

University of Georgia
INTL 4620: Human Rights
Fall 2017, MWF 9:05 am – 9:55 am
Caldwell G10

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Office Hours: Mondays & Fridays, 10:00-11:00 AM, and by appointment
Prerequisites: INTL 3200 or INTL 3300 or permission of department

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

The aim of this class is to provide you with a greater understanding of the concept of human rights, including their importance in international politics and the various means by which these rights might be either violated or protected. Further, we will also discuss many of the methods used to study and evaluate respect for human rights cross-nationally. As such, by the end of this course, you should:

- Have a strong grasp on the various definitions of human rights, including comparisons between universal and culturally contingent perspectives, as well as the ability to clearly express and justify your preferred definition of human rights and explain its implications
- Have gained a general understanding of many of the sources of human rights violations, as well as the many ways in which human rights may be violated and the cross-national extent of the problem of human rights violations
- Be able to list and discuss several types of efforts aimed at improving respect for human rights, including the efforts associated with international law, powerful states, and non-governmental organizations
- Be capable of understanding and participating in the public debate over the many issues discussed in this class
- Have an improved ability to make logical, convincing oral and written arguments

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

- (1) Donnelly, Jack. 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. 3rd ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- (2) Goodhart, Michael, ed. 2013. *Human Rights: Politics & Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- (3) Schulz, William F., ed. 2007. *The Phenomenon of Torture: Readings and Commentary*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- (4) Glendon, Mary Ann. 2001. *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. New York: Random House.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

EXAMS (60%):

Midterm Exams (2 X 15% of your grade) & Final Exam (30% of your grade)

There will be three major tests given this semester. Each exam is cumulative. The first midterm exam is tentatively scheduled for **Wednesday, September 20**. The second midterm exam is tentatively scheduled for **Monday, October 16**. The final exam will be given on **Friday, December 8**.

Human Rights Data Project (25% of your grade)

As a part of this course, you will gain experience assessing government human rights practices by working as a coder for a human rights data project. Human rights data like these are utilized by scholars and students who seek to test theories about the causes and consequences of human rights violations, as well as policy makers and analysts who seek to estimate the human rights effects of a wide variety of institutional changes and public policies. Indeed, previous data project that I have worked on have been utilized by hundreds of governments and organizations worldwide, including the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Commission, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), among others. As such, your work on this project is very serious and important, with implications that go far beyond your grade in this course.

For your assignment, you will be working with the Sub-National Analysis of Repression Project (SNARP). SNARP is a new data collection effort aimed at generating standards-based measures that capture variation in physical integrity rights abuse within a state's borders. For this project, we rely on a mix of expert coding, theoretically informed measurement models, and cutting-edge computational techniques, which are capable of coding and then linking together the diverse information drawn from a rich set of primary source documents. Using this information, we generate standards-based measures for each of several specific types of physical integrity violations (arbitrary detention, torture, disappearances, and extrajudicial execution) as well as a combined indicator for these abuses for each first-order subnational administrative unit within a state. This level of analysis brings us closer to the level at which most citizens encounter the government's legal, political, and bureaucratic authority.

I will ask you to read human rights reports, and, using guidelines I will provide, extract information about respect for certain human rights. Later in the semester, you, another student who is working with the same countries and rights as you (for reasons I will explain in class), and I (or a graduate assistant) will meet to go over your work and reconcile differences where necessary. Then, finally, you will prepare a short report summarizing your work. Your grade for all of this will be divided into three components:

Timeliness (5% of your grade) – This grade is primarily based on (1) whether all data assignments are completed and turned on time, (2) class attendance on training days, and (3) on-time completion of all other related assignments. Successfully meeting these three requirements should result in a perfect score for timeliness. Some of the coding deadlines can be found in the class schedule below; however, I retain the right to change this schedule as necessary.

