

In Partnership With



Global Perspectives on Human Rights in Action

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: LNDN 3242

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45

Instructor: Daniel Wheatley

Course Description

The notion of human rights has become central to global politics today. It is therefore not a single subject but a broad field of potential investigation: This semester seminar provides a multi-disciplinary introduction to the topic, critically examining the politics of human rights, their contentious nature, and uneven global implementation. Throughout, the focus will be on practical issues and the contested politics of human rights in action through a range of topical case studies. Students will evaluate key debates about the politics and morality of human rights and analyze and explore the theoretical foundations of human rights concepts and topical issues relating to human rights with focus on British national and community perspectives. The course critically examines the history and development of concepts of human rights and the philosophies underpinning them, before examining the practical value of human rights in community cohesion and Britain's national political life. Topics to be covered will include human rights and UK foreign policy; postcolonial and feminist critiques of human rights; the intersection of human rights with gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and class; the relationship between human and civil rights; human rights and the UK legal system; the balance between free speech and protection from hate speech in the British context; and the practical implementation and enforcement of human rights.

Course Objectives

Students will be encouraged to examine critically the political character of human rights and their own views and assumptions about them, as well as consider the ways in which human rights values can impact on community and social cohesion and the influence of human rights in UK politics and society. By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate a fundamental understanding of human rights systems and issues in community and British contexts.

Students should demonstrate: responsibility and accountability, independence and interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, and appreciation of differences. At the end of this course, students will have the knowledge, understanding, and skills to:

- Appreciate the major concepts, history, development, and structure of human rights
- Evaluate key debates about the political and moral character of human rights
- Use a human rights framework to analyze and assess topical issues within a British context of rights, social justice, and inequality
- Gain firsthand experience of the practical application of human rights ideas in a British context
- Articulate and explain the role of human rights in British society in oral and written forms
- Appreciate the role of London as a location for human rights activism and advocacy on local, national, and global scales

Methodology

This class will meet for 3.2 hours several times per week over four weeks. The class will include discussion and active student participation in debate. The course will therefore be taught interactively with a variety of student exercises, debates, and presentations to enable students to gain competence and confidence in using core human rights terminology and utilizing and applying core principles within the field of human rights. A variety of guest speakers actively engaged in human rights activism and legislation will explore their implementation in local, national, and global contexts.

Course Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites for this course, which is aimed at all students with an interest in human rights, and assumes no previous knowledge of the subject. Critical thinking and a willingness to participate actively will be necessary to complete the course successfully.

Required Reading / Materials

 Goodhart, M., ed. (2013): Human Rights: Politics and Practice, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Additional required readings will be provided in Xerox or electronic form via Canvas as indicated in the weekly schedule below.

- Alston, P. & R. Goodman (2012) International Human Rights, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Clapham, A. (2015): Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Colon, C., A. Gristwood & Dristwood & Colon, C., A. Gristwood & Colon, C., A. Gristwood & Colon, C., Capan, C., Capan,
- Crawshaw, S., J. Jackson (2010): Small Acts of Resistance: How Courage, Tenacity and a Bit of Ingenuity Can Change the World, Union Square, London.
- Crawshaw, S. & A. Weiwei (2017): Street Spirit: The Power of Protest and Mischief, LOM Art, London.
- Donnelly, J. (2013): *Universal Rights in Theory and Practice*, 3rd edition, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.
- Gearty, C. (2016): On Fantasy Island: Britain, Europe, and Human Rights, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Gearty C. (2006): Can Human Rights Survive?, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Ghandhi, S. (2012): Blackstone's International Human Rights Documents, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Ghanea N., Stephens A., Walden R. (2007): Does God Believe in Human Rights?, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Ife, J. (2010): Human Rights from Below: Achieving Rights through Community Development, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Klug, F. (2015): A Magna Carta for All Humanity: *Homing in on Human Rights*, Routledge, London.
- Moyn, S. (2010): The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History, Harvard University Press,
- Cambridge, MA.
- Risse, M. (2012): On Global Justice, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.
- Wells, H. G. ([1940] 2015): The Rights of Man, or What are we Fighting for? A. Smith, ed., Penguin, London.

