

GOV 365N Human Rights and World Politics (Unique No. 38055)

Spring 2015

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Rhonda L. Evans, J.D., Ph.D.

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Office Hours: T/TH 2:00-3:30 pm or by appointment

Office Location: BAT 4.150

Class Meeting: T/TH 3:30-5:00 pm @ MEZ B0.306

Teaching Assistant: Mine Tafolar

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human rights play an important role in contemporary politics. International human rights provide activists with a potentially powerful discourse that can be used to frame and legitimate contested claims. Its legal and institutional manifestations offer activists new opportunities for pressuring human rights violators to change their behavior. This course examines human rights activists from a distinctly political perspective. It traverses the ways in which advocates and their organizations give meaning to human rights and mobilize these meanings in pursuit of political and policy objectives. In so doing, the course engages four key questions: (1) what are the mechanics of international human rights advocacy? (2) what is the role of law? (3) does international human rights advocacy work? and (4) if so, how does it work?

This course introduces you to the political and policy dimensions of human rights. It explores the philosophical, legal, and moral foundations of human rights and surveys the legal and institutional infrastructure and processes that exist at domestic and international levels for promotion of human rights. In so doing, the course examines various actors involved in human rights advocacy, including states, international organizations, international tribunals, nongovernmental organizations, and the media. Answers to the key questions that animate this course will be pursued through critical engagement with important contemporary issues in human rights policy. By the semester's end, you should understand basic laws, policies, institutions, processes, and debates in the evolving international human rights regime and appreciate the role of human rights advocacy in world politics.

REQUIRED READING

The following books are required:

- Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1998);
- Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton University Press, 2001).

Required readings are also available in other ways. Those that appear on Canvas are designated on the course schedule as [C]. Additional readings may be added as the semester proceeds.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams: Course grades will be based on student performance on three exams. All three exams will be administered in class. The first two exams will consist mainly of short-answer, multiple-choice, and true-or-false questions. The final exam will be cumulative. It will include short-answer, multiple-choice, and true-or-false questions based on a study guide that will be provided to students in advance. The final will also contain two

major essay questions that will be selected from a set of potential questions that will also be provided in advance. Failure to take any of the exams without a University-approved excuse will automatically result in a failing grade.

<i>Course Requirement</i>	<i>Percentage of Final Grade</i>	<i>Date</i>
Exam One	30%	Thursday, March 5
Exam Two	30%	Thursday, April 16
Final Exam	40%	Saturday, May 16 @ 2:00 pm

Class Participation: Attendance and participation do not constitute a formal component of the course grade. However, in my experience as an instructor, exam and final course grades generally correlate to student attendance and engagement with the course.

Grading Scale: Final course grades will be assigned based upon the standard ten-point grading scale, using a plus/minus system. At the end of the semester, an average of 92.3 or higher will earn an “A,” 90 to 92 will earn an “A-,” 88 to 89.7 will earn a “B+,” 82.3 to 87.7 will earn a “B,” 80 to 82 will earn a “B-,” 78 to 79.7 will earn a “C+,” 62.3 to 77.7 will earn a “C,” 60 to 62 will earn a “C-,” and 50 to 59.7 will earn a “D.” Anything below 50 is an “F.”

Extra Credit: Don’t ask; there will be none.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & REQUIRED UNIVERSITY NOTICES & POLICIES

Electronic Device Policy: All electronic devices, including laptop computers, are strictly forbidden absent documentation of need by an appropriate university official. If I see your cell phone during class, five points will be deducted from the next exam grade. Touching your phone during an exam will result in a failing grade. Students are not permitted to record class lectures without first securing written permission from the professor. Students who do so without permission will have their final course grades dropped by one full letter, and they may face legal action in a court of law.

Grade Complaint Policy: A Teaching Assistant (TA) will grade the exams in consultation with the professor. Complaints about the way in which an exam has been graded must first be lodged in writing (e.g. by email) with the TA within seven days of exams being returned to students for their review. The TA will consider a complaint’s merits. Students who are dissatisfied with the course of action proposed by the TA may submit their exams for re-grading in their entirety by the professor, who may assign a higher or lower exam grade than that assigned by the TA. Students who remain dissatisfied with a final course grade may elect to pursue action at the College-level: http://www.utexas.edu/cola/student-affairs/files/pdf/grade_appeals_form_student_version.pdf.

