



Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) International Summer Semester (ISS) 2019

## Human Rights Across Borders

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### SHORT COURSE DESCRIPTION

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This course analyzes global human rights—their philosophical basis, their emergence and proliferation, their measurement, their incorporation into national societies, their advocates, how to educate them, and how to improve them—from a social science perspective. We will begin with a discussion of the universal declaration model advocated by Jack Donnelly and the related debates on how to conceptualize human rights, followed by a discussion of legal and organizational manifestations of global human rights, including treaties and the U.N. system of human rights protection. We will then examine how human rights ideals and institutions have infiltrated into national societies by examining public opinion, mass media, and various human rights institutions, including national human rights commissions. We will also explore to what degrees the global expansion of human rights has made meaningful changes in rights-practices and the ways in which human rights are respected and promoted. Specifically, we will address recent and new human rights issues, including privacy and human rights and new technologies and human rights. We'll also explore recent backlash against human rights by examining the impact of negative NGO initiatives taken by 'strong men' like Putin in Russia on terrorist incidents. A unique set of lecture slides compiled from extensive empirical works, documents, surveys, and media coverage will be used for the course, distinguishing the course from other standard human rights courses.

### READING MATERIALS

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Course packet will be available for purchase. Place and price for purchase will be notified later.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

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Attendance: 10%  
Class participation: 20%  
Presentation (one time): 20%  
Final Exam: 30%  
2 memos: 20% (2×10%)

#### Preferred Style for Memo

Beginning with 2 pages summary, proceeding with 1 page review, and ending with two thought-provoking questions (11 font, Times-New Roman, and default margins in MS Word). Plagiarism-free writing requirement.

- 📌 Please note that SKKU regulations require students to attend at least 80% of all classes.
- 📌 Please also note that new topics such as “big data and human rights” and “human rights in the digital age” have been added and will be deeply surveyed and discussed during classes. Students with engineering and natural science backgrounds are highly welcome to join.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

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### **– WEEK I : Understanding Human Rights –**

**Thursday (27 June): Introduction to Class, and Course Logistics**

**Friday (28 June): What Are Human Rights and Why Do We Study Them?**

**Read:** Jack Donnelly. 2003. "The Concept of Human Rights." in Universal Human Rights: in Theory and Practice (Cornell University Press) pp.7-21

### **– WEEK II : Understanding Human Rights Continues –**

**Monday (1 July): The Universal Declaration Model**

**Read:** Jack Donnelly. 2003. "The Universal Declaration Model," "Equal Concern and Respect." in Universal Human Rights: in Theory and Practice (Cornell University Press). Pp.22-37

**Tuesday (2 July): The International Human Rights Regime**

**Read:** Landman, Todd. 2006. "The Scope of Human Rights." in *Studying Human Rights*. (Routledge). Pp. 8-18; Landman, Todd. 2006. "The Terrain of Human Rights." in *Studying Human Rights*. (Routledge). Pp. 19-35.

**Wednesday (3 July): Measuring Global Human Rights**

**Read:** Wood, Reed M. and Mark Gibney. 2010. "The Political Terror Scale (PTS): A Reintroduction and A Comparison to CIRI." *Human Rights Quarterly* 32: 367-400.

**Thursday (4 July): The backlash against Human Rights**

**Read:** Koo, Jeong-Woo and Amanda Murdie. 2019. "Smear Campaigns or Counterterrorism Tools: Do NGO Restrictions Limit Terrorism?" Under Review

### **– WEEK III: Public Opinion, Media, Big Data, and Digital Age –**

**Monday (8 July): Public Opinion and Human Rights**

**Read:** McFarland, Sam and Melissa Mathews, 2005. "Do Americans Care About Human Rights?" , *Journal of Human Rights* 4: 305-319

**Tuesday (9 July): Psychology of Human Rights**

**Read:** Diaz-Veizades, Jeannette, Keith F. Widaman, Todd D. Little, Katherine W. Gibbs. 1995. "The Measurement and Structure of Human Rights Attitudes." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 135(3): 313-328.

