INTL 370: International Human Rights
Winter 2013

CRN: 27957/ 4.00 credits
Time & Location: MW, 8:30am-9:50am, 125 McKenzie

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Office: 321 Prince Lucien Campbell (PLC)
Office Hours: Fridays, 1:15-3:15pm
Email: rhodges3@uoregon.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The concept and practice of international human rights encompasses more than simply defining and enforcing what is ‘right.’ Like many social phenomena, human rights have myriad dimensions and perspectives that delve into issues of philosophy, policy, imperialism, identity, justice, power, and much more. Although genocide is the most blatant offense perpetrated by humans against humans, the study of human rights also covers other important topic areas. What factors explain the perpetuation of unfair, unlivable wages among the world’s working poor? Why do billions of people lack access to safe and clean drinking water? What factors explain the rise of the global sex trade, human trafficking, and systematic femicide? What role does our complacency play in these issues? What about environmental racism and the continuation of US-administered “secret prisons” around the world? This course will give students the comparative historical and theoretical perspective to examine many of these issues and contribute to public discourse, policy, and activism concerning international human rights.

COURSE TEXT AND MATERIALS

The below book will serve as the foundational text for the course; however, other additional readings, which will be made available on Blackboard, will serve to supplement the text.


Information on this syllabus is subject to change.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to facilitate your learning and practice of essential knowledge and skills for engaging critical social inquiry in the field of international human rights. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Explain what makes human rights unique from other moral principles and practices;
2. Identify and explain significant historical moments that have contributed to current conceptions of human rights;
3. Analyze cases of human rights issues through various theoretical perspectives;
4. Identify and locate conditions of vulnerability within global social structures;
5. Construct an argument that either criticizes or supports implementing a regime of universal human rights;
6. Critically evaluate current world events as they apply to class concepts;
7. Use your own voice to contribute meaningful ideas to public discourse about human rights

EXPECTATIONS

This is an active course, meaning student success demands active participation in course readings, writing exercises, and class activities. I am committed to doing everything I can to help you learn. I realize that each individual learns differently; therefore, please let me know how I can best accommodate your learning process if problems arise. Ultimately, your achievement is in your hands. It is up to you to take advantage of the opportunities this class will offer.

MEASURING STUDENT PROGRESS

10% - News Reviews
15% - Class Participation
25% - Reflection Essay 1
25% - Reflection Essay 2
25% - Final Essay/Op-Ed Article

Information on this syllabus is subject to change.
**News Reviews:** Thinking about international human rights necessarily requires us to fully engage with current political, economic, and social issues unfolding around the world. A news review will be given three to four times per week. The review will consist of three or four questions covering current world news stories for that day. Students are encouraged to spend a little time each day reading news stories from a ‘credible’ source. Examples of a credible news source include The New York Times, International Herald Tribune, National Public Radio, BBC, and Al Jazeera. Occasionally, a question pertaining to the course readings will be asked. The lowest news review score for each student will be dropped when calculating final grades.

**Class participation:** This course will be highly interactive and will include various opportunities for active engagement during each class session, including exploratory writing, organized discussions, debates, small group work, etc. Your participation will be graded based on the consistency and thoughtfulness of your contributions, and on your alert and respectful interaction with others in the class. Keep in mind that I consider office hour visits to be opportunities for you to participate and contribute to the course.

**Reflection Essays:** We will move beyond memorization of concepts and learn how to apply theoretical concepts to real world situations. You will be asked to complete two midterm reflection essays and a final essay answering specific questions related to course readings and lecture concepts. The essays will consist of three to four typed pages in paragraph form and will allow for creative reflection and application of class concepts. Assignment specifics will be distributed in class at least one week before the due date. Please note that I do not accept late submissions.

**Op-Ed Article:** An editorial style letter addressed to world leaders and the public will be due by the last day of class. This letter is your opportunity to voice your convictions about a particular human rights issue of concern to you. This is not a research paper but a concise, compelling rhetorical statement, based on evidence and critical reasoning, which is intended to convince others to take action. The Op-Ed will consist of 10 percent of your grade. More details will be available in class on format and submission options. Please note that I do not accept late submissions.

