read the department's financial report or audit statement, 91.3% answered no. Most respondents also said they did not know the procedures for budget approval or for refund eligibility. When asked about the general amount of the department fee, most answers were in the 200,000 to 300,000 KRW range.



In an open-ended section, respondents expressed concerns about transparency, over collection, and refund procedures. When asked to check all the items they thought were necessary for improving department fee management, the most supported idea was "annual collection of fees," with 15 students in favor. Nine supported imposing penalties by school authorities in case of mismanagement, eight supported having an information session on budget usage tied to extracurricular credits, and nine wanted monthly reporting and approval of expenditures involving all students. Other specific suggestions included "There's a lack of transparency. If an agency or company is involved for an event, I think it should go through an open bidding process. Fee payers should have the right to suggest ideas and vote on bids to actively participate in program planning." "It would build trust if we were informed quarterly about how much money was collected and spent during major events." "Receipt disclosure and notification should be mandatory."



What is Overcollection?

As mentioned, most departments at our school collect four years' worth of department fees at once, which many students strongly oppose. According to the survey, 15 respondents agreed that this practice should change. However, from the department student council's perspective, it's not so simple. They argue that bulk funds are needed for MTs (membership training events), festivals, snack support, and other purposes. If only one year's worth were collected, the available budget would be reduced to one-fourth, which would naturally shrink the scale of events.

But then again, perhaps such events should have been conducted on that scale from the beginning? If there aren't enough people willing to pay, doesn't that mean there isn't sufficient demand? Shouldn't only those genuinely interested in participating at a given time bear the cost? Put simply, it seems we are overcharging due to a lack of paying participants. Participation rates clearly differ between freshmen and seniors, so why are we paying 200,000 - 300,000 KRW upfront for four years? Even if such a large amount is justified for traditional events, the notion of "four years in advance" is clearly problematic.

Transparency and Integrity: Who Oversees It?

Budget management is supposed to be monitored by an audit committee. However, there are two key issues. First, students have poor access to the audit results. As shown in the survey, most students (18 out of 23) said they do not know the rules or processes (either "don't know at all" or "don't know"), and 91.3% said they have never viewed an audit report. This suggests poor accessibility.

Second, there is no way to supervise misleading statements made during department fee briefings. While fee management is a long-term issue, fee collection often occurs in a matter of days. Freshmen usually receive information during their OT (orientation), and some are pressured into paying right before the OT afterparty. If misleading sense of obligation or benefits is created in those few hours, and there's no oversight, students may not even realize something is wrong. One respondent noted, "At the very least, students should be informed that the fee is not mandatory."

Is the Refund System Safe or Reasonable?

An anonymous student said, "At OT, I heard that the department fee would be refunded on a prorated basis. But later, the general student council said there's no guarantee of a full refund." Refunds are often taken for granted, but a closer look at the university's detailed regulations on budget use and reporting reveals this isn't quite accurate. According to the rules ([Detailed Regulations on Budget Utilization and Reporting for Student Self-Governing Bodies at Gangneung-Wonju. *National University*]):

Article 13 (Refund of Department Operational Fees)

1. Department operational fees may be partially or fully refunded to individuals depending on personal circumstances or departmental conditions.

2. The department student council president makes the final decision regarding the refund amount.



This regulation allows significant discretion in determining refund eligibility and amounts, but lacks detailed criteria for ensuring refund budgets or advance notice.

Those requesting refunds are typically students who change majors or drop out. The 2025 department transfer list shows that 89 students were approved for transfers this year. Even if only a quarter of them paid fees, that's 4.4 million KRW at 200,000 KRW per person. How is such a large amount left unaccounted for?

From the department's perspective, it may be difficult to set aside a refund reserve under tight budgets. But as a legitimate financial transaction, the general student council needs to establish clear refund standards or proactively prepare refund reserves.

Efforts Within the Conflict

To be clear, while no department is without controversy, many student councils are making earnest efforts. For example, the Electrical Engineering department's staff gave up prizes they had won during the 2025 MT. The Biology department received positive feedback in our survey, with one comment stating, "Our department collects fees by semester to ease

student burden." One anonymous respondent said, "I think they're doing a good job already."

Still, university students are opinionated, arguments are frequent, and life is busy. Amid the noise, problems have grown and now threaten the trust between student councils and students. For diligent student councils who spend their holidays planning events, the criticism can feel unfair. Meanwhile, uninformed students are left confused. And because these issues remain unsolved, individual councils lack the time and resources to address everything. That's why the general student council must urgently take the lead in recognizing problems and finding solutions.

It seems the university is also seeking solutions, reminding us that this is not a problem unique to our school. A university is not only a research institution, but also an educational one, responsible for nurturing responsible individuals. It must actively serve as a shield for its students.

Resolving these issues requires a collaborative effort — one that includes the university, student councils, and students themselves. We hope that students can trust their student council, and that student councils can communicate with students. The university and student council must use this controversy as an opportunity to clarify fee policies and protect students' financial rights. Establishing clear rules and responding quickly to conflicts can become the foundation for restoring student autonomy and democratic values.



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