

## **Introduction to Human Rights**

187:080 Winter-Spring 2008, 3 s.h.

Andrew R. Willard

**Time & Location: 4:00-6:30 T 22 SH**

### INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS: UNDERSTANDING AND SHAPING LAW

The international human rights program is described, analyzed, and evaluated in this course. The relationship between human rights and international law is given special emphasis due to international law's capacity to shape shared expectations among peoples from around the planet of what constitutes appropriate and permissible conduct. These shared expectations also bear importantly on the quality of life worldwide.

The primary goals of the course are for students to learn how to clarify or bring into better focus the features and dynamics of the international human rights program, and to develop their ability to evaluate and offer suggestions for improving the program and/or specific facets of it. To address the latter task, students will explore ways in which international law can be modulated to help bring about more desirable futures.

In addition to providing an overview of how human rights are established, maintained, and changed, we will examine and analyze a range of particular topics, including issues that pertain to self-determination, equality, development, peace, national security and individual freedom, humanitarian intervention, and so on. Students are welcomed to raise subjects of interest that are not included in the course syllabus.

Students are encouraged to contact me or the course teaching assistants, Sam Connet and Jennifer Lickteig, if they have questions, comments, or issues they would like to discuss. Office hours are 3:00 to 4:15 on Wednesday and Thursday, or by appointment. Office hours will be held in Room 413, Blank Honors Center. I also can be reached by phone at 335-8333 (with voice mail) or by email at [andrew-willard@uiowa.edu](mailto:andrew-willard@uiowa.edu). Email addresses for Jennifer and Sam are [jennifer-lickteig@uiowa.edu](mailto:jennifer-lickteig@uiowa.edu) and [samuel-connet@uiowa.edu](mailto:samuel-connet@uiowa.edu).

## **Course Policies**

### **Evaluation of Student Performance/Course Requirements**

Students are expected to read all assignments, and should be prepared to discuss them during class sessions. Participation in class discussion is not simply desirable—it is vital. Hence, your grade will be shaped, in part, by how you engage in class discussion. Regardless of how you choose to participate, you have a responsibility to help create a classroom environment where all may learn. At the most basic level, this means you will respect the other members of the class and the instructors, and treat them with the courtesy you expect to receive in return.

Students will take two exams—a 75 minute exam that covers the first part of the course, and a comprehensive, 2-hour final exam. In addition, each student—with a colleague or two—will make a class presentation. To help prepare their presentation, students are required to meet at least once with a course teaching assistant. An optional writing assignment must be completed by students seeking an “A” in the course. Completing this assignment can only help to improve course grades. Course grades will be determined by the following percentages: class participation, including the class presentation, 25%; midterm exam, 30%; and final exam, 45%. At the first class session, I will provide more details about grading, class presentations, and the optional writing assignment.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance at every class session is expected because the classroom discussion and experience generates important knowledge and helps to develop valuable skills. If you must miss a class, please borrow notes from the missed class from a classmate.

### **Policy on Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements, please let me know so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Please contact me after class or during office hours.

### **Plagiarism and Cheating Policy**

You are expected to be honest and honorable in your fulfillment of assignments and in test-taking situations. Plagiarism and cheating are serious forms of academic misconduct. Examples of them are given in the Student Academic Handbook. [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic\\_handbook/ix.shtml](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml). If you have *any* questions about proper use and citation of scholarly texts, come to office hours and we will discuss the matter. Cheating or plagiarism can lead to a reduced grade for the course.

## **Complaint Policy**

If you have a complaint with the course, please bring the matter to my attention so that we can work together to resolve the problem. If you remain unsatisfied, you may contact Downing Thomas, Associate Dean for International Programs at 335-1438. If your concerns still have not been resolved, you may submit a written complaint to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, 120 Schaeffer Hall (335-2633).

## **Assigned Reading**

The course text is *Human Rights in the World Community: Issues and Action*, edited by Richard Pierre Claude and Burns H. Weston. The text costs \$34.95 (before taxes) and is available at Prairie Lights Books at 15 South Dubuque Street. Students are expected to read the entire book, which includes the “Questions for Reflection and Discussion” section that follows each chapter of the text.

## **Course Schedule**

### Week 1: January 22

No assigned reading. However, in addition to providing a course overview, discussion will summarize material from the following chapters. These chapters should be read for the class on January 29 along with the reading assigned specifically for that class session.

