

## IR489/POLS 589 – Human Rights in World Affairs

Fall 2024

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Class schedule: W 14:40-16:30 & Th 9:40-10:30 FASS 2023	

**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.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- 1) Understand the development of the concept of human rights and discuss the various critiques of this concept.
- 2) Define and identify human rights and critically evaluate their implementation in world affairs.
- 3) Identify the relevant the international human rights treaties and understand how the human rights regime works.
- 4) Analyze and understand the strengths and weaknesses of mechanisms to promote and protect human rights by individuals, non-governmental organizations, states, and international organizations and others.
- 5) Critically think about different human rights problems in different countries by focusing on case studies.
- 6) Apply theoretical knowledge and develop writing and communication skills.
- 7) Critique readings, analyze evidence and make informed arguments **(G)**.

## 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 Justice Info (<https://www.justiceinfo.net/en>) as well as the Rights Track podcast (<http://rightstrack.org>). 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
30% midterm exam	30% response papers
20% reflection papers	20% book review
30% final exam	30% take home exams

## Course Assessment:

Midterm Exam (30%): 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 (10%): 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 three written responses of approximately 2 -3 pages in reaction to a week's readings material. The first RP can be for any week between 1 and 4, the second one for any week between 5 and 8 and third one for any week between 9 and 13. Each student is responsible for discussing the assigned readings during class hour.

Book review (20%): 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%) and will include questions similar to ones you could get in comprehensive exams.

**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 (December 22)**

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

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

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).

Dilek Kurban, *Limists of Supranational Justice- The European Court of Human Rights and Turkey's Kurdish Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 2020)

Rochelle Terman, *You The Geopolitics of Shaming When Human Rights Pressure Works—and When It Backfires* (Princeton University Press, 2023).

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

**Course Policies:**

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.

During class lectures and discussions, please turn off your cellphones, be respectful to your fellow classmates and do not interrupt one another when speaking.

While we prefer and require participation during class hours, you can make up by engaging with the discussion online by responding to questions posted or by posing your own questions in the SUcourse+ course discussion 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 25 & 26) 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. 2014. "A social science of human rights", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 51(2) 273–286. **(G)**

### **2. Week 2 (Oct 2 & 3) Concept and Historical Origin**

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

Paul Gordon Lauren. 2011. *The Evolution of International Human Rights*, 3rd ed. Ch. 1 and 2.

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

Jerome J. Shestack. 1998. "The Philosophic Foundations of Human Rights". *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 201-234. (G)

Andrew Moravcsik. 2000. "The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe", *International Organization*, Volume 54, Issue 2, pp. 217 – 252. (G)

### **3. Week 3 (Oct 9 & 10): 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.

Bronwyn Leebaw. 2007. "The Politics of Impartial Activism: Humanitarianism and Human Rights", *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2

Özlem Altan-Olcay 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/>

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

Ann Marie Clark and Kathryn Sikkink. 2013. "Information Effects and Human Rights Data: Is the Good News about Increased Human Rights Information Bad News for Human Rights Measures?" *Human Rights Quarterly* 35(3):539-568. (G)

Recommended - 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>

### **Pick the book for review! (G)**

### **4. Week 4 (Oct 16 & 17) 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.

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)

Wayne Sandholtz. 2017. "Domestic law and human rights treaty commitments: The Convention against Torture", *Journal of Human Rights*, 16:1, 25-43. (G)

## 5. Week 5 (Oct 23 & 24) Domestic Politics of Human Rights

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

Jean Grugel and 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.

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)

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

Yonatan Lupu. 2013. "Best Evidence: The Role of Information in Domestic Judicial Enforcement of International Human Rights Agreements". *International Organization* Vol. 67, Issue 3, pp. 469–503. (G)

## 6. Week 6 (Oct 30 & 31) 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/>

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

Christian Davenport. 2007. "State repression and the tyrannical peace." *Journal of Peace Research* 44.4 485-504. (G)

Mauricio Rivera. 2017. "Authoritarian Institutions and State Repression: The Divergent Effects of Legislatures and Opposition Parties on Personal Integrity Rights" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 61(10) 2183-2207. (G)

## 7. Week 7 (Nov 6 & 7) Non-state actors as Human Rights Violators

Magnus Lundgren, Kseniya Oksamytna, and Vincenzo Bove. 2022. "Are UN Peacekeeping Leaders Held to Account?", *Political Violence at a Glance*.  
<https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2022/03/09/are-un-peacekeeping-leaders-held-to-account/>

Tatiana Devia and Daniel Marin Lopez. 2024. "Insights From The Chiquita Trial (1): 25 Years Of Struggle," Justice Info, September 12, 2024  
<https://www.justiceinfo.net/en/135749-insights-chiquita-trial-25-years-struggle.html>

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

**Midterm for undergraduate students.**

**Take-home exam for graduate students.**

## **8. Week 8 (Nov 13 & 14) Political Enforcement and Economic Sanctions**

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

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

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

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

Richard A. Nielsen. 2013. "Rewarding Human Rights? Selective Aid Sanctions against Repressive States". *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 57, pp. 791–803 (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)

## **9. Week 9 (Nov 20 & Nov 21) Legal and Other Mechanisms of Accountability**

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

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

David Bosco, 2013. "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](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)

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

James D. Meernik, Angela Nichols, and Kimi L. King. 2010. "The Impact of International Tribunals and Domestic Trials on Peace and Human Rights After Civil War" *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 11, 309–334. (G)

### **10. Week 10 (Nov 27 & 28) Humanitarian Intervention**

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

Benjamin A Valentino. 2011. "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)

Amanda M. Murdie and David R. Davis. 2010. "Problematic Potential: The Human Rights Consequences of Peacekeeping Interventions in Civil Wars". *Human Rights Quarterly*, Volume 32, Number 1, pp. 49-72. (G)

### **11. Week 11 (Dec 4 & 5) 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.

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

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

Rochelle Terman and Joshua Byun. 2022. "Punishment and Politicization in the International Human Rights Regime" *American Political Science Review*, Volume 116, Issue 2, pp. 385 – 402. (G)

### **12. Week 12 (Dec 11 & 12) 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. 2013. *Making Human Rights a Reality*. Princeton University Press, 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. 2012. "There's no place like home: Explaining international NGO advocacy," *The Review of International Organizations*, Dordrecht Vol. 7, Iss. 4, pp. 425-448. **(G)**

### **13. Week 13 (Dec 18 & 19) Special topic: Climate Change**

Sumudu Ataputtu and Andrea Schapper. 2019. "Pros and cons of a human rights-based approach to environmental protection" in *Human Rights and the Environment: Key Issues*, Earthscan, Routledge.

Readings on contemporary developments to be distributed via email.

**Guest speaker** TBA

**(G) Book Reviews are due.**

### **14. Week 14 (Dec 25 & 26) 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>

Seth Kaplan. 2019. "When Everything Is a Human Right, Nothing Is", *Foreign Policy*, September 19, available at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/06/when-everything-is-a-human-right-nothing-is/>

Recommended - Listen: Entitled podcast, episode "From Pets To Zoos, Should Animals Have Rights, Too?" available here <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/from-pets-to-zoos-should-animals-have-rights-too/id1577996421?i=1000598871586>