

PS 3353: International Human Rights

Fall 2019, Texas State University

Time and Place: Monday and Wednesday, 12:30-1:50pm in UAC 406

Instructor: Dr. Franziska Boehme Newell

Office hours: Tue 3:45-5pm, Wed, 2:15-4pm, and by appointment in UAC 343

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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. We will devote each week to a specific actor, concept, or issue in the human rights world, ranging from repression, nongovernmental organizations, courts, to women's rights and refugees. How do NGOs contribute to the spread of human rights? Why do some states respect human rights more than others? To what extent are human rights universal? By examining these and other questions, the class will not only increase your knowledge of human rights around the world but also hone your skills in understanding and critically discussing political science research on human rights. This class is part of PS 3353. Issues in World Politics, which examines major issues in world politics, international relations, and comparative politics. Corequisite: PS 3300 or PS 3301.

We will likely be covering material that is touching on a 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.

Learning Outcomes

The class contributes to the following learning outcomes for the Department of Political Science's BA program:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to ask relevant research questions pertaining to Political Science (research paper, lectures and class discussions)
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize and evaluate assumptions and implications (book review, lectures and class discussions, journal)
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to examine and evaluate different sides of an issue (lectures and class discussions, research paper, exam essay, journal)
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to state and defend a thesis that is clear, direct, logical, and substantive in the area of Political Science (research paper, book review, exam essay)
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to find and use a variety of appropriately cited sources (research paper)
6. Students will demonstrate substantive knowledge of concepts and facts relevant to Political Science (exams, research paper)

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 and Participation: 20 points**

- Participation is an important part of your contribution to this class. The primary mode to gauge participation is your level of activity during class. This score includes attendance and participation in class discussions, staying up to date with international news related to human rights, homework assignments, in-class group work, short writing prompts, etc.
- You can miss up to three classes a semester without consultation or explanation. Any absence beyond those will result in a lower score (unless you have an excused absence for a school trip, medical reason with a doctor's note), one point per missed class!
- Option for reluctant speakers: If you are very uncomfortable speaking in class, please feel free to email me analytical reflections on the class readings and questions it raised *consistently* and *before* each class. Please note that you are still expected to participate in group work and active listening during class. Nevertheless, I highly encourage you to push yourself to participate in class discussions based on your emailed reflections. This should give you some comfort in your statements.

Possible points	Level of participation (assumes perfect attendance)
18-20 (A)	Contributes to class discussions frequently, critical thinking, shows respect for everyone. Frequent email reflections.
16-17.5 (B)	Occasional participation, some engagement with the material. Occasional email reflections.
14-15.5 (C)	Rare participation, some engagement with the material. Rare email reflections
12-13.5 (D)	No engagement or interest in the class, student is on phone, disrupts class etc. No email reflections.

- **Exams: 20 points**

- We will have 2 exams in this class, each worth 10 points and concluding a thematic unit.
- Your final exam will be on Wednesday, 11 December 2019, from 11am to 1:30pm. In addition to Part II material, the final exam will include one *cumulative* essay question: "To what extent are international human rights norms a powerful influence on states and individuals, or are they merely an idealistic vision? Please support your argument with evidence and literature we discussed in class." Themes, theories, data and current events that we study over the semester and insights from student presentations will help you shape your answer to this question.

- **Book Reviews and Discussion Leadership: 20 points**

- To get to know some 'great works' of human rights scholarship, you will sign up for a book review in Week 2.
- The assignment consists of two parts:
 - A written review of the book (10 points), which is due on TRACS ONE WEEK BEFORE the presentation. This paper, which should be 5-7 pages, reflects your personal analysis of the book.
 - You will also collaborate with the other students who signed up for the same book to lead do a 40-minute presentation on the book and organize a discussion/debate for the class (10 points). To prepare, you should coordinate with the others, i.e. which issues do you want to address, who will bring up what, how will you involve the class?
- For more details, please see the assignment sheet "Book Review" on TRACS.