Useful Websites & Related Resource

- Bar Human Rights Committee: http://www.barhumanrights.org.uk/
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office, annual human rights report:
 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/630623/

 Human_Rights_and_Democracy_Report_2016_accessible.pdf
- Girls Not Brides: https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/
- UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Women/SRWomen/Pages/SRWomenIndex.aspx
- UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomOpinion/Pages/OpinionIndex.aspx

- UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/FreedomReligion/Pages/FreedomReligionIndex.aspx
- UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/SRRacism/Pages/IndexSRRacism.aspx
- UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Migration/SRMigrants/Pages/SRMigrantsIndex.aspx
- UN Special Rapporteur on Torture: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Torture/SRTorture/Pages/SRTortureIndex.aspx
- A full list of all current thematic and geographic UN Human Rights "special mechanisms":
 - http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Currentmandateholders.apx
- OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) (1976): International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), United Nations Human Rights: www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx
- OHCHR (1990): Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Human Rights: www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx
- OHCHR (2012): The Corporate Social Responsibility to Respect Human Rights An Interpretive Guide, United Nations Human
 Rights: www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Business/RtRInterpretativeGuide.pdf
- United Nations General Assembly (1948): General assembly resolution 217 A: Universal declaration of human rights:http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html
- United Nations General Assembly (1966): International covenant on civil and political rights: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume20999/volume-999-I-14668
 English.pdf
- United Nations Human Rights Committee (1999): General comment no. 27: Freedom of movement: http://hasbrouck.org/documents/UNHRC-general-comment-2.pdf
- United for Human Rights: http://www.humanrights.com/home.html
- University of Minnesota Human Rights Library: http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/

Grading

Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
А	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	
B+	87–89	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
В	83–86	
B-	80–82	
C+	77–79	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
С	73–76	
C-	70–72	
D+	67–69	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Participation/small group discussion	10%
Oral presentation	15%
Written site visit report	20%
Research paper	30%
Final exam	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

Participation (10%)

This is a full seminar class. As such, active participation in classroom discussion and field studies is an expected component of the course and will enhance students' understanding of the material for their research and field study papers, presentation, and exam. Lecture material and field studies encourage discussion based on students' observations as well as insights from course materials. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to each class and to contribute to discussion in an informed manner through relevant comments, questions, and analysis. Silent attendance of class will not result in a strong participation grade. It is students' responsibility to ensure on the day that they are included on the register for classes and field studies. Grades will be based on the quality of participation in class discussions, such as taking an active role in asking questions and making comments, as well as evidence that required reading has been completed on time.

Oral Presentation (15%)

Each student will offer an in-class presentation of 7–10 minutes. Students will produce a presentation (including questions) based on their research project into a specific human rights issue, allowing students to investigate key themes in greater detail and share their findings with their peers. These presentations will also give students the opportunity to receive formative feedback from peers and their instructor before submitting the final research paper.

Students may work individually, focused on one article taken from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that connects to material and issues they have learned about over the course, or on a topic of their own interest. This could include such examples as Articles 6, 7, and 8 and the right to fair trial, Article 14 and the right to asylum, Article 18 and issues of freedom of expression, Article 19 and attacks on religious or secular beliefs, or Article 23 and right to non-discrimination and equal pay at work. Students should demonstrate in their presentation how one or several articles from the UDHR find expression in law, advocacy, and public discourse around key human rights today.

Written Field Study Report @1,000 words (20%)

Students will submit one 1,000-word report based on their experience and learning from the site visit during the first half of the course. These reports will enable them to relate the findings from a site visit to the broader context of key themes in human rights and consider the ways in which the field of human rights is represented in different ways in the social dynamics, institutions, and grassroots and activist organizations of the global city. Further guidance and additional notes will be provided by the instructor.

Research Paper: Draft paper @1,000 words (@10%), Final Paper @2,000 words (@20%), 30% total

Students will submit one 2,000-word paper that will draw on the topic selected for their in-class presentation and which will situate a specific human rights issue, project, or organization within both the "local" context of London and the "global" context of relevant concepts and debates in human rights. A shortlist of suitable topics and case studies will be provided by the instructor. Students must not select a topic or organization that they have already covered for their field study report.