Conscientiousness (10% of your grade) - I will evaluate how conscientious you were when you collected your data reviewing your notes and by taking note of your preparedness for our reconciliation meetings. You should keep careful notes of why you made the decisions you made in data collection. These notes will be used during the reconciliation meetings with your partner and me, so you should bring a copy of those notes to the meetings where reconciliation will take place. This will be discussed in greater detail in class.

Coding Report (10% of your grade) – Finally, you will take your observations over the course of the coding project and present them in a short 3-5 page report. This report should summarize the information in your coding and notes, describe any difficulty you had interpreting the guidelines or the information from the reports, describe any difficulties encountered in the reconciliation process, and finally, describe any suggestions you have for the improvement of the coding process. Of course, the potential quality of this report is directly tied to your conscientiousness, i.e. a non-conscientious coder will find it difficult to successfully complete the report.

You will encounter much more material and discussion about all aspects of the human rights data project over the course of the next few months, much of which will occur in class.

Attendance & Participation (15% of your grade)

Attendance and participation are a necessary condition for satisfactory achievement in this class. I am here for guidance and to share knowledge with you, which I will do extensively on the days that I lecture. However, the best way for you to learn in this course is to engage with the material and to debate and discuss it at length with your peers in class. Thus, excellence in participation means more than just talking a lot in class; rather, it requires that your participation be high in both quality *and* quantity. In order to pull this off, you should do your best to be a *critical reader*. Critical readers are (Schumm, J. S., and Post, S. A. 1997. Executive Learning, 282; Richards 2006):

- willing to spend time reflecting on the ideas presented in their reading assignments
- able to evaluate and solve problems while reading rather than merely compile a set of facts to be memorized
- logical thinkers
- diligent in seeking out the truth
- eager to express their thoughts on a topic
- seekers of alternative views on a topic
- open to new ideas that may not necessarily agree with their previous thought on a topic
- able to base their judgments on ideas and evidence
- able to recognize errors in thought and persuasion as well as to recognize good arguments
- willing to take a critical stance on issues

- able to ask penetrating and thought-provoking questions to evaluate ideas
- in touch with their personal thoughts and ideas about a topic
- willing to reassess their views when new or discordant evidence is introduced and evaluated
- able to identify arguments and issues
- able to see connections between topics and use knowledge from other disciplines to enhance their reading and learning experiences

I will regularly take attendance in class. I will also take note of both the quantity and the quality of your contributions to class discussions. If necessary, I may also intermittently give brief quizzes in class in order to gauge the degree to which you are engaging with and understanding the material. As a result, it is important that you stay caught up on the readings at all times.

Finally, I should note that points for attendance and participation are not simply given out; they are earned. Grades in my classes are often raised by attendance and participation. However, others have found their grade lowered when they paid attendance and participation little attention. As such, it is in your best interest to attend class and participate in discussion where appropriate.

COURSE POLICIES

1. Attendance

As explained above, attendance and participation make up a sizable portion of your grade for the class. However, I am aware that, at times, events beyond our control conspire to keep us from meeting our normal, everyday obligations; in these cases, I grant excused absences. An excused absence is one where you have an officially documented college-sanctioned event (sports / conference / trip), a documented medical excuse (for **you** only) or proof of a deceased *direct* relative. For our purposes, “direct relative” includes mother, father, sister, brother, or grandparent living anywhere, or other relative (aunt, uncle, cousin) living at the student’s permanent residence. ***UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN THE RECEIPT OF A ZERO FOR ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION FOR THAT DAY.***

In the event that an excused absence keeps you from attending class on the day a test is given, the test will be made up at the nearest possible time to the test date. Once again, an excused absence is one where you have an officially documented college-sanctioned event (sports / conference / trip), a documented medical excuse (for **you** only) or proof of a deceased *direct* relative. For our purposes, “direct relative” includes mother, father, sister, brother, or grandparent living anywhere, or other relative (aunt, uncle, cousin) living at the student’s permanent residence. ***Excused absences are the only reason I will accept for offering a make-up exam. UNEXCUSED ABSENCES ON TEST DAYS WILL RESULT IN THE RECEIPT OF A ZERO FOR THE TEST.***

2. Cell Phones and Other Noise-Making Devices

All cell phones and other devices that make noise must be turned off or put on silent/vibrate upon entering the classroom. Repeated unnecessary disruptions of class caused by such devices may negatively affect a student's grade.