- **Country Research Project: 25 points**
 - One goal of the class is to become an expert on a specific country and its human rights record. You will start to get a good idea about ‘your’ country through several homework assignments.
 - The assignment consists of three parts:
 - A proposal (10 points) is due on Monday, 7 October.
 - The second assignment is a presentation in front of the class where you present the key findings of your country study. (5 points)
 - The third assignment is a 12-14 page research paper (10 points).
 - For more details, please see the assignment sheet “Country Profile” on TRACS.
- **Human Rights Journal: 15 points**
 - Entries in the journal can vary in length but should be at least one page. Please bring these entries printed to class (submit only the final version of the journal via TRACS)!
 - What you write about is up to you. The journal is meant to be a space where you reflect on human rights issues as they arise in your daily lives. This can be news stories or articles you read, movies or shows you watch, music you listen to, something we discussed in class that you think needs more exploration, human rights issues you hear about on campus or from friends and family. In your entries you can describe the issue/controversy, your thoughts on the causes and potential consequences of this issue, how it makes you feel personally, etc.
 - *Please vary the type of your entries throughout the semester! This means, do not just pick up on news stories only or TV shows only etc. but mix it up!*
 - Please see the Key Dates section below for the three deadlines throughout the semester.

Grading

- “A range” (90-100) indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all aspects of the course.
- “B range” (80-89.5) indicates a good performance in which there has been a high level of achievement in some aspects of the course.
- “C range” (70-79.5) indicates an adequate performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated.
- “D range” (60-69.5) indicates a minimal performance in which despite recognizable deficiencies there is enough to merit credit.

Electronic Etiquette Policy

Some 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 computers perform better on tests. So please spare us the trouble and bring a nice notebook and pen/pencil. Please come talk to me if you feel like you absolutely need the computer for note-taking purposes.

Academic Honesty and Honor Code

As members of a community dedicated to learning, inquiry, and creation, the students, faculty, and administration of our university live by the principles in this Honor Code. These principles require all members of this community to be conscientious, respectful, and honest. 1. WE ARE CONSCIENTIOUS. We complete our work on time and make every effort to do it right. We come to class and meetings prepared and are willing to demonstrate it. We hold ourselves to doing what is required, embrace rigor, and shun mediocrity, special requests, and excuses. 2. WE ARE RESPECTFUL. We act civilly toward one another and we cooperate with each other. We will strive to create an environment in which people respect and listen to one another, speaking when appropriate, and permitting other people to participate and express their views. 3. WE ARE HONEST. We do our own work and are honest with one another in

all matters. We understand how various acts of dishonesty, like plagiarizing, falsifying data, and giving or receiving assistance to which one is not entitled, conflict as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.

Readings and Late Work and Make-up Exams

In the course schedule below, I have indicated the readings to be completed ahead of each session. The required textbook for the course is Michael Goodhart, *Human Rights: Politics and Practice* (3rd Edition, 2016) and may be purchased at the University bookstore. One copy of the textbook is also available on reserve at the library! Additional course materials (journal articles and book chapters) will be available through TRACS (Resources). Please contact me if you have any problems accessing the readings.

Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed on the syllabus. **For the semester, you have ‘2 penalty-free late days’ which you can either use for one assignment or split up for two assignments.** Note that this applies to the paper and journal components BUT NOT to the presentation components, i.e. you cannot delay your presentation! Beyond this policy, any assignment not turned in at the specified time will be considered late except in the case of an extraordinary situation and will result in a lower grade (1/3 letter grade per day). Make-up examinations for exams will be granted only for documented medical or family emergencies.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with learning or physical issues which may affect performance in the course should come and see me as soon as possible. If you are a student with a disability who will require an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact me as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. Recommended accommodations may include extended time on exams, recording of class lectures, use of a laptop computer to take notes, assistance with locating a volunteer note taker, sign language/oral interpreting services and captioning services. As a prerequisite to establishing the need for accommodations, Texas State requires the student provide documentation of disability to the Office of Disability Services (ODS). This documentation should be from a medical professional qualified to diagnosis the disability. Professional ODS staff will review the documentation according to university criteria to determine the student’s eligibility for accommodations.

Religious Observances

In accordance with state law, Texas State University excuses a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. The student may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence, to be determined upon notification to the instructor of the absence. Students must provide written notification to the instructor of each class prior to the student’s absence for a religious holy day. Ideally, students should make every attempt to notify the faculty member at least two weeks in advance of the anticipated absence. An instructor will not penalize a student excused under this section for the absence. However, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete any missed assignments or examinations within a reasonable time after the absence, to be determined upon notification to the instructor of the absence.

