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 conceptions of human rights, including comparisons between universal and culturally contingent perspectives, as well as the ability to clearly express and justify your preferred view 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 the implementation and effectiveness of 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 designing and conducting original research on the topic of human rights
- Be able to effectively critique and communicate information about both your research and the work of others

Recommended Books:

Course Assignments & Grades

Weekly Response Questions (20% of your grade)

Each week (beginning in Week 2), you will be responsible for submitting at least 2 critical-thought questions based on that week’s readings. These questions should be geared toward producing class discussion or scholarly research. As such, questions can include a preamble as needed, but overall, each question should not exceed 5 lines. These questions should be posted to our message board on eLC by 12 PM each Thursday before class. We will discuss the format of these questions more over the course of the class.

Human Rights Basics Quizzes (20% of your grade)

Over the course of the semester, I will give you a few brief quizzes covering basic material from the classes. These quizzes are open book, but I do ask that you do them by yourself. They are not meant to be difficult. Rather, the intention of these quizzes is to ensure that you are grasping the basic substance of the course and to encourage you to better engage with the material that you encounter that you are perhaps less familiar with. I will follow up with more information on these quizzes as the semester progresses.
Human Rights Research (40% of your grade)

This course will require substantial research on human rights. However, there are many options for meeting the course’s research requirement.

First, by being a member of the class, you are automatically invited to participate in the GLOBIS Human Rights Research Lab this semester. The Lab has several projects underway that could use your support, including a web video series in the early stages of production, blog posts, and reports. We will discuss these periodically over the course of the class, and there will be calls for each of them.

Second, the Lab will have one very big project this semester: A report as part of the Human Rights Measurement Initiative on COVID-19’s effect on respect for human rights around the world in 2020. We anticipate releasing this report sometime later in 2021, and, if you choose to participate, you will be able to claim having been one of the authors of the report itself. We will discuss this more as the semester goes on.

Of course, you can also turn in a research paper, and if you are a PhD student, I recommend allocating some of your research time to at least working on a research design for the course. This paper should rely on scholarly research, as well as research that you conduct on your own, to address a research question concerning some aspect of human rights. The goal is that this paper will provide solid footing for a future project suitable for presentation at a professional conference and, eventually, publication. Depending on how much of your research time you dedicate to the project, this paper could be anywhere between 10 and 30 double-spaced pages in length.

I will be placing “calls” for each of the various research activities on eLC as the semester goes on, and each of these calls will contain specific instructions and tips for carrying out that assignment. You will have the ability to tackle whichever tasks you are most excited about, but the expectation is that, once we are a couple of weeks into the semester, you should be spending ~4 hours a week on research tasks. I won’t be monitoring your time (and I anticipate that the actual number of hours in any given week will vary wildly), but I WOULD like you to keep a weekly “Research Journal” that describes what you are working on and what you have been doing. These research journal entries should be very short; indeed, they could just be bulleted lists of what you have done that week. I will ask you to let me check your journal on a couple of occasions over the course of the semester, just so I can let you know whether you are on track or not. I will also ask you to turn them in at the end of the semester to help me determine your research grade.

Participation (20% of your grade)

Participation is a necessary condition for satisfactory achievement in this class. This is a seminar course, which means that YOU should be bringing your own unique perspective to class. I am here for guidance and to share knowledge with you, but 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

Finally, I should note that points for 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**

Physical, in-person attendance is NOT REQUIRED in this class. In order to accommodate social distancing during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, only about 1/4 of the class will be allowed to come to the classroom on any given day. A list splitting you into groups and letting you know which days you will be able to attend in-person, if you so desire, has been emailed out and is available on eLC. However, each of these classes will be available synchronously on Zoom and will also be uploaded for asynchronous viewing after the class. Likewise, all exams and other assignments will be accessible online, and the class itself could be taken entirely online, if the student so desires.

2. **Zoom-Capable Device & Headphones**

If you choose to attend class in-person, you are REQUIRED to have a Zoom-capable device with you to participate, as well as a webcam and headphones that you can use with that device. As our class will be split, we will have to ensure that all members of the class can communicate with
one another. Your Zoom-capable device will enable you to participate in class and hear your classmates that are unable to be in the same room with you.