**CRITERIA FOR GRADING**

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| C     | Satisfactory | - the student follows directions,  
- the student does what is minimally necessary to address assignments  
- student work is a bit sloppy and the writing careless |
| D     | Inferior    | - student does not follow directions and barely addresses the assignment,  
- does not participate in class,  
- student work is sloppy and careless |
| F     | Unsatisfactory | - does not meet the standards of a college student |

**COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Academic Integrity:** Your enrollment in this course constitutes your agreement to abide by the University of Oregon policy on Academic Misconduct, as defined in the University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu). Neither ignorance of these policies nor lack of intention to engage willfully in acts defined as academic misconduct will be considered a legitimate defense. In short, I expect that all work you produce for this course will be your own; if you engage in academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, it will result in a failure of the entire course, without exception. To learn more about your rights and responsibilities concerning academic conduct and the procedures related to academic misconduct, I strongly advise you to become familiar with the University Student Conduct Code (link given above). Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at [www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students](http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students). Please talk with me if you have any questions about academic integrity issues.

**Inclusive Access:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me within the first week of the term if aspects of the instruction or course design present obstacles to your active participation. Such obstacles may include, but are not limited to, issues concerning physical access and mobility, physical or mental health and well-being, and academic learning. For additional assistance and resources, I encourage you to contact the following campus services, as appropriate for your concerns:

- Disability Services, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu;
  website: [http://ds.uoregon.edu/](http://ds.uoregon.edu/)
• University Counseling and Testing Center, Health Center 2nd Floor, 346-3227; website: http://counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/
• Teaching and Learning Center, 68 Prince Lucien Campbell, 346-3226; website: http://tlc.uoregon.edu/

Diversity: The University of Oregon is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity in education and an acceptance of diversity as an affirmation of individual identity within a welcoming community. Open inquiry, freedom of expression, and respect for difference are therefore fundamental to a comprehensive and dynamic education. This course is committed to upholding these ideals by encouraging the exploration, engagement, and expression of diverse perspectives and diverse identities. Please notify me ASAP if you feel aspects of the instruction or course design, or classroom activities, undermine these principles in any way. For additional assistance and resources, I encourage you to contact the following campus services, as appropriate for your concerns:

• Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity, 1 Johnson Hall, 346-3175; website: http://oied.uoregon.edu/
• Bias Response Team, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1134 or brt@uoregon.edu; website: http://bias.uoregon.edu/

Electronic Devices: Please respect our collective learning environment by turning off electronic devices during class, including laptops, cell phones, MP3 players, etc. You will be notified in class if use of laptops is allowed for particular activities. The instructor and other students are not responsible for any damage to electronic devices or theft, as a result of classroom activities that may include moving around and working in different locations within the room. Also note that you may be asked to leave and be counted as absent if your use of such devices disrupts the class. Please notify me prior to class if you need to have a cell phone on in case of emergency, e.g. an ill family member or pregnant spouse/partner.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1: Overview and Foundations of Human Rights</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, Jan. 7</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Course Overview and Introduction to Human Rights</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Become familiar with world news headlines</td>
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<td><strong>Wednesday, Jan. 9</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Foundations/Early Ethics</strong></td>
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<td>Readings</td>
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<td>• Steiner et al, Global Snapshots excerpt</td>
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<td>• Donnelly, Intro and Ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ishay, The Human Rights Reader, pp. 8-9</td>
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<td>• Jamail, 2012: A Year of Human Rights Challenges</td>
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<td>Watch</td>
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<td>Democracy Now, Congo Humanitarian Crisis Worsens Amidst Renewed Violence Linked to Rebels Backed by Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, Jan. 10, 4pm</td>
<td>Event Presentation – The Problem of Sovereignty in Ethical Thought.</td>
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**Week 2: History of Human Rights**

**Liberalism and the Enlightenment**

- **Monday, Jan. 14**
  - Readings
    - Ball & Dagger, pp. 43-68
    - Skim French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

**Socialist Critique**

- **Wednesday, Jan. 16**
  - Readings
    - Ishay, The History of Human Rights, Ch. 3, pp. 118-145

**Week 3: Human Rights as a ‘Western’ Category**

- **Monday, Jan. 21**
  - **No class - Human Rights as a Category**
  - Readings
    - Donnelly, Ch. 4
    - Seils, Are we still committed to human rights for all?

- **Tuesday, Jan. 22, noon**
  - Event
    - Panel Discussion – The Economic War on Women: Taxes, Austerity, and Debt, EMU Fir Room

**UN Declaration Model**

- **Wednesday, Jan. 23**
  - Readings
    - Donnelly, Ch. 2 and 8
    - Skim UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
    - Hafner-Burton & Tsutsui, Human Rights in a Globalized World

**Due Reflection Essay 1**

- **Thursday, Jan. 24, 4pm**
  - Event
    - Presentation - Alternative Form of Neoliberal Resistance: Youth workers and the creative arts in Bogota, Colombia. Hendricks 330.

