

IR489/POLS 589 – Human Rights in World Affairs

Spring 2021

Oya Yeğen oya.yegen@sabanciuniv.edu	Office hours: T/R 16.00- 17.00
Class schedule: Wed: 08.40-09.30 Thurs: 10.40-12.30 G006 https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/91273513289	https://calendly.com/oyayegen/officehours

Course Description: The idea of human rights has permeated many aspects of domestic and international politics but human rights violations and abuses are frequent and flagrant. This course introduces students to the foundations of human rights theory and practice and examines the role of human rights in world affairs. The course analyzes what constitutes as human rights and offers a critical analysis of international human rights norms and its enforcement by focusing on major international institutions and the documents that govern the human rights regime as well as the role of states, individuals, NGOs and other human rights networks. We begin with an overview of the conceptual and historical origin of human rights, followed by a discussion on the challenges to human rights: sovereignty and cultural relativism. We review the role of international law in the emergence, development and enforcement of human rights. Supported by discussion of real-world cases, both historical and contemporary, the course surveys the role of the state as promoter and violator of human rights, the role of human rights in foreign policy and critically reviews application of human rights by exploring the judicial and political enforcement mechanisms, the dilemma of humanitarian intervention, and the effectiveness of different forms of human rights advocacy. We conclude the course by exploring the future of human rights.

A typical lecture begins with the presentation of the topic and is followed by class discussion on readings and relevant discussion questions and requires the active participation of students.

Course Objectives:

- 1) to explore the development of the concept of human rights and various critiques of this concept.
- 2) to define and identify human rights and to survey their implementation in world affairs.
- 3) to expose students to a variety of human rights issues in contemporary world with class discussions.
- 4) to understand the strengths and weaknesses of efforts to promote and protect human rights by individuals, non-governmental organizations, states, and international organizations and other mechanisms.
- 5) to explore different human rights problems in different countries by focusing on case studies.
- 6) to apply theoretical knowledge and develop writing and communication skills.

Course Requirements:

Throughout the course, the main expectation is that the students come to class ready to discuss the readings and comment on the lecture.

Readings are available on SuCourse +. Those marked by **(G)** are required readings for graduate students but undergraduates should familiarize themselves with their main arguments.

Additionally, students are expected to follow the current developments relevant to human rights, as we will devote the first 15 minutes of each class to discuss what is happening and how it relates to general theoretical debates.

I encourage you to keep yourself updated about current developments by following reputable newspapers such as those of the New York Times, The Guardian, Washington Post or news agencies such as BBC News, CNN, Al-Jazeera, Reuters and etc. You may keep yourself updated by following related websites and blogs such HRW (<https://action.hrw.org/>), AI (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/>), LSE Human Rights (<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/humanrights/>) and David Bosco's blog the Multilateralist (<https://davidbosco.substack.com/archive>). I encourage you to share what you have read, with your comments on Sucourse+.

Additional short readings (such as newspaper articles and blog posts) may be assigned over the course of the semester.

Undergraduates	Graduates
20 % attendance and participation	20% attendance and participation
20% midterm exam	20% response papers
30% reflection papers	30% book review
30% final exam	30% take home exams

Course Assessment:

Midterm Exam (20%): There will be an in-class midterm exam. The midterm will include identification and short essay questions. For graduate students, the format will be take-home (15%).

Attendance and Participation (20%): You will be evaluated on contributions to class discussions, both in terms of quality and quantity. Sucourse + will also provide a venue for participation through discussion forums. There will be an ungraded assignment (human rights bio due Week 2) that will still count towards your participation. See course policies for further details.

Reflection papers (15%): Undergraduate students will be writing two reflections on a current event that falls within the broader topic of human rights. Please feel free to consult me before deciding on your topic.

Response papers (10%): Graduate students will be writing two written responses of approximately 2 -3 pages in reaction to a week's readings material. The first response paper can be for any week between 4 and 8 and second one for any week between 9 and 13.

Book review (30%): Graduate students are required to write a book review for one of the books listed below. Further instructions will be posted on Sucourse+

Final Exam (30%): There will be an essay type in-class final exam. The date is to be announced Student Resources. Students who fail to show up for the exams indicated in the Syllabus without a valid excuse and not taking the make-up examinations for such exams will receive N/A as their final grade. For graduate students, the format will be take-home (15%).