Wednesday (10 July): Media Coverage of Human Rights

*Read:* Caliendo, Stephen M., Gibney, Mark P., and Payne, Angela. 1999. "All the News That's Fit to Print" New York Times Coverage of Human Rights Violations. *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 4:48-69.

Thursday (11 July): Big Data and Human Rights

*Read:* Koo, Jeong-Woo and Jaesung Choi. Forthcoming. "Polarized Embrace: South Korean Media Coverage of Human Rights, 1990-2016". *Journal of Human Rights*

– **WEEK IV: Human Rights Institutions and Future of Human Rights** –

Monday (15 July): Human Right in Digital Age

*Read:* Dunstan Allison Hope "Protecting Human Rights in the Digital Age: Understanding Evolving Freedom of Expression and Privacy Risks in the Information and Communications and Technology Industries" BSR Report, 1-25.

Tuesday (16 July): Refugees and Asylum Seekers

*Read:* Yoo, Eunhye, and Jeong-Woo Koo. 2014. "Love Thy Neighbor: Explaining Asylum Seeking and Hosting, 1982-2008." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 55:45-72.

Wednesday (17 July): Seeking Truth and National Reconciliation:

**Worldwide Expansion of Truth Commissions**

*Read:* Hayner, Priscilla B. 1994. "Fifteen Truth Commissions, 1974 to 1994: A Comparative Study." *Human Rights Quarterly* 16: 597-655.

Thursday (18 July): Worldwide Expansion of National Human Rights Institutions

*Read:* Koo, Jeong-Woo and Francisco O. Ramirez. 2009. "National Incorporation of Global Human Rights: Worldwide Adoptions of National Human Rights Institutions, 1966-2004." *Social Forces* 87: 1321-1354.

Friday (19 July): Final Exam (in class exam)

**Potential Presentation Topics**

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**International Human Rights Regime**

What roles has the Human Rights Council played? Has it been an effective instrument in protecting human rights worldwide? What are the ways in which the Human Rights Council cooperates with human rights NGOs? Does this coalition work in addressing human rights? What are the strengths and weakness of human rights NGOs? What are the conditions under which human rights NGOs play an instrumental role in protecting human rights? How about regional instruments of human rights

protection? What region shows better human rights profile and why? Do the regional instruments matter in determining the differences on the human rights profiles? Choose exemplary cases of human rights NGOs and address their accomplishments and/or limitations. Choose some of most recently drafted human rights treaties (like CRMW, CRPD) and explain why these instruments have not received enough attention. What can be potentially done in assuring that more number of countries becomes parties of these instruments?

### **Measuring Global and National Human Rights**

Use global indicators of human rights and compare the human rights records of countries of international students who are taking this class (like the US., France, Germany, Norway, Mexico, China, Guatemala etc). How has the record changed over time? What is responsible for explaining such temporal changes in each country? Which country shows better records and why? To what extent is the measurement useful in explaining human rights variation? What are the limitations of such measuring efforts? Do you think we can also measure human rights observance in other settings like schools, universities, companies, government agencies, etc.? Any ideas or suggestions to extend the measurement effort to such settings of sorts? What if you measure the extent to which Sungkyunkwan University respects human rights? What concrete indicators do you think can be used? What principles do you want to use to collect or construct the indicators? How do you want to standardize each indicator and subsequently create a composite index?

### **Public Opinion and Human Rights**

You MUST conduct a human rights survey for Sungkyunkwan students, compile the dataset, and analyze the data obtained using some standard statistical package (like SPSS, STATA, or SAS). For this, administer first the questionnaire with several crucial human rights related questions as well as background or control items/variables. Second, with the constructed questionnaire, get the feedback from or do a pretest for IHR students in advance. Third, circulate the questionnaire to at least 100 Sungkyunkwan students to get response (keep in mind the significance of a random sample). Forth, analyze the data and reports the findings to class. Compare and contrast the results you obtain from the survey with those reported by other studies that examine perceptions and attitudes of college students in other countries.