3. Academic Honesty

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

4. Class Discussion and Debate

Political debates and discussions can become quite heated. This passion is part of what makes the study of politics fun. However, the fun ends where personal attacks and disrespect begin. All students are expected to be courteous and considerate of their classmates. Disrespectful language and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

5. Communicating with the Instructor

My primary method of communicating with you outside of class time/office hours will be thorough email. You have each been assigned an email address by the university and will be held responsible for regularly checking this account. Assignment changes, important dates, and other valuable information may be sent to this account over the course of the semester. Please check it regularly.

I have posted office hours from 10 AM until 11 AM on Mondays and Fridays. During this time period, you should feel free to come by my office at Candler Hall 323 and discuss any questions you may have about the class. If these times do not work for you, I would be more than happy to set up an appointment.

6. Staying Informed

In this course, we will often discuss current political events and issues. It is therefore important that you stay informed. Your ability to take the news of the day and view it through the lens of what you are learning will be a vital component of your success in this class. You may get your information from whatever outlet you choose. However, it is recommended that at least some of your information comes from a national news source, such as *The New York Times* (www.nytimes.com), *The Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com), CNN (www.cnn.com), or NPR (www.npr.org). Also, academic blogs are often great places to encounter discussions of current events through the lens of the things we are talking about in class. A few political science blogs that may be useful for this course are The Monkey Cage (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage>), The Quantitative Peace (www.quantitativepeace.com/), Political Violence @ a Glance

(<http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/>), and The Duck of Minerva (<http://duckofminerva.com/>), among others.

7. Changes to the Syllabus

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. As such, I reiterate the absolute necessity that you (1) come to class and (2) check your email regularly.

PRELIMINARY COURSE SCHEDULE

Weeks 1 & 2 (August 14 – 25): What are human rights? Where do they come from?

Reading (Due by Wednesday, August 16)

Donnelly 2013, Chapter 1

Reading (Due by Wednesday, August 23)

Glendon 2001, Chapters 3-5

Weeks 3 (August 28 – September 1): Human Rights & International Law

Reading (Due by Monday, August 28)

Donnelly 2013, Chapter 2

Smith 2013, “Human Rights in International Law”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights (ICCPR):

<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>

Optional Protocol to the ICCPR:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCCPR1.aspx>

Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/2ndOPCCPR.aspx>

International Covenant on Economic, Social, & Cultural Rights (ICESCR):

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx>

Optional Protocol to the ICESCR:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCESCR.aspx>

Week 4 (September 4 – 8): Universalism & Relativism

Reading (Due by Wednesday, September 6)

Donnelly 2013, Chapter 4

Donnelly 2003, “Cultural Relativism & International Human Rights”

Kalev 2004, “Cultural Rights or Human Rights: The Case of Female Genital Mutilation”

Week 5 (September 11 – 15): Measuring Human Rights

Reading (Due by Monday, September 11)

Landman 2004, “Measuring Human Rights: Principle, Practice, & Policy”
Cingranelli and Richards 2010, “The Cingranelli and Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data Project”

The CIRI Human Rights Data Project website (particularly the information in the “CIRI Documentation” section under the “Data & Documentation” tab):
<http://www.humanrightsdata.com>

Reading (Due by Wednesday, September 13)

Fukuda-Parr, Lawson-Remer, & Randolph 2009, “An Index of Economic and Social Rights Fulfillment: Concept & Methodology.”

