

**PSC 354: Human Rights & Global Affairs**  
**Fall 2021**

Tu/Th 12:30-1:50, Hall of Languages 202

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**Course Description** The idea of human rights has become a powerful tool in struggles against oppression and discrimination. This growing popularity of claiming inalienable rights has also led to a formidable backlash both against the very idea of rights and the groups that claim to advance them. The course introduces students to the history of human rights since 1948, highlights the role of international institutions and non-governmental organizations, and discusses current human rights issues. Students will conduct their own original human rights research and describe both root causes of violations and the solutions that are most likely to address contemporary human rights challenges.

**Learning Objectives** After taking this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the historical and theoretical origins of international human rights
- Distinguish between the different actors, arrangements, and dynamics that comprise the global human rights regime
- Consider significant cases and debates pertaining to human rights in light of the concepts and arguments covered
- Reflect critically on the practical and ethical challenges associated with the promotion of human rights

**Course Requirements** Students should participate actively in class sessions. There will be two exams. A take-home midterm exam will be assigned on October 7 and due on October 12. A take-home final exam will be assigned on December 9 and due on December 15. In addition, students must make regular progress on a research project over the course of the semester and submit a prospectus on September 30. The final “everything but the paper” research assignment will be due on November 16.

Participation	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%
Research Assignment	30%

Prospectus Prepare a 2 page prospectus that covers the following points:

- What question do you intend to address? Explain the question, showing how it is related to the broad topic of “Human Rights & Global Affairs.”
- What makes your question puzzling? What disagreements among scholars, gaps in knowledge, or complexities or inconsistencies characterize the question?
- What is at stake in addressing this question? Why is it significant? To whom does it matter?

Everything but the Paper Research, but do not write a paper! Only submit the following:

- Title: The title should hook your reader’s interest and/or preview your question or argument.
- Introduction: In 2-3 paragraphs, the introduction should: 1) state the research question and explain why it is puzzling and significant; 2) present the thesis statement; and 3) provide an overview or blueprint of the paper.
- Detailed Outline: The outline should chart the structure of the body of your paper within 3-5 pages. List the major sections, headings, and paragraphs within your paper, with some notes of the main points to be included in each. Indicate the sources to be used in each section.
- Conclusion: In 2-3 paragraphs, the conclusion should: 1) summarize the paper’s main points; 2) explain the paper’s contribution; 3) explore the strengths/weaknesses of the research; and 4) suggest opportunities for future research.
- Annotated Bibliography: Select 5 credible sources relevant to your argument, at least 2 of which are peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles. Cite each source in either MLA or Chicago style. Below each citation, provide a one paragraph annotation that summarizes the source’s main argument and reflects on the usefulness of that source.

Optional Assignment The Syracuse University Human Rights Film Festival ([suhrrff.syr.edu/](http://suhrrff.syr.edu/)) will be screening (online) a number of films relevant to this course on September 23-25. Interested students may complete an optional assignment, which involves viewing one of the screenings and submitting a 3-5 page written response. The written response is due by Nov 2, for a maximum of 5% in extra credit. This optional assignment cannot substitute for successful completion of the regular course requirements.

To complete this optional assignment, select and view any one of the films being screened at the festival (all screenings are free). Then, write 3-5 pages in which you reflect on the film in light of our course. How does the film intersect with the concepts, approaches, and arguments we deal with in this course? What else can we learn about human rights from a film of this kind?

**Required Texts** The following book is required. An eBook version is available for free via [SU Libraries Summon](#), or you may purchase a physical copy at the SU Bookstore. A copy has also been placed at the Bird Library course reserves.

Jack Donnelly and Daniel J. Whelan, *International Human Rights*, 6th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2020).

All other readings are available electronically via Blackboard.

## Policies

- *Attendance*: Students sometimes need to miss class sessions for a variety of legitimate reasons. I do not need documentation, and you will not be penalized. Simply view the recording of the session you missed on Blackboard and participate via the relevant Flipgrid Topic within 24 hours. Contact me if you are unable to make up your absence via Blackboard/Flipgrid, or if you will be missing classes for an extended period of time. **Please do not come to class if you are feeling ill, are awaiting results of a diagnostic test for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.**
- *Participation*: Your participation ensures that everyone benefits as much as possible from the course. Your participation grade will reflect the quality (not merely the quantity) of the remarks and questions you raise during class sessions or on Flipgrid. All participants are expected to listen attentively and respond respectfully to others.
- *Readings*: You should carefully read the assigned readings for every class session. This will be necessary for you to follow the lectures, ask questions, and participate in class. Your understanding of the readings will be assessed in the papers assigned. Occasionally, you may be assigned a short op-ed or newspaper article covering current events in addition to the readings listed below.
- *Written Assignments*: Each written assignment must be submitted on Blackboard by the day indicated below and should be double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and standard (1 in.) margins. Any assignment not submitted on time will be reduced by one full letter grade for every day that it is late. If you wish to contest a grade given by a TA, you must explain in writing (within one week) why your grade is inaccurate in light of the comments you received. Contested grades may be adjusted by the professor upward, downward, or not at all.
- *Trigger Warning*: Because of the nature of the topics covered in this class, the course readings or class discussions may generate intellectual and emotional discomfort. These responses are natural parts of intellectual growth. If, however, your emotional response becomes acute psychological distress (triggering), please communicate with me. I invite you to contact me if you have concerns in this regard.
- *Pronouns/Names*: Syracuse University community members may indicate a preferred name and designate the pronouns they use for themselves in MySlice under My Profile. For more information on designating personal pronouns and preferred names, access:

[answers.syr.edu/PronounFAQ](https://answers.syr.edu/PronounFAQ) or [answers.syr.edu/PreferredNameFAQ](https://answers.syr.edu/PreferredNameFAQ)

- *Religious Observances Policy*: [Syracuse University's Religious Observances Policy](#) recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are given an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance, provided they notify their instructors no later than the academic drop deadline. For observances occurring before the drop deadline, notification is required at least two academic days in advance. Students may enter their observances in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.
- *Disability-Related Accommodations*: Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course. I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process. If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit [Center for Disability Resources](#). Please call (315) 443-4498 or email [disabilityresources@syr.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@syr.edu) for more detailed information. The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.
- *Sexual Violence or Harassment*: Federal and state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If a student has been harassed or assaulted, they can obtain confidential counseling support, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, from the [Sexual and Relationship Violence Response Team](#) at the Counseling Center (315-443-8000, Barnes Center at The Arch, 150 Sims Drive, Syracuse, New York 13244). Incidents of sexual violence or harassment can be reported non-confidentially to the University's Title IX Officer (Sheila Johnson Willis, 315-443-0211, [titleix@syr.edu](mailto:titleix@syr.edu), 005 Steele Hall). Reports to law enforcement can be made to the University's Department of Public Safety (315-443-2224, 005 Sims Hall), the Syracuse Police Department (511 South State Street, Syracuse, New York, 911 in case of emergency or 315-435-3016 to speak with the Abused Persons Unit), or the State Police (844-845-7269). 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, harassment, and crimes I learn about with the University's Title IX Officer to help make our campus a safer place for all.
- *Mental Health*: Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources effectively to navigate stress, anxiety, depression, and other

mental health concerns. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources the Barnes Center provides ([ese.syr.edu/bewell/](http://ese.syr.edu/bewell/)) and seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days, at 315-443-8000, and I encourage you to explore the resources available through the [Wellness Leadership Institute](#).

- *Academic Integrity*: Syracuse University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit and for upholding course-specific, as well as university-wide, academic integrity expectations. The policy governs citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and truthfulness in all academic matters, including course attendance and participation. The policy also prohibits students from: 1) submitting the same work in more than one class without receiving advance written authorization from both instructors and, 2) using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as their own. Under the policy, instructors who seek to penalize a student for a suspected violation must first report the violation to the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS). Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Instructors must wait to assign a final course grade until a suspected violation is reviewed and upheld or overturned. Upholding Academic Integrity includes abiding by instructors' individual course expectations, which may include the protection of their intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or otherwise share instructors' course materials without permission. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered, as described in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Students are required to read an online summary of the University's academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice. The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.
- *Academic Integrity Online*: All academic integrity expectations that apply to in-person quizzes and exams also apply to online quizzes and exams. In this course, all work submitted for quizzes and exams must be yours alone. Discussing quiz or exam questions with anyone during the quiz or exam period violates academic integrity expectations for this course. Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g. Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course.
- *Turnitin*: This class will use the plagiarism detection and prevention system Turnitin.

You will have the option to submit your papers to Turnitin to check that all sources you use have been properly acknowledged and cited before you submit the paper to me. I will also submit all papers you write for this class to Turnitin, which compares submitted documents against documents on the Internet and against student papers submitted to Turnitin at Syracuse University and at other colleges and universities. I will take your knowledge of the subject matter of this course and your writing level and style into account in interpreting the originality report. Keep in mind that all papers you submit for this class will become part of the [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers.

- *Student Academic Work Policy*: I intend to use academic work that you complete this semester in subsequent semesters for educational purposes. Before using your work for that purpose, I will either get your written permission or render the work anonymous by removing identifying material. Your registration and continued enrollment constitute your permission.
- *Use of Class Materials and Recordings*: Original class materials (syllabi, lectures, slides, assignments, handouts, etc.) and recordings of class sessions are the intellectual property of the course instructor. You may download these materials for your use in this class. However, you may not provide these materials to other parties (e.g., web sites, social media, other students) without permission. Doing so is a violation of intellectual property law and of the student code of conduct.

## Course Outline

### PART I. PRELIMINARIES

#### Introduction – Aug 31, Sept 2

Tu

- Th • Michael Freeman, “Thinking about Human Rights,” in *Human Rights: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), p. 1–14.

