

## PSC 300 Human Rights through Film

Maymester, Syracuse University, 16-27 May 2016

<u>Time</u> : Monday-Friday 8am-12pm	<u>Instructor</u> : Franziska Boehme
<u>Place</u> : Tolley 104	<u>email</u> : fboehme@syr.edu
<u>Office hours</u> : 1-2pm (except 27 May) in 100G Eggers, and by appointment	

### Class Objectives

Are international human rights norms a powerful influence on states and individuals, or are they an idealistic vision? This course seeks to answer this question by exploring the role of human rights in global politics through the medium of film. We will devote each day to understanding the role and influence of a particular actor (including states, NGOs, courts) or a particular issue (including women's rights, post-9/11 human rights, LGBT rights). These topics are examined through documentary and popular culture films that will introduce multiple perspectives and ways of experiencing human rights protections and violations throughout the world. The class is meant to not only increase your knowledge of human rights in other countries and in the US but also to hone your skills in analyzing visual material and applying political science research to debates raised in films.

### Class Format

The Maymester is a special format. We are covering the material of a 300 level semester class within 10 days so we will spend a lot of time together over these two weeks. It also means that you will be required to do a lot of work in these two weeks so be ready to commit full-time! Moreover, we will likely be covering material that is touching on a very personal level and/or is controversial. Students should expect vigorous discussion and debate! This means that I place a premium emphasis on collegiality in class. We can engage in debates, but this needs to be constructive and without resorting to personal attacks. Rude and inappropriate comments or disruptive behavior can result in students being asked to leave the classroom or in a reduced grade.

### Requirements

Think about your final grade in terms of points: You can get up to 100 points for this class. The requirements for successful completion are:

- **Attendance: 10 points**
  - Since we are only meeting for 2 weeks, I expect you to be present **every day**. Absences of a day are granted in extraordinary situations only or when you are sick (doctor's note required). If you have to stay away from class for more than a day, you should not take this class!
- **Participation: 30 points**
  - This is the most important part of your contribution to the class. This may not necessarily be your favorite time of day but let's make the best of it! This score includes participation in discussion and group work but also short writing assignments.
  - You can get up to 3 points per day. The table below displays how you get these points! As you can see, it is not about quantity of comments but also about their quality.

Daily possible points	Level of participation
0	No engagement or interest in the class, is on phone, disrupts class etc
1	Interested in the discussion and respectful, but no active participation
2	Occasional participation, some engagement with the material
3	Contributes to class discussions frequently, engages fully with the material and with fellow students, displays critical thinking, makes insightful comments, shows respect for everyone

- **Daily reading quizzes: 24 points**
  - There will be nine reading quizzes, each of them worth 3 points. Because I am nice, I will drop your lowest score at the end!
  - These quizzes are “open-notes” which means that you can consult any hand-written or printed notes you have, but you may not use computers or the readings themselves.
  - The focus will be on remembering key concepts as well as understanding the main arguments and major debates presented in the readings. Some days, these quizzes may be at the end so there could be a question on discussion content. Hence, I advice good note-taking during class!
- **Film Journal: 10 points**
  - Over the two weeks, you are required to keep a daily journal of the movies we watch in class. These can be short and summaries. But feel free to critically reflect on cinematic depictions of violence, abuse, and trauma, contrast the movie with readings, or show how a class theme is picked up in a movie. You are also welcome to expand on discussions we had after watching the movies.
  - The journal is meant to help you prepare for the final paper, in which you can weave in parts of your journal.
  - The journal is due on the last day of class, 27 May 2016, at the beginning of class.
- **Final paper: 26 points (5 for proposal).**
  - The final paper is due at 8am, on Thursday, 2 June 2016. Please submit the paper through Turnitin on blackboard. I will grade them online and leave comments for you.
  - The paper has to be between 6 and 8 pages (1.5 spacing, 1-inch margins). In the paper you should compare and contrast two movies (one should be a course film) that deal with either a common theme/country/time period. Thus, if you have an interest in a particular film or human rights situation, you can analyze them in greater depth.
  - I expect that you hand in a proposal on Wednesday, 18 May 2016. More details will be handed out on Day 1.

## Grading

“A range” indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all aspects of the course.

- A: 93-100
- A-: 90-92

“B range” indicates a good performance in which there has been a high level of achievement in some aspects of the course.

- B+: 87-89 points
- B: 83-86
- B-: 80-82

“C range” indicates an adequate performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated.

- C+: 77-79 points
- C: 73-76
- C-: 70-72

“D range” indicates a minimal performance in which despite recognizable deficiencies there is enough to merit credit. D: 60-69

### **Electronic Etiquette Policy**

Most of you won't like this, but I do not allow the use of computers or cell phones during class. The temptation to just check your email or look up something is just too strong! Studies have also consistently shown that students without computer perform better on tests. So please spare us the trouble and bring a nice notebook and pen/pencil. Since reading quizzes are open-note, you should take hand-written notes or bring a printed copy with notes from the readings. If you violate this policy, I will exercise my right to lower your participation points for the day. And I will call you out – shaming works (see class content!)

### **Academic Honesty**

Please note that in this course, no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Serious infractions can result in failing the course or greater university consequences. Instructors are required to report violations of Academic Integrity to the College of Arts and Sciences and the University Office of Academic Integrity. The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. To familiarize yourself with the SU policy on academic integrity, visit <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu/index.php>. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly use citations, please visit the resources available on the SU library website at <http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/citation>.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located in Room 309 of 804, University Avenue, available at <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs.

