



Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) International Summer Semester (ISS) 2020

Understanding Global Conflict

Prof. Ray T. Hartman, Sungkyunkwan University

SHORT COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the fundamental aspects of international relations, causes of interstate war, conditions which foster peace, and what it means to be secure in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world.

READING MATERIALS

Reading materials will be provided one week prior to the beginning of ISS, and they can be found when clicking the link below. Completing the assigned readings is not mandatory. However, to better aid in your comprehension of the course content and contribution to class discussion, you are strongly encouraged to complete assigned readings prior to class.

https://skku0-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/rayhartman_skku_edu/EuU5s0MzZoJHtGmKlOsTA6QBt6nCkxhMrwDI73stIOkRZw?e=5tSReP

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

All ISS classes are pass/fail based on the student academic achievement evaluated by grades on a scale of 100 points (grade of 60 or above is Pass). **SKKU regulations require students to attend at least 80% of all classes.** Moreover, you are responsible for exhibiting proper standards of academic integrity. Academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to cheating or plagiarizing, can result in you automatically failing the course. Your grade will be based on the following assessments.

25% - Class participation and group discussion

75% - Group presentations

Prior to class, read “Is the World Becoming More Peaceful?” pp. 14-15 in *Essentials of International Relations*

COURSE SCHEDULE

– WEEK I –

Thursday (25 June)

Course Introduction: What are the trends in warfare? Is the world becoming more peaceful? What can *Game of Thrones* teach us about international relations?

Friday (26 June)

Levels of Analysis and Theoretical Frameworks: How should one study the field of international relations. What are the different perspectives and interpretations? How do they help us understand conflict and cooperation between states?

First Assignment: Students will be asked to examine one conflict using different levels of analysis and dominant international relations theories.

– WEEK II –

Monday (29 June)

System-Level of Analysis: What are the strengths and weaknesses of using the notion of the

international system as a means of explaining state behavior? What are the concepts that realists, liberals, radicals, and constructivists employ to analyze the international system? How do each of the contending theoretical perspectives explain change in the international system?

Tuesday (30 June)

State-Level of Analysis: What is a state? How do the various theoretical perspectives view the state? How do political scientists measure state power? How do states exercise their power? How do democracies differ from nondemocracies? Which models can help us explain how states make foreign policy decisions? What are some major contemporary challenges to the state?

Wednesday (1 July)

Individual-Level of Analysis: Which individuals matter most in international relations? What psychological factors have an impact on elite foreign policy decision making? What are the roles private individuals play in international relations? What role does the public play in foreign policy? According to the various theoretical perspectives, to what extent do individuals matter in international relations?

Thursday (2 July)

Group presentations and class discussion

– WEEK III –

Monday (6 July)

System-Level Theories of War: What are the contending system-level explanations for the occurrence of interstate war (war between two or more states)?

Second Assignment: Students will be asked to examine one interstate war and explain which system-level theory, state-level theory, and individual-level theory they believe provides the best explanatory power.

Tuesday (7 July)

State-Level Theories of War: What are the various state-level explanations for the onset of war? How do these theories differ from system-level theories of war?

Wednesday (8 July)

Individual-Level Theories of War: What are the different individual-level explanations for the onset of war? How do these theories differ from system-level and state-level theories of war?

Thursday (9 July)

Group presentations and class discussion

– WEEK IV –

Monday (13 July)

The Just War Tradition: Is war ever justifiable? If so, what conditions should be met? Should one state intervene in an ongoing civil war (an intrastate war between domestic groups/factions)?

Third Assignment: Students will be asked to examine one recent conflict and explain what makes it a global/regional security issue.

Security: What is security? What does it mean to be secure? What are various approaches to understanding security?

Tuesday (14 July)

Issues in Global Security – Environmental Security: What is the relationship between the environment, security, and violent conflict?

Wednesday (15 July)

Issues in Global Security – Migration and Border Security: How can the migration of people be understood as a security threat?

Thursday (16 July)

Issues in Global Security – Technology and Warfare: How have innovations in technology affected states' (in)security?

Friday (17 July)

Group presentations and class discussion