A draft paper of 1,000 words must be submitted by November 19. This will be an evaluated assignment and is worth 10 of the 30% of overall course mark. The draft paper should show a clear thesis or topic for the final paper, evidence of planning for the body text of the work, and ideas for your research and sources that will support your development of the paper.

Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive and based on a clearly stated thesis and supported by specific details from the field studies, class handouts, and readings where appropriate. Written analysis must be supported by a minimum of eight secondary sources, which should be cited in the text and in a final bibliography. Students must demonstrate their ability to search the literature and broader resources to produce a critical, cohesive, and balanced argument drawing on this research and relevant concepts and debates in the field of human rights. Relevant resources will be found in the CAPA Resource Centre, as well as through students' institutional online access to scholarly journals and the SUNY Online Library: https://libraryguides.oswego.edu/capa

For guidance on research, see: http://libraryguides.oswego.edu/c.php?q=500670

For guidance on citations, see: http://libraryguides.oswego.edu/capa-citingsources

Final Examination: In-Class Debate (25%)

In the final class of the semester, each student will participate in a class debate on the motion: "Britain Has Been A Greater Force In Human Rights Abuses Than In Human Rights Empowerment Across Its History." This assignment will serve as the final examination for this course. Students will be required to turn in a hard copy of their debate speech and/or slides in addition to participation on the day. Students will be divided into two groups: those in support of the motion and those against the motion. Within each group, students will work both in groups and individually to develop different roles and their own contributions. On each side, students may support their position in the debate either by delivering an opening argument in support of their side or by supporting their team with up to five PowerPoint slides containing factual information and data that reinforce and strengthen the position of their team. Students should submit these slides to the instructor as part of the evaluation process for this assignment. Debates are typically conceived as a "zero sum" contest: one side wins, the other loses. This partisan model is increasingly seen as limited in its value because it assumes one view is entirely correct and the other is entirely false. This debate is predicated on the concept of the pursuit of higher levels of truth and understanding.

Neither side will be found to be "right" or "wrong." Each member of the class should seek to make the best contribution and to the utmost of their capacities advance or support their allocated side of the debate. Each side debate will divide into two teams: proposers and seconders. Each member of the proposer team will speak for 5–7 minutes, with each side of the debate getting a collective total of 20–30 minutes to build their case. Teams that coordinate their comments and avoid repetition will prove more effective.

Those who are seconding and researching will be given a 15–20 minute recess to reflect and respond to the proposers arguments. The seconders will each speak for 5–7 minutes in which they will refute or challenge the arguments offered by the proposing team on the other side of the debate and draw on statistics to support the arguments of their team's proposers. Seconders should also coordinate their replies and aim to conclude in 15–20 minutes overall.

There will be open time offered at the end of this for any member of either debate to offer a summation of their argument. Field Components CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. You will actively explore the global city in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

Field components listed in the syllabus are provisional since the program will take advantage of students' interests and opportunities to engage with course themes as they appear. London is an important centre of research and policy-making in the field of global human rights and offers many relevant institutions, organizations, and activist groups.

Relevant "My Global City" events and activities, or other optional activities (such as LSE Public lectures, etc.), will vary from semester to semester.

Dress Code

To be advised. Smart casual will be required for site visits.

Course Content

Theme 1

Study Task: Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Each student will be given the text of one article from the UDHR. Over the week ahead they should conduct simple research into this article, determine what right or rights it covers, and prepare some thoughts on it and examples of how this article features in human rights discourse and activity in the real world. They will present their findings in class.

Unit 1

Introduction to the Course

- Introduction to the course, field studies and assignments; key concepts in human rights discourse
- Categories of rights and topical issues of concern
- Activity: Human Rights Squares: http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hrsquares/original.pdf
- Screening and discussion: Berti, B. (n.d.): "What are the Universal Human Rights?" TED Talk, available at:
 https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-are-the-universal-human-rights-benedetta-berti
- Follow-Up Readings:
 - o Goodhart, M. (2013): "Introduction: Human Rights—Politics and Practice" in Human Rights, pps. 1-8.
 - United Nations General Assembly (1948): General assembly resolution 217 A: Universal declaration of human rights, available at http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html

Unit 2

The Abolition of Slavery: The World's First Human Rights Campaign, or an Injustice Still Unresolved?

