

**INTL 4620: Human Rights**  
University of Georgia  
Caldwell Hall Room 102  
Spring 2024, MWF 12:40pm-1:30pm

**Instructor: Asia Parker**

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Office Hours: 1:30-3:30, Mondays at the GLOBIS office: 110 E Clayton St 6th Floor, Athens, GA 30601 or by appointment

**Course Description & Objectives**

Human rights violations are widespread. The majority of the world's citizens live with inadequate civil and political and economic, social, and cultural rights, often with dire consequences on economic and human rights. What caused this situation? And what can be done to fix it? This course focuses on the social scientific study of human rights. We will focus on the rise of human rights, political and economic explanations for human rights conditions, and the effects of advocacy efforts concerning human rights. After this class, you will have not only an understanding of the major players and factors influencing human rights, but a base understanding of the social scientific processes which govern human rights conditions and improvements. As such, this class is not a history class or a class on current events. Instead, the focus will be on understanding the underlying interests of important actors towards human rights, the arenas in which these actors interact, and the rules which govern their interactions. The first half of the semester will focus on defining human rights and understanding the determinants of human rights issues. The second half of the semester will focus on international human rights law, international interventions and advocacy. We will read a variety of research and other materials about human rights, and engage in a simulation to immerse you in fictional human rights processes.

By the end of this course, you should:

- Have a strong grasp on the various definitions and understandings of human rights, including comparisons between universal and culturally contingent perspectives
- Be able to discuss several international human rights instruments, as well as the definitions of the rights contained therein
- 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 capable of discussing several different methods of measuring human rights
- Be able to list and discuss several types of efforts aimed at improving respect for human rights, including the efforts associated with international law, states, and non-governmental organizations
- Have an improved ability to make logical, convincing oral and written arguments

## **Assignments & Grades**

Midterm 25%

Final 25%

Active Participation 20%

Attendance 5%

Activity or Simulation 25%

### *Books*

Kara, S. (2023). Cobalt red: how the blood of the Congo powers our lives. St. Martin's Press (Not required until Week 6)

### *Midterm & Final Exams*

Each test will be in-class. The tests will consist of both multiple choice and short answer questions. The tests will not be cumulative but you should retain your basic knowledge of the social science of human rights for the second test.

### *Active Participation*

Participation is an essential part of any class and students are expected to participate in each class through debate, discussion and asking questions. I expect that for each discussion you have read any assigned material. Quality will dictate this part of your grade. To participate effectively, be sure to attend class prepared: read assigned material, and take notes of key concepts or questions you might have. If we experience continued issues preparing for classes, some of the components will be converted to reading quizzes.

### *Attendance*

Attendance will be taken for each class. You are solely responsible for catching up any lecture materials you miss. Tests are all in class and your participation/presentation grades require your attendance. You are allowed to miss two classes without penalty. Any additional absences or to make up a test or in class activity requires proper documentation for a medical or family emergency.

### *Activity or Simulation*

Throughout the course, we will engage in a multi-class simulation exercise. Prior to the exercise, you will complete a one-two page single spaced policy brief, examining the actor that you have been assigned, their preferences and goals, and their preferred strategies to utilize. You will then use said brief to inform your strategies and actions during the simulation. On the non-simulation weeks, students will engage in active learning activities including group work and presentations.

## **Useful Information and University Policies**

### *Grading Scale*

Grades are constructed to reflect the university standards posted at [http://bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin\\_Files/acad/Grades.html](http://bulletin.uga.edu/Bulletin_Files/acad/Grades.html) and are summarized below. Grades will be based on how many points you earn according to the following distribution:

A	93-100 points
A-	90-92 points
B+	87-89 points
B	83-86 points
B-	80-82 points
C+	77-79 points
C	73-76 points
C-	70-72 points
D	60-69 points
F	Fewer than 60 points

### *Academic Honesty*

UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at [www.uga.edu/ovpi](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi). The bottom line is simple – do not plagiarize the work of fellow students or other resources (ChatGPT). Any material drawn from other sources should be properly cited.

### *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.

### *Changes to the Syllabus*

Remember that the course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

### *Virtual Office Hours and Responses*

My office hours are on Mondays from 1:30-3:30. Most days I will be available to meet with you after class and I am also available to meet virtually over Zoom. Please send me an email if you would like to set up a meeting.

### *Copyright on Lecture and Course Materials*

During this course students are prohibited from recording lectures or distributing tests or written materials without the express written permission of the instructor teaching this course.

### *Students with Disabilities*

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services Office will be accommodated according to university policy. For more information, contact Disabilities Services at (706) 542-8719 or visit their website at <https://drc.uga.edu/>. If you have difficulty reaching the classroom, please notify me as soon as possible.