Grading Scale:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89	B- 80-82	C 73-76	D+ 63-69	F <50
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C+ 77-79	C- 70-72	D 50-62	

Graduate Students Book Review (due April 26, 2021)

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Stephen Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton, 1999).

Beth Simmons, *Mobilizing for Human Rights*, International Law in Domestic Politics (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Emilie Hafner-Burton, *Making Human Rights a Reality* (Princeton University Press, 2013).

Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan. *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* New York: NY (Columbia University Press, 2011)

Courtenay R. Conrad and Emily Hencken Ritter, *Contentious Compliance: Dissent and Repression under International Human Rights Law* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

You may choose to review other academic books on human rights but please consult beforehand.

Course Policies:

For the Fall 2021 semester, the teaching mode will be the teaching mode will be in-class & online (Hybrid). These will be recorded and shared with all students through SuCourse+.

Attendance is mandatory and unless you have a valid excuse, absences will result in point deductions from participation grade. Having said that, if you have a foreseeable valid reason

for absences, you should tell me at the beginning of the semester so that we can find alternative ways to make up for it.

If you attend the class online, please do so with your SU email account and with camera (as possible), be respectful of your fellow classmates during class discussions and be mindful of Zoom etiquette, meaning mute yourself if you are not speaking and do not interrupt one another when speaking.

Electronic recordings of course materials are for personal use only, do not share them outside of the class.

If you feel like you are not able to participate as much as you like during Zoom sessions, you can make up by responding to discussion questions posted for that week or by posing your own questions in the course forum.

There is not going to be an extension unless a student has a written official documentation of an emergency (i.e. medical notice from a doctor documenting your illness). Please let me know of any excused absences.

It is imperative that students follow the standards and provisions set by Sabancı University. Students' cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences will not be tolerated. Cases of academic misconduct will be reported. Cheating and plagiarism will also result in failing that exam/assessment. If you have any questions about what constitutes an academic offense, you can ask the instructor or TA in advance.

I will keep you updated about the course, including additional short readings through e-mail and communicate any changes to the syllabus or deadlines through Sucourse+ announcement board.

Please always feel free to e-mail me at any time or talk to me during class breaks or after class. If you have a matter that requires extended discussion, please see me during my office hours or arrange to meet me at a convenient time. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours.

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Week 1 (Sept 29 & 30) What are human rights?

Samuel Moyn, 2018. How the Human Rights Movement Failed, April 23, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/23/opinion/human-rights-movement-failed.html>

Todd Landman, 2002. "Comparative Politics and Human Rights", *Human Rights Quarterly* 24 , 890–923.

Todd Landman, 2004. "Measuring Human Rights: Principle, Practice, and Policy" *Human Rights Quarterly*, Volume 26, Number 4, pp. 906-931. **(G)**

Recommended: Emilie M Hafner-Burton, “A social science of human rights”, *Journal of Peace Research* 2014, Vol. 51(2) 273–286.

2. Week 2 (Oct 6 & 8) Concept and Historical Origin

Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights*, Routledge, 2017, Ch. 2.

Paul Gordon Lauren, *The Evolution of International Human Rights*, 3rd ed. Ch. 1 and 2.

Tim Dunne. & M. Hanson. 2013. “Human Rights in International Relations”, chapter 4 in Goodhart, M., ed. *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Samuel Moyn, 2010. *The last Utopia? Human Rights in History*. Cambridge: HUP. Ch. 2

Listen: Entitled podcast, episode 1 “What's The Matter With Rights” available here <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/1-whats-the-matter-with-rights/id1577996421?i=1000529835007>

3. Week 3 (Oct 13 & 14): A Contested Concept- Universal Human Rights?

Jack Donnelly, 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed, Cornell University Press Ch. 6 and 7.

Ethan Watters, 2013. “We Aren’t the World, Pacific Standard” Feb. 23, available at <https://psmag.com/social-justice/joe-henrich-weird-ultimatum-game-shaking-up-psychology-economics-53135>

Altan-Olcay, Özlem and Bertil Emrah Oder. 2021. “Why Turkey’s withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention is a global problem”, June 2, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/why-turkeys-withdrawal-from-the-istanbul-convention-is-a-global-problem/>

4. Week 4 (Oct 20 & 21) International Law and Human Rights

Eric Posner. 2014. “The Case Against Human Rights”, *the Guardian*, December 4, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2014/dec/04/-sp-case-against-human-rights>

Stephen Krasner, 1999. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*, Princeton, Ch. 4.

