

**University of Waterloo  
Department of Political Science  
Winter 2009**

**PSCI 658  
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD**

T 9:30 - 12:20  
HH 123

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**Description**

The course is a study of international and local responses to human rights abuses in the contexts of economic globalization and proliferation of armed violence. It examines major debates on international human rights. It also discusses specific categories of human rights and explores human rights situations in particular countries. The focus is on the indivisibility of human rights and the growth of transnational civic activism.

The course starts with an analysis of the origins of human rights norms, obstacles to their implementation, controversies surrounding the principle of universalism, and the rise of a global economic justice movement. We then proceed to the discussion of fundamental social and economic rights. Topics include: labor and community rights, the rights to food and health, children's and women's rights. The human rights agenda in conflict and post-conflict situations (the rights of refugees, R2P, transitional justice) is also addressed. The course ends with a brief discussion of ethical dilemmas confronted by rights advocates.

**Format**

Seminar

**Requirements**

*Oral presentations and participation in class discussion*

Each student is expected to do two short oral presentations. The presentations should be based on required or additional readings and on independent research. Each presenter should prepare a handout (1 or 2 pages, single-spaced) with the statement of central argument, summary of major points, one or two questions for discussion, and references to the sources. All students are expected to do the required readings and participate in the class discussion.

*Research proposal and research paper*

Students are required to write a research proposal and a research paper on one of the topics covered in the course (or related topic). The research proposals (5 pages double-spaced) are due February 10, in class. A proposal should include: (i) brief outline of the research problem with references to the literature on the subject, (ii) your own research questions and tentative central argument; (iii) proposed structure of the paper; and (iv) preliminary bibliography. Research papers (15 pages, double-spaced, font size 12pt) are due March 31, in class. Late papers (submitted without a medical certificate) and papers that substantially exceed the size limit will be penalized. Penalty for late papers: 3 points per day.

### **Evaluation**

Oral presentations	15%
Participation in class discussion	15%
Research proposal	10%
Research paper	60%

### **Recommended texts**

Philip Alston and Mary Robinson (eds.), *Human Rights and Development: Towards Mutual Reinforcement*, Oxford University Press, 2005.

George Andreopoulos et al. (eds.), *Non-State Actors in the Human Rights Universe*, Kumarian Press, 2006.

David Forthysse, *Human Rights in International Relations*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Shale Horowitz and Albert Schnabel (eds.), *Human Rights and Societies in Transition*, UN University Press, 2004,

### **Topics and readings**

#### **Jan. 6. Introduction**

#### **Jan. 13. Human rights - norms and realities**

Human rights norms - origins and evolution; implementation problems; universality vs. cultural relativism; contextualization and inter-cultural dialogue.

#### Required readings

- \* Fortsythe, ch.2 (Establishing Human Rights Standards) and ch.3 (Global Application of Human Rights Norms).
- \* Horowitz and Schnabel, ch.3 (Universalism and Cultural Relativism: Lessons for Transitional States).

#### Additional readings

- \* J. Oloka-Onyango, "Who's Watching 'Big Brother'? Globalization and the Protection of Cultural Rights in Present Day Africa," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27 (4), 2005.
- \* P. Zeleza and P. McConaughay (eds.), *Human Rights, The Rule of Law, and Development in Africa*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, ch.1

(Restraining Universalism: Africanist Perspectives on Cultural Relativism in the Human Rights Discourse).

### **Jan. 20. Transnational civic activism and global economic justice**

NGOs - service providers or civic activists? transnational movement for economic justice; globalization and global poverty.

#### Required readings

- \* Forthyse, ch.7 (Non-governmental Organizations and Human Rights).
- \* S. Batliwala and L.D.Brown (eds.), *Transnational Civil Society: An Introduction*, Kumarian Press, 2006, ch.7 (Dot-Causes and Protest: Transnational Economic Justice Movement).
- \* J. Mandle, *Global Justice*, Polity, 2006, ch.7 (Poverty and Development) and ch.8 (Globalization).

