Introduction to Human Rights
Syllabus: Spring 2014, UConn Storrs Campus
MWF: 1:25PM - 2:15PM LH305
Instructor: Jack J. Barry
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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday: 2:15-3:45 PM or by appointment.
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Course Description and Objectives
What do the following events have in common: An authoritarian government shutting down independent media; sickness among the poor due to a lack of clean water; refugees fleeing tribal or religious violence; gay men and women organizing a campaign to demand the right to marriage and equality; illegal human trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation; provisioning of habeas corpus; or a repressive military regime advocating genocidal state policy towards members of an ethnic group? Today, it would be difficult to talk about any of these events without invoking human rights. The primary objective of this class is to introduce students to human rights even if they enter the class with little formal knowledge about them. Throughout the course we will take different disciplinary approaches to human rights—legal, philosophical, literary, health, etc. Human rights can be defined as fundamental rights which all humans are entitled to by being human, these rights can neither be created nor can be abrogated by any government or any other political authority, and at their core they are designed to uphold human dignity. Broadly conceptualized, they include, but are not limited to, social, cultural, economic, civil, and political rights. More specifically, some of these rights include the right to life, liberty, education, equality before the law, right of association, freedom of speech, information, religion, movement and nationality. In fact, they all relate to the provisioning of rights relating to the enhancement of human dignity (most modern definitions of human rights link to dignity). The class will address ‘classic’ debates in human rights as well as new emerging ones. The class will be divided into two general sections: (1) Theoretical framing of human rights; (2) and human rights in practice. For each human right we will analyze, instruction on the historical development of the right will be conducted which will help put their emergence into the context of world politics. Once this background is addressed, the remainder of the analysis will explore contemporary issues in human rights. Particular focus will be on current events, as new issues are constantly emerging in the development, practice and enforcement of human rights since the end of the Cold War.

A few tensions continuously come up in the study of human rights that students should keep in the back of their minds in studying the material of this class. First, at the heart of international human rights is the tension between state sovereignty and universal human rights. Should states give up their autonomy for human rights? This tension also occurs between culture and universal applications of human rights. Second, there are vast differences between advancement of theory in human rights and human rights in practice. Is international human rights law actually adhered to by states? Does international law have the necessary enforcement to punish violators of human rights? Third, issues of cause and effect are far from agreed upon in the human rights literature. For instance, does democratic governance always lead to less human rights violations? Throughout the class students must keep weighing evidence of various theories and evidence relating to causal claims regarding human rights to be able to make a case for where they stand on the differing sides of debates that are raised. The debate questions addressed in class discussions will often ask that students take a normative position on an aspect of human
rights and defend it. Students should be aware that there are many different sources for evidence relating to causal arguments and their job is to sift through the evidence and make a case for why they reach the normative view that they do. I hope that the readings chosen below particularly expose these lines of inquiry with useful examples from the textbook and from human rights scholarship. Besides the general objectives above, by the end of the semester, students should be able to: Recognize key terms and major institutions in the human rights field; critically interpret international news and understand scholarly articles on human rights issues; analyze human rights issues from different disciplinary perspectives; analyze a political situation, economic perspective or cultural product in terms of human rights; write towards a human rights informed audience; finally, the ultimate objective is for students to make an effective argument addressing the final exam question (defined below).

As a unique teaching technique I will give you the Final Exam essay question right now: The Final Exam essay question is: **Human Rights in Modernity: How is dignity central to humanity in the modern world?** Over the course you should be thinking in the back of your mind about this question. Themes, theories, data and current events that we study over the semester will help you shape your answer to this question.

**Course Requirements**

- **Completion of all Reading Assignments:** It is helpful if students complete the reading assignments listed on the syllabus prior to class. Since many of the topics discussed in class will include current international political news, students are expected to read the *New York Times* on a daily basis. You can also read *The Wall Street Journal* or *The Economist* for a more conservative perspective. All three, for the most part, are available for free online (or use the library for full access). Please focus on international political news, when they address issues dealing with human rights.