3. Face Coverings

If you attend class, you are REQUIRED to wear a face covering. Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia—along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions—requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at https://drc.uga.edu/.

4. Zoom Etiquette

Since we will be utilizing Zoom for much of our class this semester, we will need to be cognizant of the difficulties that come with that. To avoid echoes and distracting background noise, please mute yourself any time you are not the one speaking. Further, take care to wait to speak until others are finished so we aren’t all interrupting each other and talking over one another.

Finally, when possible, please turn your camera on while in class. Being able to see one another’s faces helps to facilitate a shared classroom feeling. I will periodically give us breaks that will allow cameras to be turned off. However, I will not require cameras to be on, and I recognize and understand that it each of our cameras may need to be turned off from time to time.

5. 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.

6. 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.
7. **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.

8. **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, changes to the class schedule, and other valuable information will be sent to this account over the course of the semester. Please check it regularly.

That said, I recognize that email is not fun. Indeed, I receive far too many emails every day, and it is one of the top sources of stress in my work life. As such, I use the Yesterbox method of managing my email (https://yesterbox.com/). In short, I generally do not look at emails on the day they were received; instead, I try to cover yesterday’s emails every day. As such, it can take as long as 48 hours to get a response from me, and sometimes it may take longer. If you have not heard from me within 48 hours of sending an email, and you need a response urgently, please feel free to email me again and let me know the response is urgent. I will not be offended.

I have posted office hours from 2 until 4 PM on Tuesdays. Given the circumstances of this semester, I will be holding these office hours over Zoom. If you would like to meet with me during office hours, simply email me, and I will send you a link and a time. If these times do not work for you, I would be more than happy to set up an appointment at a different time during the week.

9. **Prohibition on Recording Lectures**

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make their own visual or audio recordings of any aspect of this course. I will be providing video recordings of all of our classes on eLC, but students must agree that they:

- Will use the recordings only for their own personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
• Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
• Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.

Violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

10. 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, 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 blogs that may be useful for this course are OpenGlobalRights (https://www.openglobalrights.org/), the HRMI blog (https://humanrightsmeasurement.org/blog/), Political Violence @ a Glance (http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/), The Monkey Cage (https://www.washingtonpost.com/monkey-cage/), The Quantitative Peace (www.quantitativepeace.com/), and The Duck of Minerva (https://duckofminerva.com/), among others.

11. 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.

Additional UGA Coronavirus Information

DawgCheck

Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/.

What do I do if I have symptoms?

Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies.
What do I do if I test positive?

Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is **required** to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?

Effective Jan. 4, 2021, students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 10 days (consistent with updated Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines). Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined.

We strongly encourage students to voluntarily take a COVID-19 test within 48 hours of the end of the 10-day quarantine period (test to be administered between days 8 and 10). Students may obtain these tests at Legion Field ([https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/](https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/)) or at the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in the University Health Center without an appointment. For emergencies and after-hours care, see [https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies).

If the test is negative, the individual may return to campus, but MUST continue to closely monitor for any new COVID-19 symptoms through 14 days. DawgCheck is the best method for monitoring these symptoms. If new symptoms occur, the individual must not come to campus and must seek further testing/evaluation.

If the test is positive at the end of the 10-day period, the individual must begin a 10-day isolation period from the date of the test.

How do I participate in surveillance testing if I have NO symptoms?

We strongly encourage you to take advantage of the expanded surveillance testing that is being offered from **January 4 – 22: up to 1,500 free tests per day at Legion Field and pop-up locations.** Testing at Legion Field can be scheduled at [https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/](https://clia.vetview.vet.uga.edu/). Walk-up appointments can usually be accommodated at Legion Field, and pop-up saliva testing does not require pre-registration. For planning purposes, precise sites and schedules for the pop-up clinics are published on the UHC’s website and its social media as they are secured: [https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-surveillance-testing](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/healthtopics/covid-surveillance-testing).

