




Byunghwan ‘Ben’ Son

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Current Academic Positions

- George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)
 - Associate Professor (with tenure), [Global Affairs Program](#) 2020–current
 - * Assistant Professor, Global Affairs Program 2014–2020
 - Director, [Asia–Pacific and Northeast Asian Studies](#) 2014–current
 - Associate Director, [Korean Studies Center](#) 2020–current
 - University Affiliate Faculty, [Schar School of Policy and Government](#) 2021–2022

Previous Academic Positions

- [The College of Wooster](#) (Wooster, OH) 2013–2014
 - Gillespie Visiting Professor (VAP), [Political Science](#)
- [University of Missouri-Columbia](#) (Columbia, MO) 2011–2013
 - Graduate Instructor, [Political Science](#)
- [Korean Air Force Academy](#) 2003–2007
 - Instructor, [Department of Military Strategy](#)

Education

- University of Missouri-Columbia (Columbia, MO)
 - PhD, Political Science 2007–2013
 - * Dissertation: Democratization and Exchange Rates
 - * Dissertation Advisor: Dr. [Jonathan Kriekhaus](#)
- [Yonsei University](#) (Seoul, South Korea)
 - MA & BA, [Political Science](#) 1997–2003

Research & Teaching Areas

Politics of Global Finance; Politics in Asia; Public Opinion; Democratization; Democratic Support; Democratic Backsliding; Inequality & Contentious Politics; Political Communication; Social Media; Quantitative Methods; Data Visualization

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles Published

- 2024. “Foreign Policy Consequences of Democratic Backsliding: The case of the Comfort Women Agreement 2015” *The Pacific Review* Forthcoming. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2024. “The Political Economy of Life Satisfaction: Democracy, National Wealth, and Personal Income” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*. Forthcoming. (with Nisha Bellinger and Jonathan Kriekhaus). [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2023. “Foreign Pop Culture and Backlash: the case of non-fan K-pop Subreddits during the pandemic” *Journal of Cultural Economics*. Forthcoming. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2022. “The Health Cost of Autocratization” *Journal of Development Studies*. 58(5): 873-890. (with Nisha Bellinger). [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2021. “Security Threats and Investment: North Korean Threats and the South Korean Stock Market” *Pacific Focus*. (with Chungshik Moon). 36(3): 544-569. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2021. “Presidential Approval Ratings and Foreign Exchange Market: The Case of the Korean Won during the Park Government” *Asian Survey*. 61(5): 767–796. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Doi Moi and Vietnamese Threat Perception of Chinese Economic Growth,” *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 21: 179-193. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Interpersonal Trust and Confidence in Labor Unions: the case of South Korea,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 20: 267-290. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2020. “Democracy and Reserves,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16(3): 417–437. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2019. “Political Parties and Foreign Direct Investment Inflows Among Developing Countries” *Political Studies* 67: 712–731. (with Nisha Bellinger) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2018. “The Mysterious Overvaluation of KRW in the 1990s,” *The Pacific Review* 31: 573– 597. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2018. “Democratization and Currency Crises in Latin America,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 21: 442–463. (with Jonathan Kriekhaus) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2016. “Are the Poor the Weak Link? Democratic Support and Income Levels in Post-Crisis South Korea,” *Journal of East Asian Studies* 16: 219-237. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2016. “Policy Choices in Tough Times: The case of democratization and currency defense,” *International Political Science Review* 37: 453-469. [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2015. “Economic Coercion and Currency Crises in Target Economies,” *Journal of Peace Research* 52: 448-462. (with Dursun Peksen) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]
- 2014. “Inequality and Democratic Support,” *Journal of Politics* 76: 139-151. (with Jonathan Kriekhaus, Nisha Bellinger, and Jason Wells) [[Journal Link](#)]; [[PDF](#)]

Articles Under Review

- “Democratic Backsliding and Movie Workers” (*Revise-and-Resubmit*)

Projects in Progress

- “Inequality and Violence” (with JP Singh)
- “Developmental State Revisited: Foreign Reserves of Asian Emerging Economies”
- “Income Levels and Institutional Confidence”
- “K-pop and Male Masculinity” (with Dae Kim and Younga Jung)
- “Fan Perspectives on Racism in K-pop” (with Dae Kim and Younga Jung)
- “Nationalism and Petition” (with Myunghye Lee)

Book Review

- 2024. *Supercorporate: Distinction and Participation in Post-hierarchy South Korea* by Michael Prentice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022. xiii, 248 pp. ISBN: 9781503631878.
 - *Journal of Asian Studies* 83(1): 187–188. [[Journal Link](#)]

Other Writings & Media Appearances

- “[Democratic Backsliding as a Threat to Regional Cooperation in East Asia](#)” 2023
 - Korea On Point
- “Income inequality: A distant but significant threat to South Korea’s democracy” 2022
 - in R. Hass & P. Kim Eds., *Democracy in Asia*. Policy Brief. Brookings Institution. Washington DC.
- “The Retreat from Kabul is NOT a sign of declining American Hegemony” 2021
 - [Pressian](#) (Korean).
- Comments on “[Korea-US Summit 2021](#)” NewsUp, CBS Radio (Korean) 2021
 - also featured in [Nocut News](#); [Hankookilbo](#) (Korean).
- “The Causes of Biden’s Victory and its Implications” [Pressian](#) (Korean) 2020
- “Is Authoritarianism Bad for the Economy?” (with N. Bellinger) [The Conversation](#) 2019
 - Translated in Portuguese at [Gazeta do Povo](#).
- “Party Systems Matter for FDI Inflows” [PSA Blog](#) 2019

Invited Talks, Lectures, Panels & Roundtables

- “Inequality and Democracy in South Korea” 2022
 - Democracy in Asia Workshop. Brookings Institution. Virtual.
- “Big Data Panel Discussion” 2022
 - Urban Research Hub Method Series, [CSSR](#), GMU
- “South Korea’s role in regional economic architecture and supply chain resilience” 2021
 - Workshop (roundtable). Brookings Institution. Virtual.
- “[The End of War Declaration in the Korean Peninsula and Vision 2030](#)” 2021
 - Round Table. [Institute of National Security and Strategy](#). Virtual.
- “Democratic Backsliding and Human Security” 2021
 - Public Lecture. [Hankuk University of Foreign Studies](#) Virtual.
- “Affective Polarization and Right-Wing Populism” 2021
 - Public Lecture. ‘EverySecondSaturday7PM’ (local activists’ society) Virtual.
- “Autocratization and Public Health Outcomes” 2020
 - Invited talk. [Institute of Korean Studies](#). University of Missouri, Columbia. MO. Virtual.
- “Presidential Impeachment in South Korea and Financial Market” 2017
 - Invited talk. Korean Studies Center. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Obama Administration’s Pivot to Asia” 2016
 - Invited Talk (student-organized). George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “KRW in the 1990s” 2016

- Public Lecture. Korean Studies Center. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Is Democratization to Blame for the Economic Difficulties of S. Korea?” 2014
 - Invited Talk. George Mason University, Fairfax. VA.
- “Territorial Disputes in East Asia” 2013
 - Guest Lecture. [Lincoln University](#). Jefferson City, MO.
- “Democratization and Exchange Rate Policies” 2013
 - Invited Talk. Korean Fellow Society, Harvard University, Boston MA.

Grants, Awards, & Fellowships

- [4VA Grant](#). \$15,000 2022
 - with Dae Kim (GMU) Younga Jung (GMU), and Yoon Hwa Choi (UVA)
 - [Commonwealth of Virginia](#)
- [Faculty Research and Professional Development Award](#). \$14,288 2020
 - with Dae Kim and Younga Jung, [College of Humanities & Social Sciences](#), GMU
- Global Democracy Fellow. \$2,000 2017
 - [Korean Democracy Foundation](#)
- [Faculty Research and Professional Development Award](#). \$3,636 2016
 - [College of Humanities & Social Sciences](#), GMU
- Online Course Development Grant. \$4,000 2016 to 2017
 - [GMU Online Course Development Institute](#)
- [J.G. Heinberg Fellowship](#). 2009–2010
 - One semester’s tuition and stipend. University of Missouri
- [Brain Korea 21 Scholarship](#). 2002
 - Stipend of about \$3,600. Yonsei University, South Korea.

Conference Presentations

- “K-pop and Male Masculinity” 2023
 - Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Philadelphia. PA
- “Fan Perspectives on Racism in K-pop” 2023
 - Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting. Philadelphia. PA
- “Nationalism and Petition” 2022
 - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Montreal, Canada.
- “Blacklists Killed Movie Starts” 2022
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual.
- “Foreign Policy Consequence of Democratic Backsliding” 2022
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual.
- “Income and Institutional Confidence”
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual. 2021
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting. New Orleans. LA. 2015
- “Soft Power and Pop Cultural Products: The case of Pandemic and K-pop Sub Reddit”
 - Korean Wave in North America. George Mason University. Virtual. 2021
 - Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Virtual. 2021
- “Covid-19 and (dis)continuity in global political economy” 2020
 - [COVID-19 and Globalization: Insights from GLOA](#). George Mason University. Virtual.
- “Resource-Rich Asians? Mercantilism and Foreign Exchange Reserves in Asia” 2019
 - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Washington DC.
- (with Nisha Bellinger) “Democratic Backsliding and Public Health”

- Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL. 2019
- (with Johathan Kriekhaus & Nisha Bellinger) “Political Economy of Happiness”
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL. 2019
- “Interpersonal Trust and Confidence in Labor Unions”
 - International Studies Annual Meeting. Toronto, ON 2019
- “Can Money Turn Foes into Friends? Vietnamese & China”
 - Global Affairs Seminar. George Mason University. Fairfax VA. 2019
- (with Chungsik Moon) “Security Threats and Investment”
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. 2018
- (with Myunghwa Cho) “Children, Child Soldiers, and Recurrent Conflict”
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. 2018
- “Approval Ratings and Monetary Market”
 - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. 2017
- “Political Economy of International Reserves”
 - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA. 2016
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL. 2014
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting. Toronto, Canada 2014
- (with JP Singh) “Inequality and Social Unrest”
 - DC Area Comparativist Workshop. Georgetown University. Washington DC 2018
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Chicago. IL 2016
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta. GA. 2016
- “The Mysterious Overvaluation of the Won in the 1990s”
 - Smart Public Policy of Korea. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, WI. 2015
 - The Evolution of South Korea’s Public Policy. CUNY, NY 2015
- “Presidentialism and Monetary Policy Performance”
 - American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. Washington DC. 2014
 - Western Political Science Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX. 2011
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL. 2011
 - International Studies Association-Midwest Annual Meeting, St. Louis MO. 2011
- (with Dursun Peksen) “Economic Sanctions and Currency Crises”
 - International Studies Association-Midwest. St. Louis MO. 2013
- “Democratization and Fear of Pegging”
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL. 2013
 - Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Orlando FL. 2013
 - Northeastern Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston MA. 2012
- “Democratization and Devaluation”
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco CA. 2012
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL. 2012
 - International Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Diego CA. 2012
- “Political Economy of Quality of Governance and Foreign Aid Effectiveness”
 - International Studies Association-Midwest Annual Meeting, St. Louis MO.
 - * Nominated for the Best Graduate Student Paper Award
 2010
- (with J. Kriekhaus) “Democratization and Currency Crises in Latin America”
 - Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Chicago IL. 2010
- “Economic Performance and Democratic Support in Central Eastern Europe”
 - Central Slavic Conference, St. Louis MO. November 2009