**Historical Roots – Sept 7, 9**

- Tu • Paul Gordon Lauren, “To Protect Humanity and Defend Justice: Early International Efforts,” in *The Evolution of International Human Rights: Visions Seen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 43–78.
- IHR: “Chapter 1: Human Rights in Global Politics: Historical Perspective”
- Th • Mary Ann Glendon, “The Forgotten Crucible: The Latin American Influence on the Universal Human Rights Idea,” *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16 (2003): 27–40.
- *Skim 25+ Human Rights Documents* (New York: Center for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, 2005), p. 1–27, 37–52, 71–92.

**Philosophical Foundations – Sept 14, 16**

- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 2: Theories of Human Rights”
- Steven Lukes, “Five Fables about Human Rights,” in *Liberals and Cannibals: The Implications of Diversity* (New York: Verso, 2003), p. 154–169.
- Th • IHR: “Chapter 3: The Relative Universality of Human Rights”
- IHR: “Chapter 4: The Unity of Human Rights”

**Violations – Sept 21, 23**

- Tu • Todd Landman, “Measuring Human Rights: Principle, Practice and Policy,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 26, no. 4 (2004): 906–931.
- Neve Gordon and Nitza Berkovitch, “How Human Rights Scholars Conceal Social Wrongs,” in *OpenGlobalRights*, [www.opendemocracy.net/en/openglobalrights-openpage/how-human-rights-scholars-conceal-social-wrongs/](http://www.opendemocracy.net/en/openglobalrights-openpage/how-human-rights-scholars-conceal-social-wrongs/) (October 12, 2016).
- Th • Sabine C. Carey, Mark Gibney, and Steven C. Poe, “Where Are Human Rights Violated?,” in *The Politics of Human Rights: The Quest for Dignity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 103–124.
- Emilie Hafner-Burton, “Rationales,” in *Making Human Rights a Reality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 29–40.

**PART II. ACTORS, INSTITUTIONS, PROCESSES****Global Mechanisms – Sept 28, 30***(Sept 30: Prospectus due)*

- Tu • Rhona K. M. Smith, “Human Rights in International Law,” in *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, ed. Michael Goodhart (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 58–74.



- Th • IHR: “Chapter 5: Global Multilateral Mechanisms”

### Regional Regimes – Oct 5, 7

(Oct 7: Take-home midterm exam distributed)

- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 6: Regional Human Rights Regimes”
- Th • Carolyn M. Shaw, “The Evolution of Regional Human Rights Mechanisms: A Focus on Africa,” *Journal of Human Rights* 6, no. 2 (2007): 209–232.

### Oct 12: Take-home Midterm Exam due

### Non-State Actors – Oct 14, 19

- Th • IHR: “Chapter 9: Transnational Human Rights Advocacy”
- *Listen to* Todd Landman, “Do NGOs Matter?,” in *The Rights Track*, [rightstrack.org/do-ngos-matter-1](http://rightstrack.org/do-ngos-matter-1) (January 13, 2016).
- Tu • David Vogel, “Corporate Responsibility for Human Rights and Global Corporate Citizenship,” in *The Market for Virtue: The Potential and Limits of Corporate Social Responsibility* (Washington, DC: Brookings, 2005), p. 139–161.

### Foreign Policy – Oct 21, 26

- Th • IHR: “Chapter 7: Human Rights and Foreign Policy”
- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 8: Human Rights in American Foreign Policy”

### No Class – Oct 28

## PART III. SELECTED ISSUES AND DEBATES

### Refugees – Nov 2, 4

- Tu • Amnesty International, *The Global Refugee Crisis: A Conspiracy of Neglect* (London: Amnesty International, 2015).
- Th • Susan F. Martin, “Rethinking the International Refugee Regime in Light of Human Rights and the Global Common Good,” in *Driven from Home: Protecting the Rights of Forced Migrants*, ed. David Hollenbach (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), p. 15–33.



**Humanitarian Intervention – Nov 9, 11**

- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 10: Humanitarian Intervention”
- Th • Thomas G. Weiss, “New Thinking: The Responsibility to Protect,” in *Humanitarian Intervention* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012), p. 88–118.

**Transitional Justice – Nov 16, 18**

(Nov 16: Research assignment due)

- Tu • David P. Forsythe, “Transitional Justice: Criminal Courts and Alternatives,” in *Human Rights in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 117–154.
- Th • Mark R. Amstutz, “Confronting Human Rights Abuses: Approaches to Transitional Justice,” in *The Healing of Nations: The Promise and Limits of Political Forgiveness* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), p. 17–40.

**Counterterrorism – Nov 30, Dec 2**

- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 13: (Counter-)Terrorism and Human Rights”
- Neil Hicks, “The Impact of Counter Terror on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights: A Global Perspective,” in *Human Rights in the “War on Terror”*, ed. Richard Ashby Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 209–224.
- Th • Morton Winston, “Why Human Rights Will Prevail in the War on Terror,” in *Human Rights in the 21st Century: Continuity and Change since 9/11*, ed. Michael Goodhart and Anja Mihr (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 30–48.

**Conclusions – Dec 7, 9**

(Dec 9: Take-home final exam distributed)

- Tu • IHR: “Chapter 14: What Has Been Achieved? And How Much is Left to be Done?”
- Th

***Dec 15: Take-home Final Exam due***