

**KU KONKUK
UNIVERSITY**

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In May 1946, Konkuk University was established as Chosun School of Politics (조선정치학관), a junior college for future political leaders, by Dr. Yoo Seok-chang. Thirteen years later, the school became a “comprehensive university” and changed its name to Konkuk (建國), which means “founding a nation” in Hanja (Chinese characters). As strong believers in the role of higher education in maintaining Korea’s sovereignty, the founder and his supporters chose the name in the hopes that Konkuk graduates would build and serve the nation. As of 2016, Konkuk University has two campuses—the main campus in the heart of Seoul and the Glocal campus in Chungju—with approximately 29,000 students enrolled. Dr. Yoo, whose pen name was Sanghuh, was raised by a father who moved to Manchuria to join the Korean Independence Movement. Trained as a medical doctor during the Japanese occupation, Dr. Yoo initially had opened the People’s Hospital in 1931 to provide medical care to less fortunate Koreans. Before long, he turned his attention to young leaders in rural areas since agriculture was the main pillar of the economy. Dr. Yoo and his supporters, who would later become benefactors of Konkuk University, aimed to open a higher education institution for leaders who would enlighten the rural population. Opposed by the Japanese, the reform-minded group managed a private organization and developed their ideas for a little more than a decade.

With years of experience in rural reforms and education as well as a short stint as a politician, Dr. Yoo became convinced that Konkuk University’s must set its goals beyond academic excellence. During his tenure as the president of Konkuk University and the chairman of the Konkuk University Foundation, he emphasized three virtues—sincerity, fidelity, and righteousness—which continues to guide Konkuk to this day.

In addition, Dr. Yoo was aware that the limited space would not be sufficient to provide future agricultural leaders with ample hands-on experience. Despite the severe financial difficulties and skepticism after the Korean War, he boldly executed a move to the current location in Seoul. Thanks to Dr. Yoo’s generous endowment and education philosophy, Konkuk University not only leads in agricultural and life science research, but also excels in many other areas today. Furthermore, Konkuk University has undergone major transformations in the past decade, earning the title of “the fastest growing university in Korea.”



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