Academic Integrity: The University of Texas maintains an Honor Code. Its core values are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Because academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at UT, I will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize, or falsify. Should I determine that an academic integrity violation has taken place, I will follow the University’s formal process for dealing with such matters. You are expected to be familiar with the UT Honor Code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>. I am a former Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in the State of Ohio. Do not give me a reason to slip back into prosecutorial mode.

The Professional Environment: Do not share with me explanations for your poor performance. You either come to class or you don’t; you either do the work as outlined herein or you don’t. Any reasons why you fail to come to class or fail to perform the required work at an acceptable level are irrelevant. You will receive the grade that *you* earn. Spare me the details of your lives. I will extend the same professional courtesy to you.

Email Policy: Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible to keep the University informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—I recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. You can find UT Austin’s policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>. All email correspondence concerning this class will occur through Canvas, which means that my emails to you will be automatically sent to your official UT email address.

The text of your email should be professional in its tone and composition. It should clearly state the nature of your inquiry and contain your name as it appears on the course roster. I have endeavored to make this syllabus as thorough and clear as possible. Before emailing with questions about the course, review the syllabus. It will likely contain the answer that you seek. Substantive questions about the course material will only be answered in class (where they are especially welcomed) or during office hours.

Make-Up Exams: Just get yourself to the exams, and save us both the hassle. Make-up exams will be considered only under exceptional circumstances and will require written documentation of the excuse proffered. All make-up exams will be scheduled for a single date and time; at the professor’s discretion, they may not follow the same format as the exam administered to the class. There will be no departure from the printed schedule of final examinations. Changes for individual emergencies of a serious nature will be made only with the approval of the instructor, the chair of the department or dean of the school involved, and the dean of undergraduate studies. The department chair or school dean will, if a serious emergency is believed to exist, forward a written request to the assistant vice chancellor for academic advising setting forth the nature of the emergency. A student who is absent from an examination without excuse will be given a grade of zero. An incomplete (I) will be given in the case of a student absent from the final examination who has presented a satisfactory excuse to the instructor or an official university excuse.

Classroom Behavior: It’s important that we have a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, and we all share the responsibility for creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Here are some guidelines for classroom behavior: (1) be on time to class; (2) packing up your things early is disruptive to others around you and to the instructor; (3) classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing; and (4) any discussion from class that continues on any listserv or class discussion list should adhere to these same rules and expectations.

Accommodations for Religious Holidays and Students with Disabilities: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. If you require special accommodations, you must obtain a letter that documents your disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement 471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to me at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations you need. No later than five business days before an exam, you should remind me of any testing accommodations you will need. See <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/>.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Policy: Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation: (1) familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building; (2) if you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class; (3) in the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors; and (4) do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed prior to the class meeting for which they are assigned.

I. FOUNDATIONS: IDEAS, ACTORS, AND INSTITUTIONS

Jan. 20 Introduction to the Course

No reading assignment

Jan. 22 Law and Politics of International Human Rights

[C] Michael Goodhart, "Introduction: Human Rights in Politics and Practice," pp. 1-7.

[C] Beth A. Simmons, "Introduction," pp. 3-17.

Jan. 27 Normative, Theoretical, and Political Foundations of Human Rights

[C] Anthony J. Langlois, "Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights," pp. 11-26.

Jan. 29 Overview of the International Human Rights Legal System

[C] Rhona K.M. Smith, "Human Rights in International Law," pp. 58-74.

Feb. 3 Human Rights in Action: *Disarm*

[C] Nicola Short, "The Role of NGOs in the Ottawa Process to Ban Landmines," 4 *International Negotiation* 481-500 (1999).

Feb. 5 Why International Law?

[C] Beth A. Simmons, "Why International Law? The Development of the International Human Rights Regime in the 20th Century," pp. 23-56.