### *Students with Financial or Emotional Hardships*

Being a student can be hard. Your lives are changing, and college can be a stressful environment. There is no shame in struggling with this. If you are feeling depressed or otherwise concerned about your mental health, please reach out to UGA's Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS). Their website is <http://uhs.uga.edu/caps/welcome>.

If you are experiencing financial hardships, UGA has a number of services that may help. These include, but are not limited to, food pantries, hygiene closets, school supply closets, provision of professional clothes, and work-study arrangements. These are free services. A summary of services provided by UGA is here: [https://financialhardship.uga.edu/content\\_page/food-and-necessities](https://financialhardship.uga.edu/content_page/food-and-necessities).

### *UGA Well-being Resources*

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community. Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit [sco.uga.edu](http://sco.uga.edu). Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: [well-being.uga.edu](http://well-being.uga.edu)
- Student Care and Outreach: [sco.uga.edu](http://sco.uga.edu)
- University Health Center: [healthcenter.uga.edu](http://healthcenter.uga.edu)
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: [caps.uga.edu](http://caps.uga.edu) or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: [healthpromotion.uga.edu](http://healthpromotion.uga.edu)
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: [drc.uga.edu](http://drc.uga.edu)

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

## **Preliminary Course Schedule**

### **Week 1-What are Human Rights?**

- Monday, January 8: Introductions and Syllabus
  - Read: What are Human Rights? <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights>
  - Read: Donnelly (2013), Chapter 1- Available on ELC
- Wednesday, January 10: Human Rights

- Skim: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):  
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
- Skim: All of the Core International Human Rights Instruments:  
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/coreinstruments.aspx>
- Friday, January 12: Discussion & TED Talk
  - Hafner-Burton, Emilie M. and James Ron. 2009. "Seeing Double: Human Rights Impact through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes." *World Politics* 61(2): 360-401

## **Week 2: What are Human Rights? Universalism & Relativism**

- Monday, January 15: MLK Day- NO CLASS
- Wednesday, January 17: Universalism and Relativism
  - Donnelly, Jack. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013. Chapter 7: Universality in a World of Particularities
- Friday, January 19:
  - Aneira J. Edmunds (2021) The colonialism of human rights: ongoing hypocrisies of western liberalism, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 44:8, 1415-1417
  - Howard, R. (1983). The Full-Belly Thesis: Should Economic Rights Take Priority over Civil and Political Rights? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 5(4), 467–490. <https://doi.org/10.2307/762231>

## **Week 3: What are Human Rights? Universalism, Relativism & Gender**

- Monday, January 22:
  - Bunch, C. (1990). Women's Rights as Human Rights: Toward a Re-Vision of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 12(4), 486–498.
  - Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others. *American Anthropologist*, 104(3), 783–790.
- Wednesday, January 24:
  - Brems, E. (1997). Enemies or Allies? Feminism and Cultural Relativism as Dissident Voices in Human Rights Discourse. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 19(1), 136–164. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/762362>
- Friday, January 26:
  - Kaiev, Henriette. 2004. "Cultural Rights or Human Rights: The Case of Female Genital Mutilation." *Sex Roles* 51(5/6): 339-348.

## **Week 4: Human Rights Measurement**

- Monday, January 29:
  - Landman, T. (2004). Measuring Human Rights: Principle, Practice, and Policy. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 26(4), 906–931.
- Wednesday, January 31:
  - Anne-Marie Brook, K. Chad Clay & Susan Randolph (2020) Human rights data for everyone: Introducing the Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI), *Journal of Human Rights*, 19:1, 67-82

- Friday, February 2:
  - Clay, K. C., Bakker, R., Brook, A.-M., Hill, D. W., & Murdie, A. (2020). Using practitioner surveys to measure human rights: The Human Rights Measurement Initiative's civil and political rights metrics. *Journal of Peace Research*, 57(6), 715-727

### **Week 5: Causes of Human Rights Abuses**

- Monday, February 5:
  - Davenport, Christian. 2007. State Repression and Political Order. *Annual Review of Political Science* 10:1-23.
- Wednesday, February 7:
  - Englehart, N. A. (2009). State Capacity, State Failure, and Human Rights. *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(2), 163–180.
- Friday, February 9:
  - Butler, C. K., Gluch, T., & Mitchell, N. J. (2007). Security Forces and Sexual Violence: A Cross-National Analysis of a Principal-Agent Argument. *Journal of Peace Research*, 44(6), 669–687

### **Week 6: Human Rights Abuses, Globalization, and Application to the DRC**

- Monday, February 12:
  - Cobalt Red Pages 1-82
- Wednesday, February 14:
  - Cobalt Red Pages 83-166
- Friday, February 16:
  - Cobalt Red Pages 167-249