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit
https://sco.uga.edu. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- GA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga) or crisis support (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

**PRELIMINARY CLASS SCHEDULE**

NOTE: I am aware that there are A LOT of readings in this class. Most weeks, we will be splitting up the required reading assignments among different people in the class. If you are trying to get an early start on a week’s readings, please feel free to reach out to me for suggestions on how to proceed.

**Week 1 - Thursday, January 14:** Introduction to the course & in-class activity

**Recommended:**

**Week 2 - Thursday, January 21:** What are human rights? How are they codified in international law?

**Required:**

**Recommended:**
Week 3 - Thursday, January 28: Universalism & Relativism

Required:

Recommended:

**Week 4 - Thursday, February 4: Measuring Respect for Civil & Political Rights**

**Required:**
   a. Political Terror Scale website: http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/
   a. CIRI Human Rights Data Project website: http://www.humanrightsdata.com
8. Human Rights Measurement Initiative website: https://humanrightsmeasurement.org/. Focus particularly on information about the civil and political rights this week; we will discuss the economic and social rights measures next week.
   a. SNARP Website (a work in progress): http://snarpdata.org/.
Recommended:

Week 5 - Thursday, February 11: Measuring Economic, Social, and Women’s Rights

Required:
      Focus particularly on information about the economic and social rights this week.
   a. Worker Rights in Law & Practice Coding Manual

Recommended:
12. Richard W. Frank’s Human Trafficking Indictors: [https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/23612](https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/23612)

Week 6 - Thursday, February 18: International Law & Human Rights

Required:

Recommended:
7. Many, many more Wade Cole articles: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=trDS_LQAAAAJ&hl=en
Week 7 - Thursday, February 25: Studying Civil & Political Rights

Required:
1. Review the ICCPR: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx
   a. First Optional Protocol: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCCPR1.aspx
   b. Second Optional Protocol: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/2ndOPCCPR.aspx
2. Review the CAT: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CAT.aspx
   a. Optional Protocol: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCAT.aspx
3. Review the CPED: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CED/Pages/ConventionCED.aspx

Decision to Repress

Principals, Agents, & Delegation

General Correlates

Domestic Institutions

**Political Economy**

**Recommended:**


**Week 8 - Thursday, March 4: Dissent, Repression, & Oppression**

**Required:**

**Repression & Dissent**


**Oppression vs Repression**

**Physical Integrity Violations in the Real World**

**Recommended:**


**Week 9 - Thursday, March 11**

Mid-Term Review & Reflection

**Week 10 - Thursday, March 18: Economic & Social Rights**

Required:

1. Review the ICESCR: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx)
   a. Optional Protocol: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCESCR.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCESCR.aspx)


Recommended:

**Week 11 - Thursday, March 25: Discrimination, Membership, & Culture I**

**Required:**

**Women’s Rights**
1. Review CEDAW: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx)
   a. Optional Protocol: [https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCEDAW.aspx](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPCEDAW.aspx)

**LGBTQIA+ Rights: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics**
Children’s Rights

1. Review CRC: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx
   a. Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPACCRCC.aspx
   c. Optional Protocol Communications: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPICCRCC.aspx


Recommended:
Week 12 - Thursday, April 1: Discrimination, Membership, & Culture II

Required:

Racial, Ethnic, or Religious Discrimination
1. Review ICERD: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx

Indigenous Peoples’ Rights

Ableism and the Rights of People with Disabilities

Recommended:
10. For some recent books on discrimination against Black people in the United States, see this list: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/132h7yGof96HsUq_cXnH9OcFIHFe6F7_fPfdmeX4glA/edit?usp=sharing

Week 13 - Thursday, April 8

Instructional Break – No Class Today
Week 14 - Thursday, April 15: Refugees, Migration, & Environment

Required:
2. Review the ICMW: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CMW.aspx

Recommended:


Week 15 - Monday, April 22: Foreign State Interventions in Human Rights

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


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**Week 16 - Monday, April 29: International Human Rights Advocacy**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


25. So much work by Amanda Murdie: http://amandamurdie.org/research.html

