

St. Edward's University

OACS

Syllabus

ANTH 4344

Human Rights & Social Justice

FALL 2017

(Online Section)

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1. Overview

Course Description: This course examines issues in human rights and human dignity in the modern international community. It also explores productive means civil discourse and how to advocate effectively for these rights. Topics also include the nature of rights, the politics of rights statements, the rationale for including and excluding certain rights, the philosophical derivation of human rights, human rights violations, and the monitoring and enforcement of human rights in the contemporary world.

Contact: Email is the official communication of the university. It is also the best way to reach me in this online section. My home is in a poor cell phone reception area but I always have my email with me. I will typically respond to email within 24 hours, but allow 48 hours before following up. If I need to be away for more than 48 hours, I will let the class know.

Office Hours: Because this is an online section, there will not be fixed office hours. I live five minutes from the St. Edward's University campus and can meet students on campus as needed. We can also set up telephone sessions as needed. Just let me know if we need to speak or meet in person.

2. Course Learning Objectives

As the course progresses, the student will:

1. Describe and analyze the history of human rights in order to explain the politics of the modern formulation of human rights standards.
2. Discuss the content of human rights statements in order to explicate rights and classify rights by type.
3. Analyze the nature of rights statements in order to put human rights in perspective.
4. Discuss and evaluate the derivations and justifications for human rights in order to identify defensible justifications.
5. Describe human rights in non-Western and Third World societies in order to explain problems in implementation and monitoring.
6. Describe the roles of the United Nations and NGO's in implementation rights in order to evaluate the successes and failures in their implementation.
7. Describe and analyze cases of human rights violations in order to evaluate the penetration of human rights into state systems.
8. Describe monitoring of human rights violations by the United Nations and NGO's in order to analyze and explain successes and failures in monitoring.
9. Describe enforcement of human rights by the United Nations and NGO's in order to evaluate successes and failures in enforcement.
10. Describe human rights in U.S. foreign policy in order to analyze reasons for shifts in policy.
11. Demonstrate research skills in using libraries and the World Wide Web.
12. Demonstrate skills in Web site evaluation in order to produce high-quality and reliable research information.

3. Textbook and Other Course Materials

The student will read the following books:

Donnelly, Jack. *International Human Rights*. 4th ed. Boulder: Westview Press, 2013.

Fagan, Andrew. *The Atlas of Human Rights*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

An optional book to read for help selecting issues is:

Kelleher, Ann. *Global Perspectives*. 4th ed. London: Longman/ Pearson, 2011

The student also will monitor popular media for human rights stories, read journals such as *Human Rights Quarterly* and *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, and will examine and evaluate sites on the World Wide Web.

4. Course Organization

Discussion

The student is expected to log on to the discussion group at least three times per week and participate in the on-line discussions. Participation should demonstrate understanding of the readings and of other students' posts. Opinions expressed will not count as a post unless they are bolstered by reasoned argumentation and reference to relevant data.

The instructor will post a question to the discussion group by Sunday afternoon of each week and will sometimes, but not always, post a follow-up or related question by the following Thursday. The instructor also will post a weekly summary response to the previous week's discussions.

Each week, after posting a response pertaining to the question the instructor posted on Sunday, the student must also respond to the posts of at least three other students. The response must be substantive, not simply "I agree" or "I disagree."

The first response must be posted by noon on Thursday and the final post by 6 the end of the day on Saturday. Each week the student will conduct brief research into the topic and post the results (about 1-2 paragraphs).

Human Rights Courses Projects

Each student will pick a human rights problem and research it during the semester. There will be three written reports. The first will outline and describe the problem, the second will report on steps being taken by governments, NGOs, and individuals to

ameliorate it, and the third will consist of an action plan to address the problem more effectively. The action plan is the major report for the class.

The action plan will consist of an explanation of what should be done about the human rights issue, who will be responsible for it, how it will be financed, how opponents can be won over, and an explanation of how the plan might have to be modified in order for it to be enacted. It will build on and incorporate the previous two reports. It will be based on substantial research sometimes including interviews, will include source notes following the MLA style sheet or other recognized style sheets, and will be 8-10 pages long including the Works Cited pages(s).

Late Work Policy:

- No late work will be accepted except under extreme mitigating circumstances such as hospitalization or a death in the family. It is always easy to get behind in online courses so be sure to not procrastinate too much.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is a bit different in an online section. A lack of the required posting in a timely manner will constitute an attendance violation. The penalty will be the lowered grade for having missed the posts.

5. Grading

The grade distribution is:

- Original posts to the discussion forum **25%**
- Response to other student's posts **20%**
- Posting of weekly research **15%**
- Posting of three research reports –
1st and 2nd reports (**10% each**, final report **20%**)

Failure to respond to each week's question and at least two other students' responses will result in a grade of F for that week's work. Because of the nature of discussion in

the course, it will not ordinarily be possible to make up work missed. If extreme circumstances necessitate missing a week's posts, special arrangements can be made with the instructor. Grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, and so forth. A minus grade is given for work that reflects little thought or effort in the instructor's judgment, a plus for good analysis and thoroughness.

6. Calendar

Week 1: Aug 28 – Sept 3

Week 2: Sept 4 – Sept 10 (Labor Day – 4th)

Week 3: Sept 11 – Sept 17

Week 4: Sept 18 – Sept 24

Week 5: Sept 25 – Oct 1

Week 6: Oct 2 – Oct 8

Week 7: Oct 9 – Oct 15 (Founder's Day – 13th)

Week 8: Oct 16 – Oct 22

Week 9: Oct 23 – Oct 29

Week 10: Oct 30 – Nov 5

Week 11: Nov 6 – Nov 12

Week 12: Nov 13 – Nov 19

Week 13: Nov 20 – Nov 26 (no classes for Thanksgiving 22-26)

Week 14: Nov 27 – Dec 3

Dec 11-14 (Exam week – no exams for this course)

Dec 19 Final grades due

7. Weekly Learning Objectives and Assignments

(Please note that the chapter readings are not always in linear order)

Week 1: Course Introduction and Civil Discourse

(Read: Donnelly Ch 1 and Fagan Pt 1 for next week and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Donnelly Pgs 261-264)

Objectives: Be able to understand the scope of the course and the fundamentals of civil discourse in modern society.