Preface, by Richard Pierre Claude and Burns H. Weston

Chapter 1 Overview: “International Human Rights: Issues Overview,”  
by Claude and Weston

### Week 2: January 29

Section 1: “Human Rights: Concept and Content,” by Burns H. Weston

Section 2: “Capabilities, Human Rights, and the Universal Declaration,”  
by Martha C. Nussbaum

Week 3: February 5

Section 3: “The Universality of Human Rights in a Multicultural World,”  
by Burns H. Weston

Section 4: “The Second Great Transformation: Human Rights Leap-Frogging in the Era  
of Globalization,” by Rhoda Howard-Hassmann

Week 4: February 12

Meet with Stefanie Bowers, the Iowa City Human Rights Coordinator

Chapter 2 Overview: “Basic Decencies and Participatory Rights,” by Claude and Weston

Week 5: February 19

Section 6: “Torture and the Future,” by Lisa Hajjar

Section 7: “Civil Rights,” by Richard B. Lillich (with Section 8: “Human Rights and  
Crime,” by Rachel Neild)

Week 6: February 26

Section 9: “First Principles of Racial Equality,” by Paul Gordon Lauren

Section 10: “Protecting the Rights of Women,” by Eva Brems

Week 7: March 4

Section 11: “The International and National Protection of Refugees,” by Maryellen  
Fullerton

Chapter 3 Overview: “Basic Human Needs as Security Rights,” by Claude and Weston

Section 13: “Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights as Human Rights,” by Asbjorn Eide

Section 14: “Worker Rights are Human Rights,” by Lee Swepston

Week 8: March 11: **Midterm Exam**

Week 9: March 25

Section 15: “Food is a Human Right,” by George Kent, with a possible guest presenter

Section 16: “The Right to Health: Key Objectives, Themes, and Interventions,”  
by Paul Hunt, with a possible guest presenter

Section 17: “The Right to Education and Human Rights Education,”  
by Richard Pierre Claude

Week 10: April 1

Chapter 4 Overview: “Community or Solidarity Rights—Groups Rights,”  
by Claude and Weston

Section 19: “The Right to Self-Determination in the Twenty-First Century,” by Hurst  
Hannum AND Section 12: “Indigenous Peoples’ Rights to Self-Determination and  
Territoriality,” by Maivan Clech Lam

Section 20: “The Right to Development,” by Arjun Sengupta

**Writing assignment distributed**

Week 11: April 8

Chapter 5 Overview: “International Human Rights: Action Overviews,”  
by Claude & Weston

Section 23: “Human Rights: Prescription and Enforcement,” by Burns H. Weston

Section 24: “How is International Human Rights Law Enforced?” by Harold Hongju  
Koh AND Section 25: “Making the Human Rights Treaties Work,” by Anne F. Bayefsky

Week 12: April 15

Chapter 6 Overview: “International Approaches to Human Rights Implementation,”  
by Claude and Weston

Section 26: “The United Nations and Human Rights,” by Stephen P. Marks

Section 27: “The Promise of Regional Human Rights Systems,” by Dinah Shelton

Week 13: April 22

Chapter 7 Overview: “National Approaches to Human Rights Implementation,”  
by Claude and Weston AND Section 28: “No Exceptions? The United States Pick-and  
Choose Approach to Human Rights,” by Michael Ignatieff

Section 29: “Civil Remedies for Gross Human Rights Violations,” by Michael Ratner

Section 30: “Humanitarian Intervention: Imperatives and Problematics,” by Richard Falk  
AND Section 5: “Genocide,” by Diane Orentlicher

**Writing assignment is due**

Week 14: April 29

Chapter 8 Overview: “Private Sector Approaches to Human Rights Implementation,”  
by Claude and Weston

Section 31: “What Do Human Rights NGOs Do?” by Richard Pierre Claude

Section 32: “Multinational Corporations and the Ethics of Global Responsibility,”  
by Mahmood Monshipouri, Claude E. Welch, Jr., and Evan T. Kennedy

Week 15: May 5

Section 22: “Peace: A ‘Sacred Right’,” by Douglas Roche

Section 33: “The Human Right to Revolution,” by Jordan J. Paust

Postscript: “Human Rights and Humane Governance,” by Claude and Weston

**Discussion:** Human Rights Work and Career Opportunities

Week 16: May 11-14: **Final Exam**