• Field study visit to Museum of London at the Docklands

• Readings/To View:

- Smith, R. K. M. (2013): "Human Rights in International Law," pps 60-76, Chapter
 4 in Goodhart
- Olusoga David, (2015) "Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners," Documentary Vine: https://documentaryvine.com/video/britains-forgotten-slave-owners

Unit 3

The Historical Development of Human Rights

- The historical development of human rights and rights language; precursors of human rights—the Code of Hammurabi, the Cyrus cylinder Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.
- This class will examine English and British contributions to human rights, including Magna Carta and the "Glorious Revolution," the campaign to abolish slavery in the British Empire, the Chartist Movement, and Suffragettes. We will also discuss the shortcomings of earlier rights movements, and challenges to the Anglo-Saxon rights tradition, such as the denial of rights to enslaved people, women, and the poor.

• Readings:

- Langlois, A. J. (2013): "Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights," in M. Goodhart, ed., Human Rights, Chapter 1, pps. 12-25.
- Minogue, K. (1979): "The history of the idea of human rights," in W. Laqueur & B. Rubin, eds., The Human Rights Reader, pps. 3-17, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA.

Theme 2: Are Human Rights Universal?

Study Task: British Figures in Human Rights

Each student will be given the name and image of a British person, alive or dead, from several periods of history, whose life and work have some bearing on human rights. Over the week ahead they should research this person and their contribution to the evolution of rights in British history. They will present their findings in class.

Unit 4

Human Rights in International Relations: Britain's Role

How did the human rights system emerge in international relations? What was the role
of Britain, and what arguments can be advanced to view Britain as a source of human
rights or as a violator of human rights?

• Readings:

- Dunne, T. & M. Hanson (2013): "Human Rights in International Relations," chapter 3 in Goodhart, pps. 44-59.
- o O'Connell, G. (2016): "Geopolitics and Human Rights: Ireland's gay Marriage Vote and the Mediterranean refugee Crisis," in Colon, Gristwood & Woolf, eds, Human Rights in Action: Power, Politics, and Practices, pps. 86-95.
- Strau, S. (2013): "Genocide and Human Rights," Chapter 20 in Goodhart, pps. 351-369.

Unit 5

Islamic Perspectives on Human Rights

 A guest speaker from a leading Shi'a Muslim organisation will offer a presentation on Islamic ideas and historic development on human rights and some right issues in the Islamic world today.

Reading:

• Human Rights and Religion; Fazaeli, R, chapter 10, pp 163 in Goodhart.

Unit 6

Part 1: Migration, Asylum, & British Rights

 Human rights organizations and activist groups in London; working in the field of human rights. The future of human rights in the UK: Brexit, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and the Human Rights Act. How will Brexit impact migrant rights and asylum-seeking?

• Readings:

- o Bertone A, chapter 16 in Goodhart, pp 273-291.
- Loescher G, chapter 18 in Goodhart, pp 311-333.

Minority and Indigenous Trends 2018:
 https://minorityrights.org/publications/minority-and-indigenous-trends-2018-2/

• Assignment:

Written field study report due

Part 2: Interactive Learning—The Universal Periodic Review

• Students will engage in role-play exercises playing the parts of representatives of various governments at the United Nations. One group will take the role of the United Kingdom as a UN member-state facing criticism of its human rights record, a second group will take the role of states and NGOs who will critique the selected state's adherence to the human rights laid out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and as overseen through the mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review, and the third group will take the role of friendly states and organizations that will highlight the positive aspects of the UK's human rights record.

