The course will address the evolution of international human rights and of the legal instruments designed for their protection. It will study the theoretical foundations of the idea of human rights in various civilizations and cultures, evaluate its legacy within the western and non-western traditions, and examine its meaning and relevance in dealing with major issues in the contemporary world.

The following books have been ordered for the course and are available at Yale Co-op:


In addition, the following books have been placed on reserve:


There will be a series of assigned readings, which will be placed on reserve at the library. Moreover, certain documents listed below can be accessed via internet. You must become familiar (if you are not already) with the United Nations' web site ([http://www.un.org](http://www.un.org)). The following documents are available at [http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/](http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/).

1. Secretary-General's Report to the UN Security Council on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.
2. Agenda for Development.

Finally, you should visit: (1) the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights web site ([http://www.unhchr.ch/](http://www.unhchr.ch/)); it includes a wealth of information and reports on human rights issues, and (2) the Consortium for Health and Human Rights web site ([http://www.healthandhumanrights.org/](http://www.healthandhumanrights.org/))
Course requirements. A 20-25-page research paper on a topic to be chosen after consultation with the instructor (90% of the grade). The paper is due on Wednesday, May 12. Class participation will count for 10% of the grade.

Week 1

What are human rights? The evolution and normative framework of international human rights.


Week 2

Philosophical underpinnings of human rights. The institutionalization of human rights in Western political thought. The issue of economic and social rights.


Week 3

Human rights in non-Western traditions. Universalist vs. cultural relativist perspectives on human rights. The individual and society in non-Western thought.


Week 4

Cultural perspectives on human rights (continued).


Week 5


  - Steiner and Alston, pp. 347-455;

Week 6

Regional instruments and institutions for the protection of human rights.

  - Steiner and Alston, pp. 563-639;

Week 7
Regional instruments and institutions (continued).

- Steiner and Alston, pp. 640-705.

**Week 8**

Past and contemporary challenges to the promotion and protection of international human rights.

- Carlos Nino, *Radical Evil on Trial*, pp. 3-104.

**Week 9**

Past and contemporary challenges (continued).

- Helen Fein, "Genocide by Attrition 1939-1993: The Warsaw Ghetto, Cambodia and Sudan," *Health and Human Rights*, vol. 2(2), 1997 (on reserve);
- Nino, pp. 107-89.

**Week 10**

Human Rights in the post-cold war period.

- An Agenda for Peace; An Agenda for Peace, Supplement; Agenda for Development; Secretary-General's Report to the UN Security Council on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (all these documents can be accessed at the web sites indicated above).

**Week 11**

Human rights in the post-cold war period (continued). The challenges of fractured societies.

- Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families*.

**Week 12**

The Human Rights Situation in Post-Soviet States.


**Week 13**


- Juviler, pp.104-88;

**Week 14**

- Andreopoulos and Claude, pp. 334-373; Read the special issue of Health and Human Rights dedicated to the fiftieth anniversary (vol. 3, no.2, 1998) and in particular the commentary by Gro Harlem Brundtland, *The UDHR: Fifty Years of Synergy Between Health and Human Rights*, and the piece by Richard Claude and Bernardo Issel, *Health, Medicine and Science in the UDHR*. 