**Week 4: Theory and Practice of Human Rights**

**Relativism and Group Rights**

- **Monday, Jan. 28**
  - Readings
    - Donnelly, Ch. 6 and pp. 208-211
    - Kenrick, J. and J. Lewis, Indigenous peoples’ rights and the politics of the term ‘indigenous.’

- **Event**
  - Presentation – Inequality, the Middle Class and Economic Growth, 5:30pm, Law 175

**The Role of Culture**

- **Wednesday, Jan. 30**
  - Readings
    - Goodale, Surrendering to Utopia
    - Ferguson, Development and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho

**Week 5: Theory and Practice of Human Rights, Cont.**

**Discursive Approaches**

- **Monday, Feb. 4**
  - Readings
    - Goodale & Merry, pp. 5-10
    - Speed, Rights at the Intersection

**Class Debate: Should rights be universal?**

- **Wednesday, Feb. 6**
  - Readings
    - Donnelly, pp. 211-221

Information on this syllabus is subject to change.
### Week 6: Conditions of Vulnerability-Identity, Class, Gender

**Thursday, Feb. 7, 6:45pm**  
**Event**  
Presentation – Dog Whistle Racism: Race + Politics in 2012, EMU Ballroom

**Week 6: Conditions of Vulnerability-Identity, Class, Gender**

**Monday, Feb. 11**  
**Identity and Nationalism**  
**Readings**  
- Bowen, The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict  
- Skidmore & Smith, The Soccer War  
- Jensen, Saying Goodbye to Patriotism

**Wednesday, Feb. 13**  
**Class and Gender, Guest Speaker**  
**Readings**  
- Thompson, Behind Roses' Beauty, Poor and Ill Workers  
- Donnelly, Ch. 13  
- McDonald, Buy, Sell, Adopt: Child Trafficking in China  
- Farmer, On Suffering and Structural Violence

**Watch**  
Al Jazeera, Women's Rights in Afghanistan

### Week 7: Conditions of Vulnerability - Environment and Globalization

**Monday, Feb. 18**  
**Environmental Injustice**  
**Readings**  
- Skim UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples  
- Ishay, The Human Rights Reader, pp. 360-369  
- Bullard, Race, Class, and the Politics of Place  
- Yang, Of Borders, Fences, and Global Environmentalism

**Due**  
Reflection Essay 2

**Wednesday, Feb. 20**  
**Globalization, Imperialism and Neoliberalism**  
**Readings**  
- Kahn, Can China Reform Itself?  
- Wallerstein, Structural Crisis in the World-System  
- Galeano, To Be Like Them

### Week 8: Responses to Human Rights Challenges

**Monday, Feb. 25**  
**Global Responses**  
**Readings**  
- Slovic, Psychic Numbing and Genocide  
- Donnelly, Ch. 10 and 14  
- Gettleman, The World’s Worst War

**Wednesday, Feb. 27**  
**Transnational Networks, Guest Speaker**  
**Readings**  
- Adams, Regional Women's Activism  
- OAS, Press Release: Mayagna Awas Tingni Indigenous Community

**Thursday, Feb. 28 – Sunday, March 3**  
**Event**  
Public Interest Environmental Law Conference – Earth: Too Big to Fail. Law Center. [www.pielc.org](http://www.pielc.org)
## Week 9: Social Movements and Transitional Justice

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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| Monday, March 4       | Civil Society and Social Movements                                    | • Staggenborg, The Global Justice Movement  
• Assies, David versus Goliath in Cochabamba: Water Rights, Neoliberalism, and the Revival of Social Protest in Bolivia |
| Wednesday, March 6    | Transitional Justice, Movie: Pray the Devil Back to Hell              | • Aiken, Learning to Live Together                                                            |
| Thursday, March 7, 2pm| Event                                                                  | Symposium – Immigrants and the Carceral State: Detention, deportation, and pathways to membership. Knight Library Browsing Room |

## Week 10: Global/Individual Connections

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| Monday, March 11      | Human Rights in Oregon, Guest Speaker                                 | • Schulz, The Power of Justice - Read the Executive Summary  
• Northwest Federation of Community Organizations, In Our Own Words  
• Human Rights Watch, Letter to Oregon State Legislature  
• Willamette University, Modern Slavery in Our Midst  
• Familiarize yourself with websites of Amigos, CAUSA, PCUN, Eugene Human Rights Commission, Coalition Against Environmental Racism - see Other Resources at the end of syllabus |
| Watch                 | Alexander, The New Jim Crow                                           |                                                                                               |
| Wednesday, March 13   | Global/Individual Connections                                        | • Ishay, The Human Rights Reader, Ch. 14 (pp. 456-473)  
• PBS, China Blue Webpage - Read 'Human Rights in China' subpage, then read 'The Blue Jeans Business' subpages  
• Additional article TBD |
| Watch                 | The Story of Stuff                                                   |                                                                                               |
| Due                   | Final Essay/Op-Ed Article                                            |                                                                                               |

### COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY


Information on this syllabus is subject to change.
Al Jazeera, Women’s Rights in Afghanistan -

Alexander, The New Jim Crow –
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31510813/#46970507


Ball & Dagger, Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal, Sixth Edition. (Blackboard)


Bullard, Race, Class, and the Politics of Place –
http://www.ciesin.org/docs/010-278/010-278chpt2.html

Chimamanda Adichie: The danger of a single story. TED Talk -
http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

Democracy Now, Congo Humanitarian Crisis Worsens Amidst Renewed Violence Linked to Rebels Backed by Rwanda -
http://www.democracynow.org/2012/11/30/congo_humanitarian_crisis_worsens_amidst_renewed


Ferguson, Development and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho (Blackboard)

French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen -
http://www.hrcr.org/docs/frenchdec.html

Gettleman, The World’s Worst War. NYTimes –


Hafner-Burton & Tsutsui, Human Rights in a Globalized World –
http://www.abdn.ac.uk/pir/notes06/Level4/P14553/hafner%20burton.pdf

Human Rights Watch. (June 19, 2009). Letter to Oregon State Legislature -

ICTJ, What is transitional justice? - http://ictj.org/about/transitional-justice

Jamail, 2012: A Year of Human Rights Challenges -
http://www.aljazeera.com/humanrights/2012/12/201212101938507569.html

Jensen, Saying Goodbye to Patriotism –
http://www.commondreams.org/views01/1112-07.htm

Kahn, Can China Reform Itself? NYT Times –

Keck & Sikkink. (1998). Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics. In Activists Beyond Borders, Ch. 1 (Blackboard)


McDonald, Buy, Sell, Adopt: Child Trafficking in China –

Northwest Federation of Community Organizations, In Our Own Words: Immigrants’ Experience in the Northwest, excerpts. (Blackboard)

OAS. (2001). Press Release: Mayagna Awas Tingni Indigenous Community -

PBS, China Blue Webpage -
http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/chinablue/humanrights.html

Schulz, W. (June 2009). The Power of Justice: Applying international human rights standards to American domestic practices, Executive Summary. At Center for American Progress. -

Seils, Are we still committed to human rights for all? -
http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/12/2012121064539398923.html


Slovic, Psychic Numbing and Genocide (Blackboard)


Staggenborg, S. (2011). The Global Justice Movement. In Social Movements, Ch. 9 (Blackboard)


The Story of Stuff - http://www.storyofstuff.com/

Thompson, G. (2003). Behind Roses' Beauty, Poor and Ill Workers. NY Times -

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples -


**OTHER RESOURCES**

**US Department of State - Human Rights Country Reports:**  
http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/index.htm

**Amnesty International Country Reports:**  
http://www.amnestyusa.org/all-countries/page.do?id=1041024

**Human Rights Watch: Daily Reports**  
http://www.hrw.org/en/publications/reports

**United Nations Human Rights Regime:**  
UNDHR: http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html  
UN HR High Commissioner: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx  
UN HR Council: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/  
UN HR Committee: http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/hrc.htm  
UN Convention Rights of Children:  

**Genocide Studies:**  
Yale University: http://www.yale.edu/gsp/

**Gender and Human Rights Abuse, Human Trafficking/Sex Slavery:**  
http://www.rapeis.org/  
http://www.humantrafficking.org/updates/822  
Environmental Justice Database: http://www.ejnet.org/ej/

**Documentary Film:**  
Frontline: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/  
Verizio Film Festival: http://www.verzio.ceu.hu/  
Media Education Foundation:  
http://www.mediaed.org/cgi-bin/commerce.cgi?display=home

**Applied Eco-Feminism:**  
Vandana Shiva and Navdanya USA http://www.vandanashiva.org/  
Muhammad Yunus and The Grameen Bank: http://www.grameen-info.org/

**Green Capitalism/Environmental Economics:**
Rocky Mountain Institute: http://www.rmi.org/sitepages/pid23.php
Redefining Progress: http://www.rprogress.org/index.htm
The Natural Step: http://www.naturalstep.org/

Local Activism:
The Eugene Human Rights Commission:
Eugene Human Rights City Project:
http://www.humanrightscity.com/Human_Rights_City_Project/Welcome_.html
Amigos Multicultural Services Center: http://www.amigosmsc.org/
Coalition Against Environmental Racism: http://pages.uoregon.edu/caer/
CAUSA: http://www.causaoregon.org/