• Readings:

- Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010): "How Fair is Britain?" overview, YouTube clip:
 - https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/how-fair-britain/video-overview
- Gearty, C. (20160: "Introduction: Why the Human Rights Act Matters," in his On Fantasy Island: Britain, Europe, and Human Rights, pps 3-14, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Jesionka, N. (n.d.): "The first step to working in human rights," The Muse.com, online, available at: https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-first-step-to-working-in-human-rights

Theme 3: Human Rights in British Politics

Study Task: Names from British Human Rights

Each student will be given the name and brief details of an episode in British history that has featured a theatre of contest for the advance of rights or that has witnessed the abuse of rights. Over the week ahead, they should research this event and its significance.

Unit 7

Human Rights—Relative or Universal?

• Lecture and class debate: human rights and cultural differences; questioning the legitimacy of human rights claims; universalist versus relativist views of human rights.

• Readings:

 Donnelly, J. (2007): "The relative universality of human rights," Human Rights Quarterly, 29(2), 281-306. Retrieved from

- https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.oswego.edu/docview/204636302?accountid=13025
- Goodhart, M. (2008): "Neither relative nor universal: A response to Donnelly,"
 Human Rights Quarterly, 30(1), 183-193. Retrieved from
 https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.oswego.edu/docview/204637059?accountid=13025

• Assignment:

• Research paper: draft paper and final paper deadlines set

Unit 8

Freedom of Religion or Belief—A Neglected Right?

 Field study visit to UK Parliament to meet All Party Group on International Religious Freedom

Readings:

- Smith, R. K. M. (2013): "Human Rights in International Law," pps 60-76, Chapter 4 in Goodhart.
- "An Orphaned Right: Article 18":
 https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/media/Article-18-An-Orphaned-Right.pdf

Unit 9

Gender Equality & Women's Rights as Human Rights

• A guest speaker will address the issue of women's rights, and ongoing efforts to end violence against women and sexual violence against women.

• Readings:

- C. Keating and C. Burack, "Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Human Rights," Chapter 11 in Goodhart, pps. 198-215.
- B Ackersley "Feminist and Activist Approaches to Human Rights," Chapter 2 in Goodhart, pps 28-44.

Theme 4: Human Rights in Action: Case Studies in British Society

Unit 10

Human Rights in the UK: Terror, Security, & Surveillance

• The balance between the rights of individuals, the rights of communities, and the security needs of a society remains a critical question in many countries in an age of renewed threats from terrorism and extremism in various forms. This session will explore the UK response to terrorism and the legal and moral questions raised in the human rights discourse to which this leads. This session will pay particular attention to prevention of terrorism and controversy over the UK "Prevent" program; detention without trial and the oral quandary of the "ticking bomb" hypothesis; and surveillance and the role of technology in security policy.

• Readings:

- o Schultz, W.F (2013): "Torture," chapter 15 in Goodhart, pps. 255-272.
- Liberty Detention Without Charge:
 <u>https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/human-rights/countering-terrorism/detention-without-charge</u>
- Benotman N, (2018) "What's Wrong With Current Counter-Terrorism Efforts,"
 Briefing Note, Quilliam Foundation, 2018.
- o Gearty C, (2006): "Can Human Rights Survive?" Hamlyn Lecture.

Unit 11

Whose Rights Exactly? Questions of Gender, Sexuality, & Patriarchy

• Readings:

- Ackerly, B. (2013): "Feminist and Activist Approaches to Human Rights,"
 Chapter 2 in Goodhart, pps. 28-43.
- Chandler, D. (2013): "Contemporary Critiques of Human Rights," Chapter 7 in Goodhart, pps. 110-126.

Unit 12

Monitoring and Enforcement: Naming & Shaming or Peer Review & Capacity Building

- Reading:
- Freedman R, Houghton R, "Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Politicisation of the Human Rights Council," Human Rights Law Review, Oxford, 2017: https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/69082/1/69082%20Freedman%20and%20Houghton_Two%20Steps%20Human%20Rights%20Council%20REVISED%206%20Feb%202017.pdf

Unit 13

End-of-Semester Debate

- The final class will be dedicated to the end of semester debate, the final examination for the course.
- After the debate, students will informally share their experiences from over the semester and niche areas of human rights knowledge that they have acquired, offering reflections on student experiences; the future of human rights, and human rights as a career.
- Assignment:
 - Final paper due

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.