Emilie Hafner-Burton, 2013. *Making Human Rights a Reality*, Ch. 4 and 5.

Beth Simmons, 2009. *Mobilizing for Human Rights*, *International Law in Domestic Politics*, Ch. 3 and 4. **(G)**

Wade M. Cole. 2012. “Human Rights as Myth and Ceremony? Reevaluating the Effectiveness of Human Rights Treaties, 1981–2007” *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 117, No. 4 (January), pp. 1131-1171 **(G)**

5. Week 5 (Oct 27) Domestic Politics of Human Rights

Jean Grugel, Enrique Peruzzotti, 2012. "The Domestic Politics of International Human Rights Law: Implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Ecuador, Chile, and Argentina," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Volume 34, Number 1, February, pp. 178-19

Emilia J. Powell and Jeffrey K. Staton, 2009. "Domestic Judicial Institutions and Human Rights Treaty Violation," *International Studies Quarterly*, 53(1): 149–174. **(G)**

Bueno de Mesquita, B, GW Downs, A Smith & FM Cherif, 2005. "Thinking Inside the Box: A Closer Look at Democracy and Human Rights," *International Studies Quarterly*, 49(3): 439-458. **(G)**

Vreeland, James R. "Political Institutions and Human Rights: Why Dictatorships Enter into the United Nations Convention Against Torture." *International Organization*, 62, 01 (January 2008): 65- 101. **(G)**

6. Week 6 (Nov 3 & 4) States as Human Rights abusers

Emilie Hafner-Burton, 2013. *Making Human Rights a Reality*, Princeton University Press, pp. 19-41.

Emily Hencken Ritter and Christian Davenport, 2021. "An Illustrated Glossary of Political Violence" Jan. 18. <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2021/01/18/an-illustrated-glossary-of-political-violence/>

Christian Davenport and Cyanne Loyle. 2012. "The States Must Be Crazy: Dissent and the Puzzle of Repressive Persistence," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence (IJCV)* Vol. 6 (1) pp. 75 – 95.

Sabine Carey. 2010. "The Use of Repression as a Response to Domestic Dissent." *Political Studies* 58: 167-186. **(G)**

7. Week 7 (Nov 10 & 11) Non-state actors as Human Rights Violators

Celso Perez and Muneer I. Ahmad. "Why the UN Should Take Responsibility for Haiti's Cholera Outbreak", *the Atlantic*, August 16, 2013 available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/08/why-the-un-should-take-responsibility-for-haitis-cholera-outbreak/278762/>

Leigh A. Payne and Gabriel Pereira, "Corporate Complicity in International Human Rights Violations," *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*. 2016. 12:63–84.

Midterm on November 11.

Take-home exam for graduate students.

8. Week 8 (Nov 17 & 18) Judicial enforcement of Human Rights

David Bosco “Why is the International Criminal Court picking only on Africa?” *The Washington Post*, May 29, 2013 available at https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/why-is-the-international-criminal-court-picking-only-on-africa/2013/03/29/cb9bf5da-96f7-11e2-97cd-3d8c1afe4f0f_story.html?utm_term=.9cd428380c59

Kathryn Sikkink and Kim, Hun Joon, “The Justice Cascade: The Origins and Effectiveness of Prosecutions of Human Rights Violations” (November 2013). *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, Vol. 9, pp. 269-285, 2013.

Mattia Pinto. 2020. “Historical Trends of Human Rights Gone Criminal,” *Human Rights Quarterly*, Volume 42, Number 4, November 2020, pp. 729-761.

Beth Simmons & Allison Danner (2010) “Credible Commitments and the International Criminal Court,” *International Organization*, Vol. 64, No. 2 (Spring 2010), pp. 225-256. **(G)**

9. Week 9 (Nov 24 & 25) Political Enforcement and Economic Sanctions

Emilie Hafner-Burton, *Making Human Rights a Reality* (Princeton University Press, 2013), Ch. 8.