#### Additional readings

- \* P. Gready (ed.), *Fighting for Human Rights*, Routledge, 2004, ch.2 (Debt Cancellation and Civil Society: a Case Study of Jubilee 2000).
- \* T. Pogge (ed.), *Freedom From Poverty as a Human Right: Who Owes What to the Very Poor?* Oxford University Press, 2007.

### **Jan. 27. Community and labor rights**

MNCs, labor standards, conflicts over natural resources - dilemmas for governments and human rights activists.

#### Required readings

- \*Andreopoulos, ch.4 (Realizing Rights in the Work Place), ch. 5 (Multinational Corporations as Non-State Actors in the Human Rights Arena), and ch. 6 (Royal Dutch Shell: How Deep the Changes?)

#### Additional readings

- \* O. De Schutter, *Transnational Corporations and Human Rights*, Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2006.
- \* D. Arnold and L. Hartman, "Worker Rights and Low Wage Industrialization: How to Avoid Sweatshops," *Human Rights Quarterly*, v. 28, 2006, 676-700.
- \* Denis Goulet, "Global Governance, Dam Conflicts, and Participation," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27 (3), 2005.

### **Feb. 3. The right to food**

Food supplies and entitlements; the criminalization of famine; domestic accountability and international responsibilities.

#### Required readings

- \* S. Devereux (ed.), *The New Famines: Why Famines Persist in an Era of Globalization*, Routledge, 2007, ch. 3 (The Criminalization of Mass Starvations: From Natural Disaster

to Crime against Humanity), and ch.11 (Increased Rural Vulnerability in the Era of Globalization: Conflict and Famine in Sudan during the 1990s).

\* Alston and Robinson, ch.4 (Democracy and the Right to Food).

Additional readings:

\* B. Guha-Khasnobis et. al (eds.), *Food Insecurity, Vulnerability and Human Rights Failure*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, part III (Hunger as Entitlement Failure: The Right to Food).

\* J. Clapp, "WTO Agricultural Trade Battles and Food Aid," *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (8), 2004.

### **Feb. 10. The right to health. *Research proposals due.***

International campaign against AIDS - Southern governments and external donors; WTO and access to essential drugs.

Required readings

\* Amy Patterson, *The Politics of AIDS in Africa*, Lynne Rienner, 2006, ch.2 (The African State and the AIDS Pandemic) and ch.5 (External Donors and Political Commitments);

\* Andreopoulos, *Non-State Actors*, ch.10 (Affordable and Accessible Drugs for Developing Countries: Recent Developments).

Additional readings

\* Alston and Robinson, *Human Rights and Development*, ch.5, Social Rights and Economics: Claims to Health Care and Education in Developing Countries.

\* S. Joseph, "Pharmaceutical Corporations and Access to Drugs: The 'Fourth Wave' of Corporate Human Rights Scrutiny," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 25 (2), 2003.

### **Feb. 17 - no classes, reading week**

### **Feb 24. The rights of the child**

Education, poverty, and child labor; alternative concepts of childhood; children, drug trade, and armed violence.

Required readings

\* Alston and Robinson, ch.9 (Child Labour, Education, and Children's Rights).

\* K. Bentley, "Can There Be Any Universal Children's Rights?" *International Journal of Human Rights*, 9 (1) 2005.

\* L. Dowdney, *Children of the Drug Trade: A Case Study of Children in Organized Violence in Rio De Janeiro*, 7 Letras, 2003 (online); part 4, Organized Armed Violence: Proposed Definitions and International Perspectives; and part 5, Local Solutions: Dealing with the Problem of Drug Trafficking in Rio de Janeiro.

Additional readings

\* *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, 2001, no.575 (special issue on the rights of the child).

\* Dowdney, *Children of the Drug Violence*, the rest of the book.