- **Completion of Written Assignments:** Students will be required to write two debate papers and one paper/blog that focuses on art and literature in human rights. There is also an online component and a journal. More writing is required of those that chose the heavy writing-grading scheme rather than in class exam grading scheme. This will be explained in detail below.

- **Class Attendance and Participation:** Attendance and participation are vital to the success of the meetings, and is expected for all classes. Class discussions will be conducted in an open format where all perspectives are encouraged and respect given to everyone and the opinions that they may raise. Students will hopefully find that articulating their own thoughts, as well as considering those of their peers can lead to a broader understanding of human rights. Put more bluntly, no one's human rights will be violated in class discussions.

- **Two short (2-3-minute) presentations on current events articles:** At two dates in the semester each student must present to the class on an article from a credible news source such as the *New York Times* (or *Wall Street Journal*). The article must be pertinent to the study of human rights and also may be helpful to other students' research. Presentations should explain why the article is important for us in the study of human rights. Students presenting must finish their presentation with a question posed towards the class to potentially start a discussion on the issue. Try to choose a question that is controversial or requires discussion to understand it. Students must post their article to the Husky CT site before their presentation. Students presenting can bring copies of the article if they want for other students as handouts but not required. Instead students must post the article online (Husky CT). The second week of class a
signup sheet will be passed around and students can choose the two dates that work best for them. **Talk to me in private if you have difficulty speaking in public**.

- **Human Rights Journal**: Students are required to keep a journal throughout the class about their experiences encountering human rights in their daily lives. The format of the journal is up to the student—entrees can vary in length, but at a minimum by the end of the semester students should have 10 entries (about a page each). Feel free to also include other brief notes, writing exercises, and study notes in the journal. The goal of the journal is for students to keep an informal, free form, writing/notes body of work relating to human rights that interests them. Students can make entrees based on news articles they come across, areas of further exploration of class material, to hearing human rights mentioned in other aspects of their lives (around campus, family, friends, TV, etc). I prefer that students keep a separate notebook they can turn in for their journal (besides class notes paper). If a student prefers typing on an electronic device they may print off entries and add them to the journal—but ‘old school’ informal writing in a notebook has its advantages (for instance I will not care as much about spelling). There needs to be at least two formal, more polished entrees by the first collection date (2/14) and there must be a total of four polished entrees by the second collection date (3/14) by the final collection date there should be ten entries (4/28).

- **Policy on Plagiarism**: In writing the papers for this course, the use of information that is not your own without the proper citation will result in a grade of F for the assignment and possible expulsion from school. Do not be influenced by papers posted on the Internet, as it is easy find where your information came from using anti-plagiarism software. Please do not risk a failing grade and possible university suspension for the sake of not completing your own work. PLEASE CITE YOUR OWN WORK AND USE MLA OR APA CITATION STLYE FOR CITING INFORMATION THAT IS NOT YOUR OWN. (See section below on UConn student code and conduct).

- **Policy on late work**: It will only be accepted if student has legitimate reason for missing class or for a paper being late, student must show proper documents, such as doctors notes…ect. Also student must attempt to contact me before turning in a late assignment. Unless exceptions are granted, late assignments will be docked 10% of grade per late business day.

**Required Book**


**ISBN-10**: 0199608288

***Check online for better prices, the book may be found cheaper online than at the Uconn Bookstore***

**DAILY NEWSPAPER**

*New York Times* (Daily) or *The Wall Street Journal* (Daily) **most of both are available free online if you are able to craftily move around their pay wall (I will show you how for NYT)**. They are both available at the library as well. For a weekly roundup of international political/economic news, sometimes relating to human rights, also see *The Economist*.

**Grading**

Everyone MUST Complete the following:
15% Attendance and Participation (50% of this is on the presentations). Students are expected to attend each class and participate. There will be many opportunities to participate during class discussion. Read ahead of time so that you can bring questions that you were confused about in the reading. Be willing to comment on current events. All types of participation explained above counts towards your participation grade. Participation is very important to this class and the class will only function well if we hear from the many diverse views often represented in a college class. I will substantially boost your attendance grade if you do not miss a class; I call this the “workaholic award”.

