

PSC 354 Human Rights and Global Affairs

Maymester, Syracuse University, 12-23 May 2014

<u>Time</u> : Monday-Friday 1-5pm	<u>Instructor</u> : Franziska Boehme
<u>Place</u> : Shaffer Art Building 203	<u>email</u> : fboehme@syr.edu
<u>Office hours</u> : 10-12, 023 Eggers and by appointment	

Class Objectives

The seminar is meant to introduce students to the broad theme of human rights and their role in global politics. The class is divided into two main themes: human rights actors and human rights issues. Each day we will devote to one specific topic, be it actors (states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and courts) or issues (women's rights, post-9/11 human rights, minority rights, refugees). Every day will include a lecture portion and in-class activities (e.g. discussing assigned readings, debates, group work, or responding to clips and documentaries) that investigate further a specific case. The class is meant to not only increase your knowledge of human rights generally but also to hone your skills in analyzing readings and visual material, applying political science research to everyday political issues, as well as working effectively and collegially in a group with fellow students.

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. 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

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: 18 points**
 - This will be the most important part of your contribution to the class.
 - You can get up to 2 points per day (except May 23). Below is a table displaying the distribution of daily participation 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, checks the Internet, facebook, text messages etc
0.5	Interested in the discussion and respectful, but no active participation
1	Occasional participation, some engagement with the material
1.5	Contributes to class discussions frequently, but focuses on anecdotal evidence or personal opinions only
2	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: 32 points**
 - Readings will be made available on blackboard in the beginning of the course. I will also make powerpoints available on blackboard after each class, not before.
 - There will be eight quizzes, each of them worth 4 points. These quizzes are “open-notes” which means that can consult any hand-written or printed notes you have, but you may not use computers or the readings themselves. These quizzes are meant to help you process the readings so the focus will be on remembering key concepts as well as understanding the main arguments and major debates.
- **Midterm exam: 20 points**
 - This is meant as an assessment of the first week’s material, not just the readings but also the discussions and activities we had.
 - To prepare for the exam, you should pay close attention throughout the class, take notes on major points, and review your reading notes and the powerpoints.
- **Final group project and presentation: 20 points**
 - You will be part of a group of 2-3. You can choose among different countries. The goal is to provide a presentation on a country’s human rights record. More detailed instructions will be provided.
 - We will set aside class time throughout the two weeks where you can work on your project with your team members. However, to complete the project additional meetings with your group members outside of class time are encouraged and probably necessary.
 - A 2-page summary of your main points is due on Tuesday, May 20, at 1 pm. I will give you feedback on the project and your progress the next day.
 - On 23 May (Friday) you will present your findings to the whole class.
 - You will fill out self-evaluations and evaluate your group members to better assess everyone’s contribution.

Grading

Final grades will be assigned based on the following assessments:

- “A range” indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all phases 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 phases 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

Technology

I allow the use of computers and tablets for research purposes during class, but only during the times reserved for it. This means that computers and electronic devices are to be turned off during reading quizzes and when I explicitly allow their use for in-class activities or for work on your group projects. If you violate this policy, I will exercise my right to lower participation points for that day.

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. However, I cannot arrange for disability-related accommodations.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Actors Shaping Contemporary Human Rights

Day	Themes	Readings
12 May	<u>Introduction</u> What are human rights? Are they universal?	Will be provided in class!
13 May	<u>States</u> How are states contributing to human rights protection or abuse? <i>Case study: humanitarian intervention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Börzel and Risse, “Human rights in areas of limited statehood: the new agenda” (20 pg.), in <i>The Persistent Power of Human Rights</i> (2013)• Kuperman, “Humanitarian Intervention” (19 pg.) in <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i> (ed. Michael Goodhart, 2009)
14 May	<u>International Organizations</u> What is the role of international organizations? Can human rights treaties lead to better human rights practices? <i>Case study: United Nations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hanhimäki, “Rights and responsibilities: human rights to human security” (2008) (22 pg.)• Neumayer, “Do International Human Rights Treaties Improve Respect for Human Rights?” (2005) (22 pg.)
15 May	<u>NGOs</u> How can NGOs help realize (or not) human rights? What are the means they use to further their cause? <i>Case study: KONY 2012</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keck and Sikkink, <i>Activists Beyond Borders</i> (1998) (12 pg.)• Simmons, “Learning to live with NGOs” (1998) (12 pg.)• <i>The Economist</i>, “Amnesty International: Many rights, some wrong” (2007)
16 May	<u>Courts</u> What is the role of courts? <i>Case study: ICC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quinn, “Transitional Justice” in <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i> (ed. Michael Goodhart, 2009) (15 pg.)• Rice, “Sudanese president Bashir charged with Darfur war crimes” (2009)

Week 2: Contemporary Human Rights Issues

Day	Themes	Readings
19 May	<u>Gender and Human Rights</u> <i>Case Study: Human Trafficking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coomarswamy, "Reinventing International Law: Women's Rights as Human Rights in the International Community" (1999) (16 pg.) • Bertone, "Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation" in <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i> (ed. Michael Goodhart, 2009) (15 pg.)
20 May	<u>The War on Terror and Human Rights</u> <i>Case Study: USA</i> <i>DUE at 1 pm: 2 page summary of your final project</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoffman, "Human Rights and Terrorism" (2004), 932-955 (22 pg.) • Krauthammer, "The Truth about Torture" (<i>The Weekly Standard</i>, 2005) (4 pg.) • Farrell and Finnemore, "The End of Hypocrisy: American Foreign Policy in the Age of Leaks" (<i>Foreign Affairs</i>, 2013) (4 pg.)
21 May	<u>Minorities and Human Rights</u> <i>Case study: Roma in Europe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pejic "Minority Rights and International Law" (1997) (19 pg.) • Astier, "France's unwanted Roma" (2014) • Bilfsky, "Are the Roma Primitive, or Just Poor?" (2013)
22 May	<u>Migration and Human Rights</u> <i>Case study: Syria</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loescher, "Human Rights and Forced Migration" in <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i> (ed. Michael Goodhart, 2009) (16 pg.)
23 May	<u>The Future of Human Rights</u> <u>Final Presentations</u>	Class, group, and self-evaluations