### **March 3. Women's rights**

Violence against women and female children; land rights - reconciling international and local norms?

#### Required readings

- \* K. Amirthalingam, "Women's Rights, International Norms, and Domestic Violence: Asian Perspectives," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27 (2), 2005.
- \* B. Billet, *Cultural Relativism in the Face of the West: The Plight of Women and Children*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007 4 (The Case of Prostituted Female Children).
- \* A. A. An'Na'im (ed.), *Cultural Transformation and Human Rights in Africa*, Zed, 2002, ch.4 (Mediating Culture and Human Rights in Favor of Land Rights in Africa) and ch.5 (Are Local Norms and Practices Fences of Pathways?).

#### Additional Readings

- \* Billet, the rest of the book.
- \* Alston and Robinson, ch.7 (The Development Impact of Gender Equality in Land Rights) and ch.8 (Women's Property Rights Violations in Kenya).

### **March 10. The rights of refugees**

Refugees crisis - from asylum to containment and repatriation? state security vs. human security perspectives on forced displacement.

#### Required readings

- \* T. Dunne and N. Wheeler (eds.), *Human Rights and Global Politics*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, ch.9 (Refugees: A Global Human Rights Crisis).
- \* E. Newman and J. van Selm (eds.), *Refugees and Forced Displacement: International Security*, UN University Press, 2003, ch.2 (Refugees as Grounds for International Action)
- \* S. Schmeidl, "(Human) Security Dilemmas: Long-term Implications of the Afghan Refugee Crisis," *Third World Quarterly*, v.23, no.1, 2002.

#### Additional readings

- \* UNHCR, *The State of the World's Refugees 2006* (online).
- \* Newman and van Selm, ch. 3 (Human Security and the Protection of Refugees) and ch. 10 (Post-Conflict Peace-Building and the Return of Refugees).

### **March 17. Human rights and R2P**

Towards a global enforcement of human rights? from humanitarian intervention to responsibility to protect; civil society perspectives.

#### Required readings

- \* A. Brysk, *Globalization and Human Rights*, Berkeley; University of California Press, 2002, ch.10 (Humanitarian Intervention: Global Enforcement of Human Rights?).
- \* Horowitz and Schnabel, ch. 7 (International Efforts to Protect Human Rights in Societies: Rights, Duty, or Politics?).
- \* *Civil Society Perspectives on the Responsibility to Protect*, 2003 (online).

#### Additional readings

- \* E. Heinze, "Humanitarian Intervention: Morality and International Law on Intolerable Violations of Human Rights," *International Journal of Human Rights*, 8 (4), 2004.
- \* J. Conlon, "Sovereignty vs. Human Rights or Sovereignty and Human Rights?" *Race and Class*, 46 (1), 2004.

## March 24. Transitional justice

TRCs - in search of truth and reconciliation; regional tribunals - between peace and retribution; ICC and national sovereignty.

### Required readings

\* P. Hayner, *Unspeakable Truths: Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, Routledge, 2001, chs.2-4 (Confronting Past Crimes, Why a Truth Commission? Five Illustrative Truth Commissions), chs.7-8 (Truth versus Justice; Naming the Guilty); and ch.10 (An Eye to the Future).

\* Forthyse, ch.4 (Transitional Justice: Criminal Courts and alternatives).

### Additional readings

\* T. Kelsall, "Truth, Lies, Ritual: Preliminary Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone," *Human Rights Quarterly* 27, 2005, 361-91.

\* Horowitz and Schnabel, ch.6 (The Consequences of the War Tribunals and an International Criminal Court for Human Rights in Transition).

## March 31. Conclusion. *Papers due.*

### Required readings

\* D. Bell and J. Carens, "The Ethical Dilemmas of International Human Rights and Humanitarian NGOs: Reflection on a Dialogue Between Practitioners and Theorists," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 26 (2), 2004.

## NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENCES

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>