Alison Brysk. 2005. “Global Good Samaritans? Human Rights Foreign Policy in Costa Rica” *Global Governance*, Oct.–Dec. Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 445-466

Dursun Peksen, “Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights” *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2009, pp. 59–77.

Reed M. Wood, “A Hand upon the Throat of the Nation”: Economic Sanctions and State Repression, 1976–2001” *International Studies Quarterly*, Volume 52, Issue 3, 1 September 2008, pp. 489–513. **(G)**

Recommended: Michelle Giacobbe Allendoerfer. 2017. “Who cares about human rights? Public opinion about human rights foreign policy”, *Journal of Human Rights*, 16:4, 428-451. **(G)**

10. Week 10 (Dec 1 & 2) Humanitarian Intervention

Alan J. Kuperman, “The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans,” *International Studies Quarterly* (2008) 52, 49–80.

Benjamin A Valentino, “The True Costs of Humanitarian Intervention: The Hard Truth About a Noble Notion,” *Foreign Affairs*; New York Vol. 90, Issue 6, (Nov/Dec 2011): 60-73.

Dursun Peksen 2012. “Does Foreign Military Intervention Help Human Rights?” *Political Research Quarterly* 65 (3):558–71. **(G)**

11. Week 11 (Dec 8 & 9) Human rights promotion through other means

James H. Lebovic and Erik Voeten. 2006. “The Politics of Shame: The Condemnation of Country Human Rights Practices in the UNCHR” *International Studies Quarterly*, 50, 861–888. **(Skim)**

Jack Snyder. 2019. "Backlash against human rights shaming: emotions in groups", *International Theory*.

Emilie Hafner-Burton, "Trading Human Rights: How Preferential Trade Agreements Influence Government Repression," *International Organization* (2005), 59: 593- 629. (G)

Emilie Hafner-Burton, "Sticks and Stones: Naming and Shaming the Human Rights Enforcement Problem," *International Organization* Vol. 62 (Fall 2008), pp. 689-716. (G)

Amanda M. Murdie and David R. Davis, "Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs," *International Studies Quarterly* (2012) 56, 1–16. (G)

12. Week 12 (Dec 15 & 16) Human Rights advocacy: NGOs and Networks

Clifford Bob. 2002. "Merchants of Morality" *Foreign Policy* 129: 36-45

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Ch.1.

Emilie Hafner-Burton, *Making Human Rights a Reality* (Princeton University Press, 2013), Ch. 9.

Thrall, A. Trevor, Dominik Stecula, and Diane Sweet 2014. "May We Have Your Attention Please? Human-Rights NGOs and the Problem of Global Communication", *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 19 (2), 135-159. (G)

Sarah S Stroup, and Amanda Murdie "There's no place like home: Explaining international NGO advocacy," *The Review of International Organizations*; Dordrecht Vol. 7, Iss. 4, (Dec 2012): 425-448. (G)

Guest speaker TBA

13. Week 13 (Dec 22 & 23) Human Rights and Covid-19

Oona Hathaway, Preston Lim and Mark Stevens "COVID-19 and International Law Series: Human Rights Law – Right to Life", Just Security
<https://www.justsecurity.org/73426/covid-19-and-international-law-series-human-rights-law-right-to-life/>

Wendy H. Wong & Eileen A. Wong (2020) "What COVID-19 revealed about health, human rights, and the WHO, *Journal of Human Rights*" 19:5, 568-581.

(G) Book Reviews are due.

14. Week 14 (Dec 29 & 30) Human Rights, Quo Vadis?

Jeff Sebo. 2018 "Should Chimpanzees Be Considered Persons?" *the New York Times*, April 7, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/07/opinion/sunday/chimps-legal-personhood.html>

David Rieff. 1999. "The Precarious Triumph of Human Rights", *New York Times Magazine*, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/08/08/magazine/the-precious-triumph-of-human-rights.html>

Ingrid Wuerth. 2019. "A Post-Human Rights Era? A Reappraisal and a Response to Critics," March 22, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/post-human-rights-era-reappraisal-and-response-critics>

Emilie M. Hafner-Burton and James Ron, "Seeing Double Human Rights Impact through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes", *World Politics* 61, no. 2 (April 2009), 360–401. **(G)**