5% Online participation. At three points in the semester we will not have class in the physical space of the classroom, but instead we will meet in cyberspace (AKA online). This will be a good opportunity for students to fully craft their ideas and questions with more allotted time than a traditional classroom setting offers. The dates we will be meeting online are in the schedule below and directions for participating in the discussion will be on the HuskyCT website. Students will be required to post something about the lesson to the group—the exact format will depend on the lesson (see Husky CT for directions for each online lesson as they come up). Grades will be determined from the quality of the students’ posts and whether or not they fully complete the assignment. Also, as part of the online component of the class students will have to post the articles they present on and the paper/blog on human rights in art. Finally, a goal of the online portion of the class is to have a space to share information on human rights news that we find. Thus, students can post articles; videos or stories that interest them and they feel are worth sharing with the class.

10% Journal. See above for description of journal assignment. It will be collected three times. It will be graded holistically. Check marks will be given for completed entrees. 10 entrees are needed in total for a passing grade, but students are encouraged to write more if they want to.

2% Pre-midterm and pre-final quizzes. These will be brief, but focused on what type of questions will be on the midterm and final exams. They will be administered the class before the exams (no makeups allowed).

20% Two argument style research papers: During most Wednesday class sessions we will have debates on topics that are pertinent to human rights. Students will write two papers, each 3.5-5 pages long on two debate issue of their choice from the list on the schedule below.

How to do the Debate Papers:
They are argument style short research papers. Meaning you must convince the reader of your argument from a theoretical perspective and then back it up using sources and or statistics. Papers should begin with a clear thesis and have about three main points that are developed as the paper progresses. A strong concluding paragraph that restates your thesis and the reasons why the reader should be convinced that your argument is correct is required. The conclusion should also add something unique, perhaps a prediction on where future research should focus.

The papers should be no less than 3.5 pages and no longer than 5. They should be 12-size font, double spaced, one-inch margins and include at least 4 scholarly sources (one must be from one of the class assigned books—or recommended readings). Examples of scholarly sources are journal articles from Foreign Affairs, APSR and Journal of Human Rights, which are all accessible via the Internet and the Uconn library website. Furthermore, students must make one or more citations from the Goodhart class textbook. Most of the debate questions are taken from one of the book (and readings) and students should start their research by reading the appropriate assigned readings.

Debates: On the day of handing in your paper, students should come prepared to lead a debate arguing for their pro or con position on the issue of that day in class. There will be a class vote on the issue for debate and 3% extra credit will go to the side that wins the debate (winning the debate will be determined by
majority vote). We might move some of the debates—due to weather cancellations or other reasons—so please attend all classes so you will know of any changes to the schedule.

- **PLEASE BE SURE TO CITE YOUR OWN WORK AND PROVIDE APA or MLA CITATION STYLE FOR CITING INFORMATION THAT IS NOT YOUR OWN.**

Quoting can follow this APA template for citing the class textbook: “The revolutionary character of human rights...” (Goodhart 2013, 3). Or if not a direct quote, but a paraphrase: Goodhart argues that human rights are important in international relations and in comparative politics (2013, 5).


**When you paraphrase be sure to note where your information came from. This is by far the most common mistake that students make and it results in serious plagiarism issues.**

Finally, do not cite wikipedia. You can start on that website to gather your information, but you need to double check everything that you find on that site, as well as any other websites that do not have as strict publishing criteria.

