

PSC 203A: International Human Rights

Fall 2018, Gettysburg College

Time and Place: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:10-2:25pm Instructor: Prof. Franziska Boehme
in Mara Auditorium (Masters Hall 110)

email: fboehme@gettysburg.edu

Office hours: Wed 4-5pm, Thu 11am-12pm, and by appointment in Glatfelter Hall 310

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.

Learning Outcomes

In Political Science, this course contributes to several learning goals. In 200-level courses “[s]tudents learn about the research process, in part through exposure to peer-reviewed scholarship in the discipline. Students also learn how to pose their own research questions as well as how best to go about answering these.” This class will contribute to goals 1, 2, 4, and 5 and we will begin to work on goal 3.

- 1. Understand the global context of politics, government, and citizenship. (all class aspects, esp. journals)
- 2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of substantive knowledge in the areas of concentration they select. (all class aspects, esp. exams, papers)
- 3. Produce qualitative or quantitative research that includes a research design with original theses, research questions and hypotheses. (country paper, discussions, book reviews)
- 4. Communicate effectively both in written and oral form. (discussion leadership, presentation, papers)
- 5. Understand the importance of engaging in politics. (journal, discussions)

Expectations: REI (Responsibility, Effort, Inquisitiveness)

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.

To succeed in this class (and in college overall), I expect you to commit to the three principles of “REI”: Responsibility, Effort, and Inquisitiveness. This means that you commit to be responsible adults. This includes respecting classroom policies (be on time, no cellphones, no disruptions, etc.), doing the assigned readings *before* class, and that you seek my consent and advice when you know you will be absent beyond the three allowed absences, when you have a scheduling conflict, or when you have any concerns or feedback about the class or your performance. You also commit to invest significant effort into this class. This means that you will perform to the best of your ability to learn relevant material. This

can include rereading assigned texts, seeing me during office hours to clarify material, forming study groups with fellow students, or seeking out extra material to help you do well in the class. It also means you will participate as much as possible during class because it makes it more fun for all of us and we all have viewpoints to contribute! The third principle is inquisitiveness, which means a commitment to knowledge. It means that you will be ready to ask questions during class and ask questions of the readings. Be critical of what you read! Challenge each other and me with other perspectives!

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 class 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* 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 Tuesday, 11 December 2018, from 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. In addition to Part II material, the final exam will include one *cumulative* essay question: "Are international human rights norms a powerful influence on states and individuals, or are they 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 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 *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 a class discussion on it (10 points). That day you are the experts on that book! 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 Moodle.
- **Country Profile: 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 the country through several homework assignments.
 - The assignment consists of three parts:
 - A proposal (10 points) is due on 2 October. It should contain some background information on the human rights issue you chose, a research question, a hypothesis, and suggestions for (primary or secondary) data to be used as evidence. Moreover, you should list at least 5 sources and add a 200-word annotation for each of the sources.
 - The second assignment is a 5-8 page research paper (10 points). The paper is due on the date of the presentation.
 - The third assignment is a presentation in front of the class based on your paper (5 points).
 - For more details, please see the assignment sheet “Country Profile” on Moodle.
- **Human Rights Journal: 15 points (Fourth Hour)**
 - Entries in the journal can vary in length but should be at least one page. Please bring these entries printed to class!
 - 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” indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all aspects 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 aspects 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

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 absolutely need the computer for note taking purposes.

Academic Honesty

The Gettysburg College Honor Code will apply to all work for the course. At the start of the course we will discuss the role of academic integrity, the nature of course assignments, and specific instructions for how academic integrity can be maintained in course assignments. All assignments submitted should include the Honor Pledge.

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. I ask you to read between 50-60 pages per week. The required textbook for the course is Michael Goodhart, *Human Rights: Politics and Practice* (3rd Edition, 2016) and may be purchased at the College bookstore. Additional course materials (journal articles and book chapters) will be available through Moodle. Please contact me if you have any problems.

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. 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 the first exam 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. Bring your Individual Educational Accommodation Plan with you and we will discuss what are the reasonable accommodations given the structure, content, and philosophy of the course. You must have an IEAP to receive accommodation in this course.

Religious Observances

Gettysburg College is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. If they choose, all students, faculty, administrators, and support staff have the right to engage in essential practices of their faith while minimizing conflict with work, academic or athletic requirements. As soon as possible but no later than the end of the drop/add period, each student has the responsibility to inform me about religious observances that are likely to conflict directly with academic, campus, or other required extracurricular activities. Once the [Religious Observance Accommodation Form](#) has been submitted, the student and faculty member, coach, or supervisor must converse and agree upon what would constitute a reasonable accommodation (i.e., missing a class, extending an assignment deadline, rescheduling an exam or assignment without penalty, etc.) for holidays (examples could include Good Friday, Yom Kippur, Eid al Adha, etc.).

Mental Health

Life can be difficult sometimes. Gettysburg College Counseling Services is committed to creating a safe and comfortable environment for all students and aiding the exploration of personal, social, and academic

concerns. They provide free confidential counseling, emergency services, psychiatric services, consultations, self-help resources, educational programs, and workshops to help students gain the skills and insights they need to overcome adversity and thrive in their life and learning. For more information, browse http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/college_life/counseling/index.dot or call 717-337-6960 to arrange to speak with a counselor.

Key Dates to Remember:

- Tue, 9/4: bring your preferences on focus country and book review to class
- Thu, 9/13: HR journal entries 1-3 are due
- Tue, 9/25: Proposal is due
- Thu, 10/2: Bring suggestions for Unit II topical classes
- Thu, 10/18: First exam
- Thu, 10/25: HR journal entries 4-6 are due
- Thu, 11/15 until Tue, 12/4: individual presentation dates
- Tue, 11/27: HR journal entries 7-10 are due
- Tue, 12/11: Final exam (1:30-3:30pm)

Part I: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS (ACTORS AND MODELS)

W	Day	Themes	Readings
1	Tue, 8/28	<u>Introduction</u>	Getting to know the content, one another, and the syllabus
	Thu, 8/30	<u>Foundations of HR</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Textbook, Langlois, “Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights” (15 pg.)• Read Universal Declaration of Human Rights• Read syllabus and Moodle Assignment materials
2	Tue, 9/4	<u>How universal are HR?</u> Bring preferences for focus countries and book reviews!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Donnelly, “Relative universality of human rights” (27 pg.)• Mutua, “Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights” (40 pg. 201-209, 8 pg.)
	Thu, 9/6	<u>How do we study HR?</u>	<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 excerpts 297-301, 4 pg.)• Clark and Sikkink, “Information Effects and Human Rights Data?” (read excerpts 539-543, 4 pg.)
3	Tue, 9/11	<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.)

	Thu, 9/13	<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	Tue, 9/18	<u>Repression</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Davenport, "Political Democracy and State Repression," (19 pg.) • Stiles, "Apartheid in South Africa," (20 pg.)
	Thu, 9/20	<u>Repression</u>	<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
5	Tue, 9/25	<u>Models of HR Change</u> Proposal is due!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Cardenas, "Human Rights in Comparative Politics," (15 pg.) • Risse and Ropp, "Introduction and Overview" (24 pg.)
	Thu, 9/27	<u>Models of HR Change</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simmons, "Introduction" to <i>Mobilizing for Human Rights</i> (21 pg. GC has online version of book)
6	Tue, 10/2	<u>NGOs</u> Bring suggestions for Unit II topical classes	<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.)
	Thu, 10/4	<u>NGOs</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Review: Hopgood, <i>Keepers of the Flame</i> → All students read Preface and Chapter 1 (26 pg.), GC library has online book • <u>Homework for today:</u> What are major NGOs in your country? What issues are they devoted to and how do they work?
7	Tue, 10/9	READING DAY – NO CLASS	
	Thu, 10/11	<u>Transitional Justice</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook, Quinn, "Transitional Justice" in Goodhart 389-403 (14 pg.) • Watch "Long Night's Journey Into Day" on Kanopy about the South African TRC (1.5 hrs)
8	Tue, 10/16	<u>Transitional Justice</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Review: Sikkink, <i>The Justice Cascade</i> → All students read Introduction (28 pg.) • <u>Homework for today:</u> Has your country used transitional justice in the past? What tools have been used?
Thu, 10/18 EXAM			

Part II: HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

W	Day	Themes	Readings
9	Tue, 10/23	<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.)
	Thu, 10/25	<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)
10	Tue, 10/30	<u>Women’s Rights</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Review: Cloward, <i>When Norms Collide</i> → All students read Introduction, 1-23 Bishin and Cherif, “The big gains for women’s rights in the Middle East, explained,” Monkeycage, 23 July 2018
	Thu, 11/1	<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.)
11	Tue, 11/6	TBD	
	Thu, 11/8	TBD	
12	Tue, 11/13	<u>What does the future hold for HR?</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Review: Hafner-Burton, <i>Making Human Rights a Reality</i> (GC has ebook) → 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?” (24 pg.)
	Thu, 11/15	5 presentations	
13	Tue, 11/20	5 presentations	
	Thu, 11/22	THANKSGIVING DAYS – NO CLASS	
14	Tue, 11/27	5 presentations	
	All HR Journal Entries are due!		
	Thu, 11/29	5 presentations	
15	Tue, 12/4	5 presentations	
	Homework: bring a final short essay (500-600 words) to class and be ready to discuss: What is the major HR issue of our time in the US and one abroad. What can be done to solve it? How has class contributed to your understanding of HR?		
	Thu, 12/6	Evaluations and Conclusion	
	Tue, 12/11	Final Exam, 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	