

Human Rights
Political Science 360 (#26443)
Spring 2010

Instructor: Dr. Carolyn Shaw
Class: M/W 2:00 - 3:15 LH 103
Office hours: M/W 12:00 - 1:30; T/Th 10:30-12:00
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Overview of the Course

This course is a seminar on human rights. The course is broadly focused on an institutional and legal perspective, examining how human rights are defined and what mechanisms exist to promote and defend human rights. Several weeks are also devoted to specific human rights issues such as gender-based repression, children's rights, and the impact that globalization and the war on terrorism have on human rights. The materials covered in this class can be very disturbing. The human rights violations are present in all parts of the world and are prevalent in many places.

Learning Philosophy / Course objectives

This class is designed to be a seminar format based on my belief that students learn best when actively engaged with the materials of the course. Students can learn from listening to each other, not just to the professor. By actively participating in regular group discussions, students can formulate and learn to articulate their own ideas about controversial issues.

There are three primary objectives of this course. The first is for students to gain a greater understanding of concept of human rights and the challenges the world faces in promoting and defending such rights. The second objective is to encourage students to grapple with the different views on human rights and to establish their own informed perspective. The third objective is help students become more adept at articulating and defending their positions through dialogue, discussion, and writing.

Requirements

Students are expected to **attend class regularly**. Attendance will be taken periodically throughout the semester. Four recorded absences are allowed before points will be deducted from the attendance grade.

Students are expected to **contribute to the weekly class discussions** on a regular basis.

Students are expected to **read all of the assigned readings** and to be able to discuss them in class. (Average weekly reading assignment will be 50-70 pages).

Students will **write weekly reflection papers** on the assigned readings. These papers are due on discussion days to encourage students to complete the readings before class. A total of 10 papers are assigned. The top 6 paper grades will count toward your class grade. You may choose to write on all 10 and drop the lowest 4. OR you may write on as few as 6 with all 6 counting toward your final grade. The details of these papers are discussed below.

There are **NO Exams** and **NO Research papers**.

Required Reading

Goodhart, Micahel. Human Rights: Politics and Practice. Oxford University Press, 2009.
Reading Packet (\$20 from Political Science Department Office)

Supplemental Reading

Students are encouraged to explore a variety of human rights webpages on Bb and on the internet.

Grading

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----|---|
| Attendance | 20% | (full points for 0-4 absences, one point off for each day missed after 4) |
| Participation | 10% | |
| Human Rights Treaty Paper | 10% | |
| Reflection Papers | 60% | (best 6 of 10) |

** Reflection Papers must be turned in at the beginning of class each Wednesday.
No late papers will be accepted.

| | |
|------|-----------------|
| A = | 90 - 100 points |
| B+ = | 85 - 89 |
| B = | 80 - 84 |
| C+ = | 75 - 79 |
| C = | 70 - 74 |
| D+ = | 65 - 69 |
| D = | 60 - 64 |
| F = | 59 or below |

WSU Blackboard

This course is facilitated by Blackboard, an online web aid accessible to all WSU students. The Blackboard page for this course contains a copy of the syllabus, the writing assignments, current course grades, and web links to a variety of international topics. In order to access this site (www.blackboard.wichita.edu) you need your student id number and pin number.

Writing Assignments

Students will write a weekly reflection paper on the assigned readings. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage students to prepare for class discussions by reading the assigned chapters, thinking critically about the views expressed in the readings, and coherently articulating their own opinions on the topics. The papers will include discussion of the key issues/debates on different human rights issues and the student's own opinion about the problems and how they can be addressed.

In addition, a short paper on your views on a new human rights treaty will be due in preparation for an in class role play exercise. This paper is required for all students and does NOT count as one of the reflection papers.

Study Tips

Don't try to read all of the assigned reading in one sitting. Read a section, think about what you've read. Perhaps answer the individual study questions in the back of each chapter as you go along to make sure you understand the material. The "key points" and "Reader's Guide" boxes in each chapter are helpful summaries. Definitions to all of the **bold** words in the Goodhart text are found in the Glossary in the back of the book.

Academic Freedom / Respect for Others

Each student is encouraged to participate in class discussions. In any class that includes discussion of political ideas, there are bound to be many differing points of view. Students may not only disagree with each other, but may also have disparate views from the instructor on sensitive and volatile topics. It is my hope that these differences will enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere where students and instructor alike will be encouraged to think and learn. Therefore, be assured that your grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class or your assignments. Rather, **we will all respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.**

Incompletes

An incomplete grade will only be given in the case of a documented medical or other emergency. To request an incomplete grade, a student must see me in my office and explain their need for an incomplete and fill out the necessary form. In most cases, it is in the student's best interest to complete the assigned course work on schedule.

I will not withdraw students from the class. It is a student's responsibility to monitor his/her progress in the course and to initiate withdrawal procedures on his/her own if necessary. To withdraw from a class, students must do it officially through the Registrar, and the Tuition and Fees Office.

Scholastic Dishonesty

As described in the Student Catalog, scholastic dishonesty constitutes a violation of college rules and regulations and is punishable according to the procedures outlined in the Catalog. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, plagiarism, and collusion. Plagiarism includes use of another author's words or arguments without attribution. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements. If a student commits any of these actions, I will seek disciplinary action in the form of an academic penalty, including a course grade of 'F'.

| DATE | TOPIC | ASSIGNMENT |
|--------------|--|--|
| Jan 20 (W) | Introduction – What are Human Rights? | Packet (1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 4.2) Goodhart Chap 1 |
| Jan 25 (M) | HR in Int'l Law | Goodhart Chap 2 Packet (Chap 3) |
| Jan 27 (W) | | Reflection Paper 1 |
| Feb 1 (M) | The Study of HRs | Goodhart Chap 4 Packet (Chap 6) |
| Feb 3 (W) | | Reflection Paper 2 |
| Feb 8 (M) | Civil Society and HRs | Goodhart Chap 9 Packet (Chap 7, 3.5) |
| Feb 10 (W) | | Reflection Paper 3 |
| Feb 15 (M) | Development and HRs | Goodhart Chap 10 Packet 8.6 |
| Feb 17 (W) | TBA | |
| Feb 22 (M) | | |
| Feb 24 (W) | Globalization and HRs | Goodhart Chap 11 (Packet Chap 8) |
| March 1 (M) | | Reflection Paper 4 |
| March 3 (W) | Women and Children | Goodhart Chaps 12 and 13 Packet (6.2, 6.3, 6.5, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6) |
| March 8 (M) | | Film: Born into Brothels |
| March 10 (W) | | Reflection Paper 5 |
| March 15-19 | Spring Break- NO CLASS | |
| March 22 (M) | Migration | Goodhart Chap 14 |
| March 24 (W) | | Reflection Paper 6 |
| March 29 (M) | TBA | |
| March 31 (W) | TBA | |
| April 5 (M) | Genocide | Goodhart Chap 16 Packet (5.2, 5.3, 5.6) |
| April 7 (W) | | Reflection Paper 7 |
| April 12 (M) | Intervention | Goodhart Chap 19 |
| April 14 (W) | | Reflection Paper 8 |
| April 19 (M) | Torture | Goodhart Chap 17 Packet (5.4, 5.5, 9.3, 9.4) |
| April 21 (W) | | Reflection Paper 9 |
| April 26 (M) | Transitional Justice | Goodhart Chap 20 Packet (Chap 4) |
| April 28 (W) | | Reflection Paper 10 |
| May 3 (M) | Negotiating a HR Treaty | Role Play Exercise Treaty Reflection Paper Due |
| May 5 (W) | | |
| May 10 (M) | Conclusions Last Day of Class | |