

**University of Georgia**  
**INTL 4620: Human Rights**  
**Fall 2019, TR 3:30 pm – 4:45 pm**  
**MLC 267**

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Office: Candler 329  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11 am – 12 pm; Thursdays, 2 pm – 3 pm; and by appointment  
Prerequisites: INTL 3200 or INTL 3300 or permission of department

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**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*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- (2) Goodhart, Michael, ed. 2013. *Human Rights: Politics & Practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 (66% (3 X 22%))**

There will be three major tests given this semester. Each exam is cumulative. The first midterm exam is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, September 26**. The second midterm exam is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, October 22**. If we decide to take an in-class final exam, the final exam will be given on **Thursday, December 10**.

### **Human Rights Data Project (15% of your grade)**

As a part of this course, you will gain experience assessing government human rights practices by working on 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 projects 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.

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.

### **Reflection Paper (Expository Essay) (5%):**

I always want to know more about what my students learned from my class and how they intend to apply that knowledge moving forward. As such, after the first midterm exam, I will provide you with a list of prompts related to the subject matter of the course. I will ask you to respond to one of those prompts with an essay based on your experience in the course.

The essay will be due on eLC on **Tuesday, December 3**, but you are welcome to turn it in well before that deadline. I expect your response to take the form of 3 to 5 double-spaced pages with 12 point font and one inch margins. It should make a persuasive argument in favor of your response to the prompt, based on a thesis statement and points supporting that thesis. These essays should NOT be simple summaries of someone else's argument. Instead, these papers should be argumentative in nature; you should strive to make ONE point in each paper and support it with evidence. In particular, essays in this course should synthesize information from multiple sources to present YOUR argument. That is, the key ingredient for a good grade on this reflection paper is a strong argument from you.

More information on the reflection papers will be provided later in the semester.

## Attendance & Participation (14% 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. 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. You will be allowed to miss 3 classes over the course of the semester; if you miss more than 3, you will begin to lose attendance points. I will also take note of both the quantity and the quality of your contributions to class discussions to separately grade your participation. 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. As such, you are granted 3 absences over the course of the semester before you start losing attendance points. Each additional absence above 3 will cost you attendance points.

If you are not be able to attend class on the day an exam is given, you must inform me (preferably at least two days prior to the exam) so that we may make arrangements for your makeup exam. The test should be made up at the nearest possible time to the test date. A missed exam day will also count against your attendance grade.

### **2. Writing Style Rules**

When writing papers for this class, you should follow these rules. Failure to do so could result in a reduction of your grade.

- All papers should be double-spaced and in 12-point font, printed on pages with 1” margins all around.
- Title pages, graphs, tables, figures, references, appendices, etc. do not count toward your paper’s length.
- You are required to use the American Political Science Association (APSA) style format for your papers. The full style guide can be found on our class’s ELC page.

### **3. 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.

### **4. 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](http://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.

### **5. 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.

## 6. 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 11 AM until 12 AM on Tuesdays and 2 PM until 3 PM on Thursdays. During this time period, you should feel free to come by my office at Candler Hall 329 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.

## 7. 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](http://www.nytimes.com)), *The Washington Post* ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)), CNN ([www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)), or NPR ([www.npr.org](http://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/](http://www.quantitativepeace.com/)), Political Violence @ a Glance (<http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/>), and The Duck of Minerva (<http://duckofminerva.com/>), among others.

## 8. 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 - 3: What are human rights? Where do they come from?**

Reading (Due by Tuesday, August 20)  
Donnelly 2013, Chapter 1

Reading (Due by Thursday, August 22)  
Glendon 2001, Chapters 3-5

## **Week 4: Human Rights & International Law**

### Reading (Due by Thursday, September 5)

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 5: Universalism & Relativism**

### Reading (Due by Tuesday, September 10)

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 6: Measuring Human Rights & Data Project Prep**

### Reading (Due by Tuesday, September 17)

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 Thursday, September 19)

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 7: Midterm Exam #1**

### **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 – MIDTERM EXAM #1**

## **Weeks 8 & 9: Studying Civil & Political Rights**

### Reading (Due Tuesday, October 1)

Landman 2005, "The Political Science of Human Rights"

### Reading (Due Thursday, October 3)

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 Tuesday, October 8)

Selected Account of Physical Integrity Rights Abuse, On ELC

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

### Reading (Due Thursday, October 10)

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."

## **Week 10: Repression & Dissent**

### Reading (Due Tuesday, October 15)

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.

### Reading (Due Thursday, October 17)

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

## **Week 11: Midterm Exam #2**

### **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22 – MIDTERM EXAM #2**

## **Week 12: Economic Rights**

### Reading (Due Thursday, October 24)

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 Tuesday, October 29)

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/](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 13: Flex Week (For changes in schedule, data project work, etc.)**

**Week 14: Discrimination & Membership**

Reading (Due Tuesday, November 12)

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](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 Thursday, November 14)

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 15: International Efforts to Protect Human Rights**

Reading (Due Tuesday, November 19)

DeMeritt 2015, "Delegating Death: Military Intervention and Government Killing"

Krain 2005, "International Intervention and the Severity of Genocides and Politicides"

Peksen 2009, "Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights"

Apodaca and Stohl 1999, "United States Human Rights Policy and Foreign Assistance"

Reading (Due Thursday, November 21)

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."

**Thursday, December 10 (3:30 PM) – FINAL EXAM! (ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY!)**