### 8% Paper/blog on Human Rights in Art

In the Third Paper/blog (8% of grade) students will address an issue relating to the intersection of human rights and art. Students will analyze a piece of art: film, photographs, paintings, sculptures or literature and explain its relationship to human rights. The particular piece of art to be analyzed will be chosen by the student. Students will explain how their piece of art relates to human rights. Are you the first to find this connection? What does the literature/critics say about the art? What aspects of human rights does the art relate to? Students should be as specific as possible with regards to conceptions of human rights learned in this class and how they relate to the art. Students should feel free to write in a less formal way—such as a blog format, or they can include the same stylistic approaches as the debate papers. If students think that they can incorporate photos, video, or music into their blog post—I highly encourage that (hopefully the class will be able to post this type of content to HuskyCT—if not I will find another online spot). Students should include at least one citation from the textbook or at least two from other sources (but this time they do not have to be scholarly in the traditional sense). Students will have to get their topic approved by the instructor before they write the paper/blog. We will have a few brainstorming exercises in class relating to this assignment after spring break.

**Paper topic is due by 3/31 for approval. Paper/blog must be posted by 4/25 (no exceptions).**

**Extra Incentive for Quality Writing (getting your work published)!!!**

**A note on publishing your work:** I will discuss publishing incentives for your work a few times during this class, basically if your work relating to this class get published in a legitimate source for publications, then you will receive an automatic A on the assignment (some restrictions apply). Talk to me if you are interested in finding a publication spot for your work. I highly recommend, if you have confidence and personal belief in the ideas in your paper, to consider trying to publish it. In this day and age of rising competition for jobs, having a publication can set you apart from other applicants (this is especially important for those interested in graduate school, political science, journalism, human rights based NGO work, and a host of other careers or higher education).
Total Grade so far: 60%

For the following 40% of the grade there are two options that students can choose from in being evaluated. I think it is in the student and the teacher’s best interest if each student is given the option of learning the way they learn best. That is why I allow students to choose between a heavy out of class writing option or taking in-class exams: “when the student is ready, the teacher will appear”.

**Option one: Heavy out of class writing**

Students who learn best when they write outside of class, rather than in an exam situation, should choose option one. On the day of the midterm, students doing option one will be given a take home exam, due 5 days from the midterm, where they will have to write at least 10 pages, using class notes and outside material to answer a host of questions. Questions will be mostly essays and will tend to be harder than exam questions in option two. For the final exam students will have to complete a similar assignment with a final essay that sums up the class. Students looking for a grade of an A on the midterm and final, will probably need at least 13 pages on each to adequately answer the questions. The Midterm assignment is worth 15% and the final is worth 25%.

**Option two: Exam based learning**

Students who learn best by taking in-class exams should choose option two. A midterm worth 15% of your grade will be given in class depending on the class schedule. The midterm will consist of a mix between identification questions, short essay questions and a long essay. The final (worth 25%) will be similar in format to the midterm but will contain a major essay that sums up the major class themes. Both exams will focus more on understanding and analyzing of concepts rather then memorization. The Final Exam essay question for both the in class and out of class exams is: Modernity Meets Humanity: How is dignity central to humanity in the modern world?

**EXTRA CREDIT**: Extra credit assignments towards your class grade will be given a few times during the semester. They are meant to help the students who are willing to work extra hard.

**Student Responsibilities and Resources**

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources at UConn available to help you succeed in your academic work.

**Student Code**

You are responsible for acting in accordance with the [University of Connecticut's Student Code](http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html), available at http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html. Review and become familiar with these expectations. In particular, make sure you have read the section that applies to you on Academic Integrity:

- [Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research](#)
- [Academic Integrity in Graduate Education and Research](#)

Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously at the University of Connecticut. As a student, it is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism. If you need more information about the subject of plagiarism, use the following resources:

- [Plagiarism: How to Recognize it and How to Avoid It](#)
- [Instructional Module about Plagiarism](#)
University of Connecticut Libraries’ Student Instruction (includes research, citing and writing resources)

Students with Disabilities

- Students needing special accommodations should work with the University’s Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

**Students with disabilities as noted in the UConn student Handbook should contact me ASAP once the class begins.**

**Class Schedule**

Goodhart chapters are from the assigned class textbook

*Shorter assigned readings will be announced and posted on the class website.*

**Part I: Theoretical Framing of Human Rights**

(Week 1)

1/22 Introduction to class and each other

1/24 Introduction to Human Rights and Political Science: Concepts and Methods
   Reading: Goodhart, Introduction (author Michael Goodhart).