### **Mental Health**

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. SU services are available and treatment does work. Please visit <http://counselingcenter.syr.edu/mental-health/services.html> To access crisis services during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.), *during the summer (8 a.m.-4:30p.m.)*, students can either call the office at 315-443-4715 or come directly to the Counseling Center on Walnut Avenue in person. After hours or on weekends, call the Counseling Center 315-443-4715 and press "0" following the voice prompts to be connected with a therapist.

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## Week 1: Actors Shaping Contemporary Human Rights

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Day	Themes	Readings
16 May	<u>Introduction</u> What are human rights? Are they universal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Carey, Gibney, and Poe, "The concept of human rights" <i>The Politics of Human Rights</i> (30 pg.)</li></ul>
17 May	<u>States and Repression</u> What causes repression? How do governments oppress their citizens? What can states do to improve human rights?  <i>Case study: Argentina</i> <i>Film: The Official Story</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Hafner-Burton, "Calculus of Abuse," <i>Making Human Rights a Reality</i> (20 pg.)</li><li>Donnelly, "The Domestic Politics of Human Rights: Dirty Wars in the Southern Cone," <i>International Human Rights</i> (12 pg.)</li><li>Donnelly, "Human Rights and Foreign Policy," <i>International Human Rights</i> (10 pg.)</li></ul>
18 May	<u>International Organizations and International Law</u> What is the role of international organizations in achieving better human rights conditions?  <i>Case study: United Nations</i> <i>Film: Shake Hands with the Devil OR Hotel Rwanda (Rwanda)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Greenhill, "The Company You Keep: International Socialization and the Diffusion of Human Rights Norms," <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 2010 (19 pg.)</li><li>Carlsson, "The UN Inadequacies," <i>Journal of International Criminal Justice</i>, 2003 (9 pg.) or UN chapter</li></ul>
<b><u>Please bring your proposal for the final paper!</u></b>		
19 May	<u>Non-governmental Organizations</u> How can NGOs help realize (or not) human rights? What are the means they use to further their cause?  <i>Case study: Human Rights NGOs</i> <i>Film: The E-Team (Syria)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Keck and Sikkink, "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics" (12 pg.)</li><li>Murdie and Davis, "Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs," <i>International Studies Quarterly</i>, 2012 (15 pg.)</li></ul>
20 May	<u>Courts and Transitional Justice</u> What is the role of courts? What are other mechanisms to create healing and how effective are they?  <i>Case study: ICC</i> <i>Film: The Reckoning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quinn, "Transitional Justice" <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i>, 2009 (15 pg.)</li><li>Sikkink and Booth Walling, "The Impact of Human Rights Trials in Latin America," <i>Journal of Peace Research</i>, 2007 (18 pg.)</li></ul>

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## Week 2: Contemporary Human Rights Issues

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Day	Themes	Readings
23 May	<u>War on Terror</u>  <i>Case Study: USA and others</i> <i>Film: Zero Dark Thirty</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welsh and Piazza, “Why Respecting Physical Integrity Rights Reduces Terrorism,” <i>Comparative Political Studies</i>, 2010 (23 pg.)</li><li>• Mayer, “Outsourcing Torture: The secret history of America’s ‘extraordinary rendition’ program,” <i>The New Yorker</i>, 2005 (13 pg.)</li></ul>
24 May	<u>Gender and Human Rights</u>  <i>Case Study: FGM/FGC</i> <i>Film: Africa Rising</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Levitt and Merry, “Vernacularization on the ground: local uses of global women’s rights in Peru, China, India and the United States,” <i>Global Networks</i>, 2009 (20 pg.)</li><li>• Cloward, Introduction, <i>When Norms Collide</i>, 2016 (40 pg.)</li></ul>
25 May	<u>LGBT Rights</u>  <i>Case study: LGBT Activism in Africa</i> <i>Film: Call Me Kuchu (Uganda)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kollman and Waites, “The global politics of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender human rights: an introduction,” <i>Contemporary Politics</i>, 2009 (17 pg.)</li><li>• Ayoub, “With Arms Wide Shut: Threat Perception, Norm Reception, and Mobilized Resistance to LGBT Rights,” <i>Journal of Human Rights</i>, 2014 (21 pg.)</li><li>• Han and O’Mahoney, “The British colonial origins of anti-gay laws,” <i>Monkeycage</i>, Oct. 2014 (3pg.)</li></ul>
26 May	<u>Indigenous Rights</u>  <i>Case Study: Australia</i> <i>Film: Rabbit Proof Fence (2002)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul Havemann, “Indigenous Peoples Human Rights,” <i>Human Rights: Politics and Practice</i> (18 pg.)</li><li>• Sylvia Arzey and Luke McNamara, “Invoking International Human Rights Law in a ‘Rights-Free Zone’: Indigenous Justice Campaigns in Australia” <i>Human Rights Quarterly</i>, 2012 (30 pg.)</li></ul>
27 May	<u>The Future of Human Rights</u>  Should the current HR system be reformed? If so, how? What can films teach us? Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hopgood, “Challenges to the Global Human Rights Regime: Are Human Rights still an Effective Language for Social Change,” <i>SUR</i>, 2014 (11 pg.)</li><li>• Goodhart, “Conclusion: The Future of Human Rights,” <i>Human Rights: Politics and Practice</i> (8 pg.)</li></ul> <p><b><u>Please bring your film journals!</u></b></p>

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