Barry, Cingranelli, & Clay 2013, “Coding Government Respect for Worker Rights”

Week 6 (September 18 – 22): Midterm Exam #1 & Data Project Prep #1

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 – MIDTERM EXAM #1

Reading (Due Friday, September 22)

Class Coding Project Guidelines & Info (On ELC)

Weeks 7 & 8 (September 25 – October 9): Studying Physical Integrity Rights

Reading (Due Monday, September 25)

Landman 2005, “The Political Science of Human Rights”

Reading (Due Wednesday, September 27)

Poe 2004, “The Decision to Repress: An Integrative Theoretical Approach to the Research on Human Rights and Repression”

Englehart 2009, “State Capacity, State Failure, and Human Rights”

Poe, Tate, and Keith 1999, “Repression of the Human Right to Personal Integrity Revisited: A Global Cross-national Study Covering the Years 1976-1993”

Reading (Due Monday, October 2)

Selected Account of Physical Integrity Rights Abuse, On ELC

Boler 1985, “The Mothers Committee of El Salvador: National Human Rights Advocates.”

Reading (Due Wednesday, October 4)

Strauss 2013, “Genocide and Human Rights”

Lessons from Rwanda Website: <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/>

Harff 2003, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955.”

Reading (Due Monday, October 9)

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm>
Schultz, *The Phenomenon of Torture*. Chapter 2; also pages 30-32, 155-162, 210-214, 227-229, and 233-282.

Week 9 (October 11 – 13): Repression & Dissent

Reading (Due Wednesday, October 11)

Selections from T. David Mason, *Caught in the Crossfire*.

Week 10 (October 16 – 20): Midterm Exam #2 & Data Project Prep #2

MONDAY, OCTOBER 16 – MIDTERM EXAM #2

Week 11 (October 23 – 27): Economic/Subsistence Rights

Reading (Due Monday, October 16)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. 2005.
“Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Handbook for National Human Rights Institutions.”
<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/training12en.pdf>.
Hertel and Minkler 2007, “Economic Rights: The Terrain.”

Reading (Due Wednesday, October 20)

Richards 2012, "What's in a Name? Human Rights, Human Development, and Human Dignity."
http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/newsletter/articles-2012/en_GB/12-2012-DR/
Mosley & Uno 2007, “Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top? Economic Globalization and Collective Labor Rights”

Week 12 (October 30 – November 3): Discrimination & Membership

Reading (Due Monday, October 24)

Facio and Morgan 2008, “Equity or Equality for Women? Understanding CEDAW’s Equality Principles,” pgs. 1133-1159.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm>
Convention on the Rights of the Child:
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf
Declaration on the Rights of Minorities: <http://www.un-documents.net/a47r135.htm>

Reading (Due Wednesday, October 26)

- Brysk 2009, "Beyond Framing and Shaming: Human Trafficking, Human Security, and Human Rights"
- Brysk 2012, "From Rhetoric to Response: Global Response to Human Trafficking"
- Stackpole 2015, "The New Abolitionists,"
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/22/the-new-abolitionists-mexico-dominican-republic-human-trafficking-mormon-our/>
- Kessler 2015, "Why You Should Be Wary of Statistics on 'Modern Slavery' and 'Trafficking,'" <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2015/04/24/why-you-should-be-wary-of-statistics-on-modern-slavery-and-trafficking/>

Week 13 (November 6 – 10): Data Project Prep #3

Weeks 14 & 15 (November 13 – December 5): International Efforts to Protect Rights

Reading (Due Monday, November 13)

- DeMeritt 2015, "Delegating Death: Military Intervention and Government Killing"
- Krain 2005, "International Intervention and the Severity of Genocides and Politicides"

Reading (Due Wednesday, November 15)

- Peksen 2009, "Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights"
- Apodaca and Stohl 1999, "Unites States Human Rights Policy and Foreign Assistance"

Reading (Due Monday, November 27)

- Murdie and Davis 2012, "Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs"
- Barry, Clay, and Flynn 2013, "Avoiding the Spotlight: Human Rights Shaming and Foreign Direct Investment"
- Bell, Clay, and Murdie 2012, "Neighborhood Watch: Spatial Effects of Human Rights INGOs."

Friday, December 8 (8 AM) – FINAL EXAM!