Mental Health

Mental health issues can diminish academic performance and may affect students’ ability to participate in activities. The Counseling Center at Texas State provides free and confidential mental health services on both its San Marcos and Round Rock campuses. For additional information, visit the Counseling Center’s website <https://www.counseling.txstate.edu/> or call 512.245.2208. Additional resources are available at mindsmatter.vpsa.txstate.edu.

I will seek to keep information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor I have mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct that occurs on campus with the university's Title IX Coordinator to help make our campus a safe place for all. For more information on Texas State University's Sexual Misconduct Policy, including your rights to anonymity, confidentiality, and possible interim measures, please see <https://gato-docs.its.txstate.edu/jcr:61179aff-a7bf-4bcd-9186-831a6201fbed/2018%20TSUS%20Sexual%20Misconduct%20Policy.pdf>

Key Dates to Remember:

- Wed, 9/4: Bring preferences for focus countries and book reviews (see TRACS)
- Wed, 9/18: HR journal entries 1-3 are due (bring paper copy to class)
- Mon, 9/23: Bring suggestions for Unit II TBD classes
- Mon, 10/7: Submit proposal for country research project (via TRACS)
- Wed, 10/16: Exam 1
- Wed, 10/30: HR Journal Entries 4-6 are due (bring paper copy to class)
- Wed, 11/20-Mon, 12/2: student presentations
- Wed, 12/4: All HR Journal Entries (1-10) are due (submit via TRACS in one document)
- Fri, 12/6: Final papers are due (via TRACS)
- Wed, 12/11: Exam 2

Part I: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS (ACTORS AND MODELS)

W	Day	Themes	Readings
1	Mon, 8/26	<u>Introduction</u>	Getting to know the content, one another, and the syllabus
	Wed, 8/28	<u>How universal are HR?</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Langlois, “Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights” (15 pg.) • Donnelly, “Relative universality of human rights” (27 pg.) • Mutua, “Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights” (40 pg. 201-209, 8 pg.)
2	Mon, 9/2	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	
	Wed, 9/4	<u>How do we study HR?</u> Bring preferences for focus countries and book reviews! (see TRACS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Landman and Kersten, “Measuring and Monitoring Human Rights” (16 pg.) • Fariss, “Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time” (read 297-301, 4 pg.) • Clark and Sikkink, “Information Effects and Human Rights Data?” (read 539-543, 4 pg.) • Hafner-Burton and Ron, “Seeing Double: Human Rights Impact through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes” (read 360-373, 13 pg.) • <u>Homework:</u> read 2 book reviews by Andersen and Hermoso: What do we learn about the book from these reviews? What is each review’s structure?

3	Mon, 9/9	<u>HR in International Law</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Smith, “Human Rights in International Law” (19 pg.) • Hafner-Burton, “International Regimes for Human Rights” (24 p.)
	Wed, 9/11	<u>HR in International Law</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Homework for today:</u> What is the ratification record of ‘your’ country? Has it entered any RUDs? Why? • Hafner-Burton, Tsutsui, and Meyer, “International Human Rights Law and the Politics of Legitimation,” <i>International Sociology</i> (2008)
4	Mon, 9/ 16	<u>Repression</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Davenport, “Political Democracy and State Repression” (19 pg.) • Nordås and Davenport, “Fight the Youth: Youth Bulges and State Repression” (2013, 14 pg.)
	Wed, 9/18	<u>Repression</u> HR journal entries 1-3 are due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Homework for today:</u> Please find out several characteristics for ‘your’ country for 2017: 1. Polity measure, 2. Population size, 3. GNI per capita, 4. Former British colony, 5. PTS score • <u>Watch:</u> PBS documentary “Myanmar’s Killing Fields”
5	Mon, 9/23	<u>Models of HR Change</u> Bring suggestions for TBD classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risse and Ropp, “Introduction and Overview” (24 pg.) • Hafner-Burton, “A social science of human rights” (2014) (13 pg)
	Wed, 9/25	<u>Models of HR Change</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simmons, “Introduction” to <i>Mobilizing for Human Rights</i> (21 pg.) • Kinzelbach, “Resisting the power of human rights: the People’s Republic of China” (16 pg.)
6	Mon, 9/30	<u>NGOs</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keck and Sikkink, “Transnational advocacy networks in international and regional politics” (13 pg.) • Murdie and Davis, “Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs” (16 pg.)
	Wed, 10/2	<u>NGOs</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Book Review:</u> Wong, <i>Internal Affairs: How the Structure of NGOs Transforms Human Rights</i> (2012, ebook through library), all students read Introduction (27 pg.)
7	Mon, 10/7	<u>Transitional Justice</u> Proposal is due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Quinn, “Transitional Justice” in Goodhart 389-403 (14 pg.) • <u>Watch:</u> “Long Night’s Journey Into Day” about the South African TRC (1.5 hrs), TRACS link

