WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE WORLD
FALL 2015

Professor: Dr. Stephanie Wolfe
Class Meetings: MWF 11:30 – 12:20, Social and Behavioral Science Room 276
Office: Social and Behavioral Sciences 296
Office Hours: Tues. 2:00pm to 4:00pm, Wednesdays 1 to 3 pm, or by appointment
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OVERVIEW

Course Description:

Human rights (HR) are a powerful idea in the modern world, but also the focus of controversy. This course will provide students with a broad foundation in human rights including the ability to analyze HR in domestic and int’l law, examine prevention and prosecution techniques, and debate current issues at home and abroad. Emphasis will be placed on women and gender studies (including LGBT issues), vulnerable populations such as refugees, and atrocity crimes.

Learning Outcomes:
Students who take this course will demonstrate mastery in (1) an understanding of the theoretical, philosophical, and legal positions within the realm of human rights, (2) the ability to identify institutions and organizations that impact human rights and understand how they function.
POLS 2500/ WGS 2500: Human Rights in the World

READINGS

**Required Texts**
- Michael Goodhart, *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*
- Debra Bergoffen, Paula Ruth Gilbert, Tamara Harvey, and Connie McNeely editors, *Confronting Global Gender Justice: Women’s Lives, Human Rights*
- *New York Times* (Free on campus)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

1. **[45%]** Current Event Analysis. There are 10 current event analyses due during the course. Current Events are due before class and should either be uploaded to Canvas or a hard copy turned in at the beginning of class. During each class, various individuals will be called upon to present their event and subsequent analysis.

   Please note that students with a WGS designation should focus primarily on women and gender issues; whereas students with a POLS designation need to emphasize the political aspects.

2. **[15%]** Reading Quizzes/ Projects. There are 10 Reading Quizzes or Projects that are due during this course. These are open book and are due via canvas before class.

3. **[30%]** Mid-term and Final Exam - There is one mid-term and one final exam. These are worth 15% each.

4. **[10%]** Participation and attendance is vital to this class. You are expected to engage in discussions and debate while in class, and conform to the course’s attendance policy.

5. Extra credit can be earned in a variety of methods: Attendance of approved (i.e. related) seminars and events outside of class, by watching documentaries or reading memoirs related to the themes of this course and writing a 1.5 to 2 page reflections of the materials/events. **Extra credit must be approved in advance.**

RULES OF THE GAME

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required. In the event that a student must miss a class, he or she should notify me in advance. Notification of absences does not mean that absences are excused. In general, to receive an excused absence, I will need some form of documentation. Unexcused absences will result in reduction of your participation/attendance grade incrementally. Students with 4 or more unexcused absences will receive a zero for their
participation and attendance grade. Students with 6 or more unexcused absences will automatically fail the course.

In addition, anyone taking this course should also consider him/herself obliged to punctually attend all classes. Failure to arrive on time can be construed as an absence. Multiple late arrivals or leaving early will be counted as an absence. If for any reason you are unable to attend a class session, this fact must be reported to me before that session.

**Grading and Late Policy**

Grades are assigned according to the following scale:

A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 68-69; D = 65-67; D- = 61-64; E = 50; 0 = no assignment submitted

Late Policies differ per assignment. The following are important to note:

- If you do not have permission to miss a quiz, then a reduction of 50 percent will be taken off your grade.
- Late proposals/outlines/papers may be accepted at instructor’s discretion; however, all late assignments papers will be subjected to a reduction of 10 points per day. A “day” consists of one 24 block of time. Thus, if your paper is due at 2 pm on Tuesday the first day is 2:05 pm Tuesday to 2:04 pm Wednesday.

**Technologies Policy**

The use of recording devices and other electronic equipment is not permitted in class, unless prior permission is given. Laptops may be used on a provisional basis, only in assigned seats, and the privilege may be revoked if students use it for purposes other then note-taking. All cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class, unless permission is received in advance; failure to do so will result in a reduction of your grade.

**Accommodations Policy**

If you require accommodations or services due to a disability you must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Services Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including the syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary. For more information about the SSD, contact them at 801-626-6413, ssd@weber.edu, or http://departments.weber.edu/ssd.