Recommended Reading: Sodaro, Critical Thinking about Politics (Posted in PDF on Husky CT).

(Week 2)

1/27 What Are Human Rights?
   Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights
   Reading: Goodhart, Chapter 1 (author Anthony Langlois).


1/29 Feminist and Activist Approaches to Human Rights
   Reading: Goodhart, Chapter 2 (author Brooke Ackerly)

1/31 Human Rights in International Relations (Realism, Liberalism)
   Reading: Goodhart, Chapter 3 (authors T. Dunne and M. Hanson)

(Week 3)

2/3 Human Rights in International Relations (Constructivism, Socialism)
Reading: Goodhart, Chapter 3 (authors T. Dunne and M. Hanson)

2/5 Rise of the Modern State and International Law
Readings: Wiktor Osiatynski, Human Rights and Their Limits, Chapter 1
‘A Short History of Human Rights’ pp-1-9 (PDF on HuskyCT).

Historical Human Rights Documents (familiarized—DO NOT have to read fine print)

1. United States Declaration of Independence:
   http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration.html

2. U.S. Constitution:
   http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html

3. French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen:
   http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/declaration.html

2/7 Rise of the Modern State and Early Human Rights Law
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 4 (author Rhonda Smith)
Wiktor Osiatynski, Human Rights and Their Limits, Chapter 1,
‘A Short History of Human Rights’ pp-1-9 (PDF on HuskyCT)

Human Rights Journal Collected (1st time) **Mark two entrees you want my feedback on**

(Week 4)

2/10 World Politics And Human Rights Law Historical Recap—1917-1989
Readings: Wiktor Osiatynski, Human Rights and Their Limits, Chapter 1,
‘A Short History of Human Rights’ pp-9-40 (PDF on HuskyCT)

Contemporary Human Rights Documents (familiarized—DO NOT have to read fine print)

2. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):
3. Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action:
   http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(symbol)/a.conf.157.23.en

2/12 World Politics And Human Rights Law Historical Recap—1917-1989.
Readings: Wiktor Osiatynski, Human Rights and Their Limits, Chapter 1,
‘A Short History of Human Rights’ pp-9-40 (PDF on HuskyCT)

Reading: Wiktor Osiatynski, Human Rights and Their Limits, Chapter 1,
‘A Short History of Human Rights’ pp-40-69 (PDF on HuskyCT)

(Week 5)


Question for debate paper #1: Which IR theory most accurately explains the situation in international politics regarding the recognition and practice of human rights?

2/19 Topic 1: Measuring and Monitoring Human Rights
Topic 2: Human Rights and Comparative Politics
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 21 (author Todd Landman)
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 5 (author Sonia Cardenas)

2/21 Human Rights and Comparative Politics
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 5 (author Sonia Cardenas)

(Week 6)

2/24 {class will meet online – do not come to class—see directions on online meetings}

Sociological and Anthropological Approaches
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 6 (author Damian Short)

2/26 Contemporary Critiques of Human Rights
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 7 (author David Chandler)

Question for debate paper #2: Are human rights universal?

**PART II: Human Rights in Practice**

2/28 Political Democracy and State Repression of Human Rights
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 8 (author Christian Davenport)

(Week 7)

3/3 Topic 1: Human Rights in America
Topic 2: Start Reviewing for Midterm and Quiz 1

3/5 Review for Midterm (Quiz 1)

3/7 Midterm Exam (in class exam given, out of class version emailed)

(Week 8)

3/10 Human Rights in America

*Question for debate paper #3: Does the U.S. Respect human rights for its' citizens more than E.U. Countries?*


3/12 Global Civil Society

Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 9 (author Marlies Glasius)

***Out of class midterm due-NO EXCEPTIONS***

3/14 Human Rights and Politics in Development

Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 10 (author Sakiko Fukuda-Parr)

Thomas Pogge, ‘World Poverty and Human Rights’, Journal of Ethics and International Affairs, SYMPOSIUM (PDF posted on HuskyCT)

*Human Rights Journal Collected (2nd time) **Mark two entrees you want feedback on***

*Question for debate paper #4: Is the Obama Administration de-emphasizing Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy?*


(Week 9)

3/17-21 No Class Spring Break

(Week 10)

3/24 Human Rights and Politics in Development

Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 10 (author Sakiko Fukuda-Parr)

Thomas Pogge, ‘World Poverty and Human Rights’, Journal of Ethics and International Affairs, SYMPOSIUM (PDF posted on HuskyCT)
Question for debate #5: Do human rights facilitate economic and political power for Western states??

3/26  {class will meet online – do not come to class—see online class directions}
     Topic: Human Rights and Politics in Development
     NO CLASS Instructor at International Studies Association Annual Conference (Toronto).

3/28  NO CLASS Instructor at International Studies Association Annual Conference (Toronto) Film to be watched will be announced.
     **The film will NOT be shown during class time, instead it will be available in library or streaming**
     (Week 11)

3/31 Globalization and Human Rights
     *Paper topic is due by 3/28 for approval.
     Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 11 (David L. Richards and Ronald D. Gelleny)

Question for debate #6: Should the U.S. Use trade sanctions against China to demand their implementation of better human rights?

***Last day to drop classes Spring Semester 2014***

4/2 Genocide and Human Rights
     Readings: Goodhart Chapter 16 (Scott Straus);

Question for debate #7: Does the world community have a 'Responsibility To Protect'?

**Topic for Human Rights in Art Paper/blog due in class or by email (topic can also be given to me for approval earlier if student needs more time to write the paper)**

4/4 Transitional Justice
     Readings: Goodhart Chapter 19 (author Joanna Quinn)
     (Week 12)

4/7 Torture and Human Rights
     Readings: Goodhart Chapter 18 (author William Shultz)
     CQ Press Issues in Human Rights Chapter 8 (Torture Debate) PDF on Husky CT.
Question for debate #8: Is torture ever justified?

4/9 Women's Rights
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 12 (only sections on Women)


4/11 (class will meet online – do not come to class—see directions above)

Topic: Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation
Readings: Goodhart Chapter 15 (author Andrea M. Bertone)

(Week 13)

4/14 Children's Rights
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 12 (author Venessa Pupavac)

CQ Press Issues for Debate in Chapter 5 (Rescuing Children) PDF on HuskyCT


4/16 Human Rights and Forced Migration (Asylum and Refugees)
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 13 (author Gil Loescher)

Question for debate #9: Should developed countries, especially the U.S., open their borders MORE to refugees and displaced people?

4/18 Indigenous Peoples Human Rights
Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 14 (author Paul Havarmann)

Question for debate paper #10: Do groups have human rights?


(Week 14)

4/21 Humanitarian Intervention and Human Rights
Reading: Goodhart, Chapter 17 (author Alan J. Kuperman)
Question for debate #11: Would military intervention be the best way to solve crises in trouble spots around the world?

4/23 NGOs and Human Rights: Guest Speaker (to be announced)

4/25 The Environment and the Future of Human Rights

***Human Rights in Art Paper/blog posted before class (no exceptions)***

Readings: Goodhart, Chapter 20, Goodhart, 22.


(Week 15)

4/28 Sharing of findings from Art paper/blog—(posted online by 4/25)

Catch up class.

Question for debate #12: Is the future hopeful for the fulfillment of worldwide human rights realization in the next century?

Human Rights Journal Collected (3rd time)

**Mark two entrees you want my feedback on—need a total of 20 pages of notes of various kinds**

4/30 Catch up class and/or start reviewing for Final exam.

5/2 Review for Final, Class evaluation, (Quiz two)

Final exam (to be announced by UConn—Sometime during the week of May 5th -10th)