Week 2: Human Rights and Human Dignity – What are the truly universal human rights?

(Read: The US Bill of Rights & Donnelly Ch 2-3, & Fagan Pt 2)

First reports due

(Submit written essay to instructor and post summary to discussion board).

Objectives: Students should be able to discuss and critically evaluate the fundamentals of human rights and dignity. Students should also be familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and how it was created.

Week 3: The Bill of Rights, the US Criminal Justice System, and US Human Rights & Human Dignity issues

(Read: Donnelly Ch 4, Fagan Pt 5)

Objectives: A thorough discussion of the US Bill of Rights. Be able to discuss its creation and interpretation. Focus on one Right in particular. Be able to discuss the US criminal justice system and US human rights issues.

Week 4: Human rights issues in the Americas (Meso America and South America)

(Read: Donnelly Ch 5 & 7)

Objectives: Be able to discuss and understand recent historic human rights issues in Meso and South America. In particular, be able to discuss current issues that have flared up in the past year in these locations.

Week 5: Theories of Human Rights

(Read: Donnelly Ch 1, Fagan Pt 6)

Second reports due

(Submit written essay to instructor and post summary to discussion board).

Objectives: Students should understand and be able to critically analyze the fundamental competing theories of human rights.

Week 6: Gender, sex, and sexuality

(Read: Donnelly Ch 10 & 11)

Objectives: Be able to compare and analyze major global issues in gender, sex, and sexuality. Propose solutions to contemporary issues.

Week 7: Food, water, and basic survival rights

(Read Donnelly Ch 8, Fagan, Pt 7)

Objectives: To learn about and evaluate issues with food and water access and ownership. Be able to discuss basic human survival rights and how others manipulate these rights to control others.

Week 8: Warfare

(Read: Donnelly Ch 6, 12 & 13)

Objectives: Be able to discuss human rights issues in modern warfare, from recent history and planning for the future.

Week 9: Genocide and Human Rights Issues globally

(Read: Donnelly Ch 14 & Fagan Pt 3)

Objectives: Discuss issues from recent history regarding genocide and major human rights issues globally. Analyze foreseeable human rights issues and genocides in the near future around the world and what can be done to prevent these. Also be aware of issues regarding human trafficking and local efforts to stop the practice.

Week 10: Globalization, Consumerism, Cultural Preservation & Press Freedom

(Read: Fagan Pt 4)

Objectives: Understand the recent history of and issues with globalization, consumerism, cultural preservation, and press freedom. Be able to compare and create ideas for how to improve each situation.

Week 11: Refugees & Immigration

(Read: Donnelly Ch 9 & 15)

Objectives: Discuss various sides of issues in regards to refugees and immigration. Focus particularly on immigration on the US/ Mexican border and Muslim refugees and immigrations into the US. Also discuss the mass migration of refugees out of Syria and contemporary issues with resettling them. Finally, be able to discuss changing policies in the US and UK and elsewhere.

Week 12: Terrorism & Foreign Policy

(Readings as assigned)

Objectives: Be able to discuss terrorism and US foreign policy. Be able to weight the balance of security vs. liberty. Also be able to discuss and debate issues with isolationism vs. obligations to help others.

Week 13: Thanksgiving week. Only three course days this week. Discussion and Q&A on final reports. Follow up to civil discourse (week 1) topic. (Finalize reports this week as well – due by End of Week 14)

Post summation of final reports here and discuss with class this week and next.

Objectives: By this week, students should be able to fully discuss their proposed research plan and solutions and back up their ideas with factual evidence.

Week 14: Wrap up and lessons learned. Final report summaries due in discussion boards.

Final Reports Due (to Instructor)

Discuss contemporary issues in human rights and lessons learned over the course.

8. Course Expectations

Student Conduct: The student conduct policies of this class are based on simple, mutual respect that we should have for one another. Civil and productive discussions are essential in an online course. We do need to challenge each other and use more than just simple affirmative responses. Challenging each other to think critically in a civil and friendly environment will be our ongoing challenge for the course.

Classroom Environment: All students at St. Edward's University have the right to a calm, productive and stimulating learning environment (in the classroom or online). Moreover, instructors are responsible for nurturing and maintaining such an

environment. Lively discussion is not disruptive behavior. However, behavior that interferes with learning will not be tolerated. Please be respectful of other students and their points of view and their learning styles. Disagreements and debates are vital parts of academic study, but be civil in your interactions.

Academic Integrity Policy: Per the Student Handbook, "St. Edward's University expects academic honesty from all members of the community, and it is our policy that academic integrity be fostered to the highest degree possible. Consequently, all work submitted for grading in a course must be created as a result of your own thought and effort. Representing work as your own when it is not a result of such thought and effort is a violation of our code of academic integrity. Whenever it is established that academic dishonesty has occurred, the course instructor shall impose a penalty on the offending individual(s). **The maximum penalty for a first offense is failure in the course, and if that penalty is imposed, the student does not have the option of withdrawing from the course.**"

<http://think.stedwards.edu/deanofstudents/studenthandbook/academicintegrity>

Dropping/ Withdrawing Policy:

- It is the student's responsibility to be aware of add/drop/withdraw and refund deadlines. See web link: <http://think.stedwards.edu/registrar/datesanddeadlines>
- