

# SAERA LEE

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## EDUCATION

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### Ph.D. Political Science, University of Iowa

*Expected 2023*

Fields: International Relations, Methodology, Comparative Politics (minor)

Dissertation Title: How Shared Culture Influences Alliance Termination

Dissertation Committee: Sara McLaughlin Mitchell (Chair), Kelly M. Kadera, Brian Lai, Elizabeth Menninga, and Stephen Saideman (Carleton University)

Abstract: Why is alliance termination less common in recent decades and what factors make some alliances more likely to terminate and not others? Studies have been focused on the deterrence effect, audience costs and level of institutionalization, but do not give sufficient explanation on declining trend of alliance termination solely. In this research, I argue that it is culture that explains the puzzle. Cultural affinity among allies encourages cooperation, decreases probability of conflicts, and provides a priori understanding. My research focuses on dyadic, alliance and systemic levels, and examines how shared culture decreases bilateral conflict within an alliance, termination of an alliance and creates systemic norm of *pacta sunt servanda* (pacts made in good faith are binding). I employ duration models and time series analysis to test hypotheses.

### M.A. Political Science, University of Iowa

2020

### M.A. Political Science, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea

2015

### B.A. International and Area Studies, Economics, Handong Global University, Pohang South Korea

2012

## ADDITIONAL QUANTITATIVE TRAINING

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### ICPSR, Ann Arbor, Michigan

*Summer 2019*

Game Theory I : Introduction (Scott Ainsworth, University of Georgia)

Multivariate Statistical Methods: Advanced Topics (Robert Henson, UNC Greensboro)

### Korea Social Science Data Archive (KOSSDA), Seoul, Korea

*Summer 2017*

Intermediate Statistics (Shang E. Ha, Sogang University)

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

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### International Relations

International Conflict and Cooperation, International Alliances, Interstate Rivalries, Security Studies, Regional Studies, East Asian Studies

### Political Methodology

Introductory Statistics, Ordinary Linear Regression, Times Series Analysis, Network Analysis, Mathematical Models, Text Analysis, Spatial Analysis, Duration Analysis, Multilevel modeling, Event History Analysis

## FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

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### Graduate Assistantship

*2018-present*

University of Iowa Department of Political Science

### Graduate College Summer Fellowship (\$5,000)

*Summer 2022*

University of Iowa Department of Political Science

### Graduate Student Senate Travel Fund (\$360)

*Spring 2022*

University of Iowa Department of Political Science

### Travel Grant

*2019, 2021, 2022*

University of Iowa Department of Political Science

<b>Excellent Thesis Award on MA thesis</b> Ewha Womans University (South Korea)	2015
<b>Hoo-Jung Yoon Scholarship</b> Ewha Womans University (South Korea)	2015
<b>German Academic Exchange Service Scholarship</b> Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (Germany)	2015
<b>Ewha Scholarship</b> Ewha Womans University (South Korea)	2012, 2015
<b>Brain Korea 21 Scholarship</b> Ewha Womans University (South Korea)	2013

## WORKING PAPERS

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### 1. Saera Lee, How Shared Culture Influences Alliance Termination

In this chapter from my dissertation, I create latent variable of cultural similarity of two states within an alliance using twelve variables including regime type, religion, and ethnicity. I conduct a duration analysis to measure whether a state is more likely to leave an alliance if its culture is significantly different from other allies in the alliance. I find that as cultural similarity between two countries within an alliance decreases, one of the countries is more likely to an alliance because cultural difference increases probability of conflict between member states. *Presented on a panel at the 2022 International Studies Association Annual Convention.*

### 2. Saera Lee, Why Do Alliances Terminate?

This project is an extension from my dissertation, and focuses on termination of alliances. I create alliance-level latent variable of cultural affinity and test whether an alliance is more likely to collapse as cultural similarity of an alliance decreases. Alliances are more likely to be terminated as cultural affinity of an alliance decreases because they fail to create collective identity and sense of community due to lack of shared values. Empirical results support the argument and show that alliances are more likely to collapse when cultural similiary of an alliance is low *Will be presented at 2022 American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.*

### 3. Sara McLaughlin Mitchell. & Saera Lee, & Addison Huygens Cultural Affinity and Alliance Deterrence

In this paper, we test the effect of cultural affinity on deterrence. We argue that alliances with high cultural affinity signal that an alliance is highly cohesive and members are more likely to commit to defense treaty. We use the latent variable for cultural similarity that I created, and find that cultural cohesion of an alliance deters highly violence conflicts but does not make effective signal for lower levels of conflicts. *Will be presented at 2022 American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.*

### 4. Saera Lee, Systemic Democratic Peace and Capitalist Peace

In this project from my third chapter of dissertation, I argue that *pacta sunt servanda* (pacts made in good faith are binding) norm is created in systemic level by alliances with high cultural affinity, which makes alliance termination overtime since 1950. Average cultural affinity of an alliance increases overtime which coincides whit increasing proportion of democratic states. I argue that increasing proportion of democracies contributes to an increasing proportion of alliances with high cultural affinity that promotes *pacta sunt servanda* norm, and the norm makes alliance termination less likely.

### 5. Kelly M. Kadera & Saera Lee, Cultural Affinity and Alliance Formation

In this project, we focus on systemic conditions on alliance formation and how systemic norm of *pacta sunt servanda* creates bad reputations for those states which have violated the terms of obligations and makes them less attractive to other states. States calculate the costs of investment before they form an alliance, therefore members of alliances those are formed are more likely to comply with *pacta sunt servanda*.

## CONFERENCES

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1. (Upcoming) Why Do Alliances Terminate? *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting 2022*.
2. (Upcoming) Cultural Affinity and Alliance Deterrence. (with Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Addison Huygens). *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Poster Session 2022*.
3. How Shared Culture Influences Alliance Termination? *International Studies Association Annual Convention 2022*.
4. Cultural Affinity and the Termination of Military Alliances. *Iowa Women Studying Politics 2022*.
5. Foreign Aid and Civil Conflict. *International Studies Association Midwest 2021*.
6. Alliance Design and Issue Linkage. *International Studies Association Midwest. Virtual Format 2020*.
7. Secret of Alliance: Focused on Alliance Duration Depends on Alliance Types. *International Studies Association Midwest 2019*.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### University of Iowa

Spring 2019-Present

1. Stand-Alone Instructor, Spring 2021, [International Conflict](#)
2. Guest Lecturer, Introduction to International Relations (for Kelly M. Kadera)  
Guest lectured on military alliances; why states form alliances and why they terminate from various perspectives. Connected the theories with real world examples such as World War I and failure of League of Nations. Also included statistical evidence to explain the conditions for effective alliance.
3. Teaching Assistant  
Introduction to International Relations (head TA for Kelly M. Kadera, and Elizabeth Menninga)  
Introduction to Political Analysis (for Douglas Dion)  
American Foreign Policy (for Brian Lai)  
Introduction to American Politics (for Tracy Osborn)

### ICPSR, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Summer 2021

Teaching Assistant, Time Series Analysis (for Sara McLaughlin Mitchell and Clayton Webb)

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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1. **Research Assistant, Political Science, University of Iowa** Summer 2021, 2020, Winter 2021  
Worked for Dr. Menninga and Dr. Prorok (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) to develop a dataset for international interventions in civil conflicts. Collected data from news sources and coded into relevant categories
2. **Research Assistant, Political Science, University of Iowa** Summer 2021  
Worked for Dr. Brian Lai to manage listserv of Foreign Policy Analysis journal.
3. **Research Assistant, The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Seoul, South Korea** 2015 - 2017  
Worked with Professor Jongdae Shin on a book publication project about history of South Korean foreign policy. I gathered historical data from newspapers, and interviewed former Minister of Foreign Affairs and former military officer.
4. **Participating Researcher, National Institute for Biological Resources, Seoul, South Korea** 2014 - 2015  
Worked as participating researcher on a project for biological diversity and sustainable development. I researched as a scholar in political science and wrote a paper on international relations in the era of sustainable development.
5. **Research Assistant, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea** Fall 2012 - Spring 2014  
Worked at The Institute for International and Area Studies and International Studies Review journal, assisting projects on preparing Korean unification and promoting international cooperation.

## ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

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1. **Participant, Ewha-Rostock Summer Academy Reunification**, Rostock, Germany 2015
2. **Intern, Educators Without Borders**, Seoul, South Korea 2013
3. **Staff, 11th Korea-Germany Forum**, Gangwon-do, South Korea 2012
4. **Volunteer, Camp City Union Mission**, Missouri, USA Summer 2010

## PROGRAMMING/SOFTWARE SKILLS

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Stata, R, Python, Mathematica, LaTeX and familiarity with E-Views

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

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American Political Science Association, International Studies Association, Women in Conflict Studies

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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1. Judge, Spring Undergraduate Research Festival 2022
2. Manuscript Reviewer, *American Political Science Review* 2021-present
3. Manuscript Reviewer, *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2020-present
4. Graduate Student Peer Mentor, Political Science, University of Iowa 2020-present

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