Courses Taught

- George Mason University
 - Economic Globalization and Development (MA) every semester
 - Interdisciplinary Research Method (MA)
 - Capstone Seminar (MA)
 - Case Studies in Globalization: Globalization in Asia (MA)
 - Globalization in Asia (BA) every other year
 - Introduction to Global Affairs (BA)
 - * Online section development [GMU OCDI](#) 2017
 - * recognized as “[Outstanding](#)” teaching by GMU multiple years
 - Korea in Global Perspective (BA & MA)
- The College of Wooster
 - Independent Studies supervisor for nine senior students
 - International Political Economy
 - Introduction to International Relations
 - East Asian Politics
- University of Missouri-Columbia
 - East Asian Politics
 - Introduction to International Relations
- Korean Air Force Academy
 - Readings on the First World War
 - Introduction to Defense Studies
 - Arms Control
 - The Sociology of Civil-Military Relations

Services

- To Global Affairs Program (GLOA), GMU
 - Search Committee
 - * chair, Assistant Professor, GLOA-SIS joint hire 2021
 - * chair, Associate Professor, GLOA-Communication joint hire 2020
 - * member, GLOA Director 2020
 - * member, Term Assistant Professor (Songdo Campus) 2019
 - * chair, Graduate Coordinator 2019
 - * chair, Assistant Director 2018
 - * chair, Graduate Coordinator 2018
 - * member, Assistant Director 2016
 - GLOA Multi-Year Term Faculty Renewal Committee 2021
 - GLOA Bylaw Committee 2020–current
 - Curriculum/Academic Advising GLOA BA/MA students 2014–2020

- Graduate Admission Committee, Global Affairs 2015–current
- Executive Committee, Global Affairs 2015–2020
- Organizer, GLOA Faculty Brownbag 2016–2017
- Director Renewal Committee 2016
- Textbook Renewal Committee (GLOA 101) 2016
- To the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, GMU
 - Intellectual Life of the College Committee 2023 to 2026
 - Senior Leadership Committee 2020 to 2023
 - Director, Asia-Pacific & Northeast Asian Studies Minor 2014–current
 - Term Faculty Promotion Committee. MCL. 2021
 - Judge, Diversity Webpage Re-design Competition. Dept. of Psychology 2019
 - Judge, Annual CHSS Undergraduate Research Symposium 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019
 - Adviser for visiting scholars, [Korean Studies Center](#) 2016–current
 - Dissertation Committee
 - * Yukiko Furuya, Sociology 2016–2020
- To George Mason University
 - Faculty discussant for Mason Graduate Interdisciplinary Conference 2023
 - Focus Group for Tenure-track Faculty Experience 2016
 - Panelist, New Faculty Orientation 2015
 - Grant Proposal Reviewer
 - * Provost Multidisciplinary Research Initiatives. 2015, 2016
- To the profession
 - Editorial Board 2019–Current
 - * [East and West Studies](#) (interdisciplinary peer-reviewed journal)
 - Reviewer for publishers: Routledge
 - Reviewer for peer-reviewed journals: American Journal of Political Science; Arts and International Affairs; Asian Survey; British Journal of Political Science; Comparative Political Studies; Comparative Politics; Defence & Peace Economics; Economics & Politics; Emerging Markets Finance and Trade; European Journal of Korean Studies; Foreign Policy Analysis; Global Perspectives; International Interactions; International Political Science Review; International Studies Quarterly; International Studies Review; Japanese Journal of Political Science; Journal of Asian Studies; Journal of Conflict Resolution; Journal of East Asian Studies; Korea Observer; Pacific Focus; Pacific Affairs; Political Research Quarterly
 - Discussant / Chair
 - * APSA 2014, 2017
 - * MPSA 2014, 2019, 2021, 2022
 - * [GWIKS](#) Workshop 2021
 - * DC-Area Comparativist Workshop 2017, 2019
 - Conference/Section/Panel Organized
 - * Association of Korean Political Studies, Related Group Section 2023

- American Political Science Association Annual Meeting. LA. CA.
- * [The Korean Wave in North America](#)
- Virtual. With Dae Kim and Younga Jung (GMU)

2021

References

- Dr. Jonathan Kriekhaus. University of Missouri-Columbia
- Dr. Cooper Drury. University of Missouri-Columbia
- Dr. Matthew Krain. The College of Wooster

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