Feb. 10 Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and Human Rights

[C] Ann Marie Clark, "Nongovernmental Organizations: Overview," in *International Encyclopedia of Human Rights*, David Forsythe (ed.), Oxford University Press (2009).

Feb. 12 The Role of Social Movements in International Human Rights Advocacy

[C] Kiyoteru Tsutsui, Claire Whitlinger, and Alwyn Lim, "International Human Rights Law and Social Movements: States' Resistance and Civil Society's Insistence," *Annual Review of Law & Social Science* 2012. 8: 367-96.

II. MEASURING HUMAN RIGHTS AND STUDYING THEIR EFFECTIVENESS

Feb. 17 How to Measure Human Rights?

[C] Todd Landman, "Measuring Human Rights: Principle, Practice, and Policy," 26(4) *Human Rights Quarterly* (Nov. 2004), pp. 906-31.

Feb. 19 Quantitative versus Qualitative Approaches to Study of Human Rights

[C] Emilie M. Hafner-Burton and James Ron, "Seeing Double: Human Rights Impact through Qualitative and Quantitative Eyes," 61(2) *World Politics* (April 2009), pp. 360-64.

Feb. 24 A Quantitative Approach to Study of Human Rights

[C] Emilie M. Hafner-Burton, "Sticks and Stones: Naming and Shaming the Human Rights Enforcement Problem," 62(4) *International Organization* (2008): 689-716.

** Do not worry about understanding the statistical methods; do, however, pay close attention to the articles' hypotheses, data, and logic.*

Feb. 26 A Qualitative Approach to Study of Human Rights

[C] Sally Merry Engle, "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle," 108(1) *American Anthropologist* (2006): 38-51.

Mar. 3 Overflow, Synthesis, and Exam Review

Mar. 5 EXAM ONE

III. HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN ACTION

Mar. 10 Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics

Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, pp. 1-38.

Mar. 12 Historical Precursors to Modern Transnational Advocacy Networks

Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, pp. 39-78.

Mar. 16-22 SPRING BREAK

Mar. 24 Human Rights Advocacy in Latin America

Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, pp. 79-120.

Mar. 26 Transnational Networks and Violence against Women

Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, pp. 165-217.

Mar. 31 Amnesty International (AI) and Emergence of Human Rights Norms

Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International & Changing Human Rights Norms*, pp. 3-36.

Apr. 2 AI's Campaigns against Torture and Disappearances

Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience*, pp. 37-87.

Apr. 6 Last day an undergraduate student may, with the dean's approval, withdraw from the University or drop a class except for urgent and substantiated, nonacademic reasons. Last day an undergraduate student may change registration in a class to or from the pass/fail basis.

Apr. 7 AI's Campaigns against Disappearances and Extrajudicial Executions

Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience*, "Disappearances," pp. 87-123.

Apr. 9 NGOs and Norms in International Politics

Ann Marie Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience*, pp. 124-141.

Apr. 14 Overflow, Synthesis, and Exam Review

Apr. 16 EXAM TWO

Apr. 21 Women's Rights as Human Rights

[C] Allida Black, "Are Women 'Human'? The UN and the Struggle to Recognize Women's Rights as Human Rights," pp. 133-155.

Apr. 23

[C] Kelly J. Shannon, "The Right to Bodily Integrity: Women's Rights as Human Rights and the International Movement to End Female Genital Mutilation, 1970s-1990s," pp. 285-310.

Apr. 28 Guest Speaker

Apr. 30 Children and Human Rights

[C] Cynthia Price Cohen, "The Role of NGOs in Drafting the Convention on the Rights of the Child," 12 *Human Rights Quarterly* (1990): 137-147.

May 5 Children and Human Rights

[C] Beth A. Simmons, "The Protection of Innocents: Rights of the Child," pp. 307-348.

May 7 Children and Human Rights

[C] Becker, *Campaigning for Justice*, "Creating a New International Priority: Ending Violence against Children," pp. 95-112.

**FINAL EXAM
SATURDAY, MAY 16
2:00-5:00 PM
MEZ B0.306**