### **Psychology of Human Rights**

Suppose that you've got a mission from the Sungkyunkwan University Office of President to measure sensitivity of human rights of incoming Class of 2015. Design a human rights questionnaire to measure how sensitive incoming freshmen are with regard to human rights. Your goal is to give a certain score for each individual in terms of their human rights sensitivity. What items need to be included in the questionnaire? What principles need to be considered when constructing this? Be ready to test IHR students with this instrument and report the results to class. Do you think your questionnaire can be used for all the freshmen in other colleges? Do you think your instrument works in ways to bring out positive changes in college life and further social life? Any limitations or challenges?

### **Media Coverage of Human Rights**

Choose exemplary press media (both conservative and liberal media for more than 2 countries) in the countries of IHR international students. Using standard search engines (like LexisNexis) search for articles referencing human rights over time. Describe the patterns of the volumes of coverage over time and explain why the temporal changes occurred. Compare and contrast liberal and conservative news outlets. What topics emerge from the newspaper coverage? Do you note any changes of topics over time? Any plausible explanations for the changes noted? Any controversial issue in the coverage of the media? What is the nature of the debate? Does the debate become contentious? Why? Do you think the media plays a crucial role in disseminating human rights values and transforming the

audience into citizens with higher human rights sensitivity?

### **Big Data and Human Rights**

How can big data be used for the study of human rights? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using big data in human rights research? Does the use of these cutting edge data collection and analysis methods address big questions? Wouldn't it be possible that the use of big data only answer small questions? How can big data contribute to the study of subtle discriminations or inhuman treatments? To what extent can computational throughputs lead to new findings and more informed analysis of human rights? Does machine learning matter in better informing the public as well policymakers in addressing human rights abuses?

### **Human Rights in the Digital Age**

How does technological change affect human rights practices? Does it strengthen our ability to express and voice opinions? Doesn't it only contribute to the making of fake news and debilitating our ability to access truth or credible information? What about the protection of privacy? What does the case of FBI asking Apple to create backdoor for I-Phone devices tell you about the impact of ICT on human rights practices (San Bernardino massacre and FBI's response)? Couldn't new technologies be used to harm the general population and their human rights? What are the ways in which we can use and manage new technologies in a way to make it align with human rights principles?

### **Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

Prepare a role playing where members take the roles of refugees, INGO helpers, host countries' government officials, UNHCR staffers etc. If the number of members is limited, focus on the roles of refugees who publicize their experiences as refugees (what happened in their country, what forms of human rights abuses occurred, how their families suffered, their current status in refugee camps or the relocated country, their hopes and dreams in the future, and suggestions for the international society etc.). Check with video clips that contain testimonies by North Korean defector, and consider replicating the testimonies.

### **Seeking Truth and National Reconciliation**

Prepare a role playing where members take the role of perpetrators and that of victims. The role playing needs to be proceeded in ways that the dialogue brings back historical memories, restores what happened (like how many died and how they died), makes perpetrators confess their wrongdoings and encourages victims to forgive them. Consider the healing process, which was used by the South African Truth Commissions. Then, reflect on the implications of this role playing and the extent to which such a method can be used for countries that suffered from past atrocities, but needs to move forward.

### **Worldwide Expansion of National Human Rights Institutions**

Choose exemplary national human rights commissions from the countries where IHR International students come from. Then, construct measures that can be used for appraising the performance of each commission. Select one who will be presenting the results of this cross-national comparison. Also select others who will represent each commission and defend the position of each commission. Make sure the comparison is as objective as possible so that state representatives might be persuaded by the assessment. But state representatives must provide serious efforts to find out the pitfalls of this assessment and needs to be able to defend their countries.