	Wed, 10/9	<u>Transitional Justice</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Book Review:</u> Sikkink, <i>The Justice Cascade</i> (library has book copy) → All students read Introduction (28 pg. hardcover copy) • <u>Homework for today:</u> Has your country used transitional justice in the past? What tools have been used?
8	Mon, 10/14	<u>International Criminal Court</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hillebrecht, “The Deterrent Effects of the International Criminal Court: Evidence from Libya” (25 pg.) • Branch, “Uganda’s Civil War and the Politics of ICC Intervention” (18 pg.)
	Wed, 10/16	EXAM	

Part II: HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

W	Day	Themes	Readings
9	Mon, 10/21	<u>Genocide</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Straus, “Genocide and Human Rights” (18 pg.) • Harff, “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955” (16 pg.)
	Wed, 10/23	<u>Refugees</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Loescher, “Human Rights and Forced Migration,” 311-330 (19 pg.) • Vijaya, Miller and Fletcher, “Within 7 years, refugees are self-sufficient and contributing to the U.S., on average,” <i>Washington Post</i> (15 August 2017) • <u>Watch:</u> PBS documentary “Exodus” (TRACS)
10	Mon, 10/28	<u>Women’s Rights</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Book Review:</u> Htun and Weldon, <i>The Logics of Gender Justice: State Action on Women’s Rights Around the World</i> (ebook through library) • Bishin and Cherif, “The big gains for women’s rights in the Middle East, explained,” Monkeycage, 23 July 2018
	Wed, 10/30	<u>Torture and WOT</u> HR Journal Entries 4-6 are due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schultz, “Torture” in Goodhart (255-271, 15 pg.) • Blakeley, “Dirty Hands, Clean Conscience? The CIA Inspector General’s Investigation of ‘Enhanced Interrogation Techniques’ in the War on Terror and the Torture Debate” (2011, 17 pg.)
11	Mon, 11/4	<u>Topic to be determined</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings to be determined
	Wed, 11/6	<u>Topic to be determined</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings to be determined

12	Mon, 11/11	<u>Children's Rights</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupavac, "Children's Human Rights Advocacy," in Goodhart 291-310 (19 pg.) • Jacobs and Misra, "Child labor: The inconvenient truth behind India's growth story," Washington Post (21 August 2017)
	Wed, 11/13	<u>LGBT rights</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Keating and Burack, "Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Human Rights" (13 pg.) • Onapajo and Isike, "The Global Politics of Gay Rights: The Straining Relations between the West and Africa" (23 pg.)
13	Mon, 11/18	<u>Backlash and the future of HR</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Book Review:</u> Hafner-Burton, <i>Making Human Rights a Reality</i> (ebook through library) → All students read "The problem of human rights" (20 pg.) • Hopgood, "Challenges to the Global Human Rights Regime: Are human rights still an effective language for social change?" (7 pg.)
	Wed, 11/20	<u>Presentations</u> 9 students	
14	Mon, 11/25	<u>Presentations</u> 9 students	
	Wed, 11/27	THANKSGIVING DAYS – NO CLASS	
15	Mon, 12/2	<u>Presentations</u> 9 students	
		<u>Homework:</u> Bring a final short essay (500-600 words) to class: How has this class contributed to your understanding of human rights?	
	Wed, 12/4	Evaluations and Conclusion <u>All HR Journal Entries are due!</u>	
	Fri, 12/6	<u>All final papers are due!</u>	
	Wed, 12/11	Final Exam, 11am-1:30pm	