**Emergency Closure**

If the University is forced to close for any reason during the semester, please check the course Canvas page and your Weber email for updates on how this course will proceed. The University announces closures and other emergencies through its Code Purple emergency alert system. Students are encouraged to sign up for Code Purple: http://www.weber.edu/codepurple/
**Academic Honesty**

As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

**Core Beliefs**

According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not obligle the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

**Tolerance Policy**

A class on politics can lead to a diversity of opinions. I encourage diversity and active discussion; however, students who are hateful or disruptive in the class will be given a warning and a zero for participation. A second warning will result in being reported to the administration and a zero for your participation grade. Repeated warnings will result in an automatic failure for the course. Being disruptive includes, but is not limited to: racist, sexist, or other prejudicial/discriminatory languages, being disrespectful to the professor and/or other students, and creating an atmosphere in which other students can not learn.

**NEEDFUL THINGS**

**Style Manual:**

**Associations and Journals:**
- **International Studies Association** (ISA) – for students continuing in political science with an emphasis on the world at large; this organization has student rates, trade publications, and great conferences. [http://www.isanet.org/](http://www.isanet.org/)

- **Foreign Policy Association** – If you are interested in political science and international studies (including the political sides of genocide and human rights abuses) subscribe to the newsletters on this site. They have classes on how to get a job in the UN and other organizations, job listings, current events, videos, blogs, and so forth. This is one of my top recommendations for students. [http://www.fpa.org/](http://www.fpa.org/)
Websites:

You should get comfortable with the web to obtain human rights reports from various sources, and to try to assess their comprehensiveness and accuracy. Normally, you have to find your document by searching through "links." Here is a selection of websites.

- Aboriginal Law and Legislation: www.bloorstreet.com/300block/ablalwleg.htm
- Amnesty International - www.amnesty.org
- Bosnia Link: http://www.dtic.dla.mil/bosnia/
- Docuweb - http://docuweb.gsu.edu/
- European Court for Human Rights: www.dhcour.coe.fr/default.hcm
- Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org
- Int'l Court of Justice: www.law.cornell.edu/icj or: www.icj-cij.org
- Int'l Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia: www.un.org/icty
- Int'l Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda: http://persubveb.francenet.fr/~intermed/
- Int'l Indian Treaty Council: www.aloha.net/nation/iitc/
- Int'l Law and Policy Institute: www.vcilip.org/vcilp/vip
- International Organization: http://WEB.bu.edu/anajam/ir595.html
- National Coalition on Haitian Rights: www.nchr.org
- Rwanda and Bosnia list: TWATCH-L@LISTSERV.ACSU.BUFFALO.EDU
- US Campaign to Ban Land Mines (c/o Vietnam Vets): www.vvaf.org
- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: www.unhchr@unog.ch (includes the 25 Human Rights Fact Sheets)
- UN Library Home Page: www.un.org/Depts/dhl/unique
- UN Office in Geneva: www.unog.ch
- UN Resolutions from the Current (52nd) Session can be found at: http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/res52.htm
- War Criminal Watch: www.wcw.org/wcw/
- Yale UN Work Station: www.library.yale.edu/un/unhome.htm
AGENDA

This syllabus is intended to give the student guidance in what will be covered during the course, and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify, supplement, and make changes as course needs arise.

Foundations

Week 1: Introduction to Human Rights

What are human rights? How are these defined? Policy vs. practice in the United States and abroad with an emphasis on women, gender, and LGBTQ rights.

Familiarize yourself with the following found on www.un.org, click on treaties.

- United Nations Charter
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

Also familiarize yourself with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch

Week 2: Human Rights as a Global Discourse

Historical and philosophical origins of human rights; the emergence of the modern state, the place of the individual therein and the role of international law in delineating that relationship. The difference between civil rights and human rights.

Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 1: Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights
- Goodhart, Chapter 2: Human Rights as a Critique of Power
- Goodhart, Chapter 9: Global Civil Society and Human Rights

Week 3: Comparative Human Rights

Are human rights a western concept or universal? What is the relationship between domestic constitutional law and international human rights law? What mechanisms exist nationally and internationally for enforcing human rights?

Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 3: Human Rights in International Relations
- Goodhart, Chapter 5: Human Rights in Comparative Politics
- Bergoffen, Chapter 18: Configuring feminisms, transforming paradigms
- Bergoffen, Chapter 13: Seduced by information, contaminated by power
Vulnerable Populations

Week 4: Racism and Minority Oppression

What does racism look like in the United States and abroad? Where do we see modern day slavery? How does racism effect women and LGBTQ populations?

Required Readings:
- Various United Nations Conventions on Slavery and Racism
- “Racism Within”, in Human Rights, Human Wrongs
- Goodhart, Chapter 8: Political Democracy and State Repression of Minorities
- Goodhart, Chapter 14: Indigenous People Human Rights

Week 5: Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery

What does human trafficking look like in the modern era? What populations are most vulnerable? How is this a global problem?

Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 15, Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation
- Bergoffen, Chapter 2: Human trafficking: Why is it such an important women’s issue?
- Bergoffen, Chapter 3: Transforming the representable: Asian women in anti-trafficking discourse
- Bergoffen, Chapter 4: Sin, salvation, of starvation? The problematic role of religious morality in U.S anti-sex trafficking policy
- Bergoffen, Chapter 6: Human Trafficking: A Photographic Essay by Kay Chrenush

Week 6: Women’s Rights

What do women’s rights look like around the world? How do civil, political, and human rights vary and what types of issues are most important in each country?

Required Readings:
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Bergoffen, Chapter 5: How Not to Give Rape Political Significance
- Bergoffen, Chapter 17: The Institutionalization of Domestic Violence Against Women in the United States

Week 7: Children’s Rights

Child brides, child slavery, child soldiers, child labor. An examination of issues in regards to the most vulnerable.
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Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 12: Children’s Human Rights Advocacy

Week 8: Sexuality and LGBTQ Identity Issues

Sexuality and gender issues, political and civil rights, human security issues, death penalty convictions for sexuality, hate crime laws, etc.

Week 9: Refugees

Refugee and asylum law; what does international law mandate, what does domestic law offer refugees? Current refugee situations at home and abroad, the role of non-state actors as persecutors; domestic violence, female genital mutilation, and sexual orientation as the basis for asylum.

Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 13: Human Rights and Forced Migration
- Goodhart, Chapter 18: Torture

Week 10: Human Rights: Economic and Development Issues

State Repression of Minority Groups, Issues found in the Global South and Economic Issues.

Required Readings:
- Goodhart, Chapter 10 Human Rights and Politics in Development
- Goodhart, Chapter 11: Economic Globalization and Human Rights
- Bergoffen, Chapter 10: Economic Empowerment of Women as a Global Project: Economic Rights in the Neo-Liberal Era Using Law and Education to
- Bergoffen, Chapter 14: Human Rights of Women and Girls with Disabilities in Developing Countries

Future of Human Rights

Week 11: Education and Domestic Legislation

What can be done in the field of human rights? How does education impact human rights? What can be done with legislation?

Required Readings:
- Bergoffen, Chapter 12: Using Law and Education to Make Human Rights Real in Women's Real Lives
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- Bergoffen, Chapter 15: Gender and Customary Mechanisms of Justice in Uganda
- Bergoffen, Chapter 16: Policing Bodies and Borders: Women, Prostitution, and the Differential Regulation of U.S. Immigration Policy

**Week 13: International Criminal Law**

The Nuremberg legacy; legal definitions; War crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity: medical/forensic, legal, psychological and sociologic factors. Rape as a war crime.

*Required Readings:*
- Goodhart, Chapter 4: Human Rights in International Law
- Goodhart, Chapter 16: Genocide and Human Rights
- Bergoffen, Chapter 1: Women and the genocidal rape of women: the gender dynamics of gendered war crimes.

**Week 12: Humanitarian Intervention**

Is humanitarian intervention a good thing? How has it been utilized in the past? What are the current theoretical assumptions regarding this and who is intervening where?

*Required Readings:*
- Goodhart, Chapter 17: Humanitarian Intervention
- “Humanitarian and Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict” in War, Conflict, and Human Rights

**Week 14: Justice**

What is the future of human rights? Can there be justice for these crimes?

*Required Readings:*
- Goodhart, Chapter 19: Transitional Justice
- Goodhart, Chapter 20: The Future of Human Rights

**Week 15: December 9 – 12**

**Finals Week**

- Final Exam