### **Week 7: Human Rights Abuses, Refugees and Application to Human Trafficking**

- Monday, February 19:
  - Blanton, R., & Blanton, S. (2020, July 30). The Global Economic and Political Causes of Human Trafficking. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*
- Wednesday, February 21:
  - Does legalized prostitution increase human trafficking? Carol Tan Jan 2, 2014. <https://journalistsresource.org/economics/legalized-prostitution-human-trafficking-inflows/>
- Friday, February 23:
  - Hepburn, Stephanie and Rita J. Simon. 2010. Hidden in Plain Sight: Human Trafficking in the United States

### **Week 8: Child Rights**

- Monday, February 26:
  - Hammarberg, T. (1990). The UN convention on the rights of the child--and how to make it work. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 12(1), 97-105.
- Wednesday, February 28:
  - In Class Midterm

- Friday, March 1:
  - NO CLASS

### **Week 9:**

Monday, March 4: SPRING BREAK

Wednesday, March 6: SPRING BREAK

Friday, March 8: SPRING BREAK

### **Week 10: Causes of International Human Rights Abuses: Torture & Genocide**

- Monday, March 11:
  - Davenport, Christian, and Allan C. Stam. 2009. "What really happened in Rwanda?." Miller- McCune, October 6
- Wednesday, March 13:
  - No required readings
- Friday, March 15:
  - Alexander B. Downes. (2006). Desperate Times, Desperate Measures: The Causes of Civilian Victimization in War. *International Security*, 30(4), 152–195.

### **Week 11: Humanitarian Interventions**

- Monday, March 18:
  - Carpenter, R. (2003). 'Women and Children First': Gender, Norms, and Humanitarian Evacuation in the Balkans 1991–95. *International Organization*
- Wednesday, March 20:
  - DeMeritt, J. H. R. (2015). Delegating Death: Military Intervention and Government Killing. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(3), 428–454.
- Friday, March 22:
  - Karim, S., & Beardsley, K. (2016). Explaining sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions: The role of female peacekeepers and gender equality in contributing countries. *Journal of Peace Research*, 53(1), 100-115.

### **Week 12: International Human Rights Law**

- Monday, March 25:
  - Neumayer, Eric. "Do International Human Rights Treaties Improve Respect for Human Rights?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 49, no. 6, 2005, pp. 925–53.
- Wednesday, March 27:
  - Hafner-Burton, E. M., & Tsutsui, K. (2007). Justice Lost! The Failure of International Human Rights Law to Matter Where Needed Most. *Journal of Peace Research*, 44(4), 407–425.
- Friday, March 29:
  - No required reading

### **Week 13: International Law Human Rights: Application to CEDAW**

- Monday, April 1:
  - Jillienne Haglund, Courtney Hillebrecht & Hannah Roesch Read (2022) International human rights recommendations at home: Introducing the Women's Rights Compliance Database (WRCD), *International Interactions*, 48:5, 1070-1087
- Wednesday, April 3:
  - Chen Kertcher & Ornat Turin (2023) 'Lost in translation': United Nations commentaries on gender stereotypes to Muslim countries, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 27:2, 219-237
- Friday, April 5:
  - Htun, M., & Weldon, S. L. (2010). When Do Governments Promote Women's Rights? A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Sex Equality Policy. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(1), 207–216

#### **Week 14: Indigenous Rights**

- Monday, April 8:
  - Madley, B. (2016). Understanding Genocide in California under United States Rule, 1846–1873. *Western Historical Quarterly*, 47(4), 449–461.
- Wednesday, April 10:
  - Lightfoot 2019, "The road to reconciliation starts with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples." <https://theconversation.com/the-road-to-reconciliation-starts-with-the-un-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples-122305>
- Friday, April 12:
  - Gilchrist, K. (2010). "Newsworthy" victims? Exploring differences in Canadian local press coverage of missing/murdered Aboriginal and White women. *Feminist media studies*, 10(4), 373-390.

#### **Week 15: Human Rights INGOs & Advocacy**

- Monday, April 15:
  - Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1999. Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics. *ISSJ*. 159: 89-101.
- Wednesday, April 17:
  - Amanda Murdie. (2014). Help or Harm : The Human Security Effects of International NGOs. Stanford University Press. Chapter 1
- Friday, April 19:
  - Amanda M. Murdie, David R. Davis, Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs, *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 56, Issue 1, March 2012, Pages 1–16

#### **Week 16: Human Rights Creative Advocacy: Application to Australia**

- Monday, April 22:
  - Darryl Cronin (2017) Trapped by history: democracy, human rights and justice for indigenous people in Australia, *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, 23:2, 220-241
- Wednesday, April 24:



- Roland Bleiker, Sally Butler, Radical Dreaming: Indigenous Art and Cultural Diplomacy, *International Political Sociology*, Volume 10, Issue 1, March 2016
- Friday, April 26:
  - No reading

**Week 17: Reflection & Send Off**

- Monday, April 29: Class Activity

**Final Exam – Date and Time TBD**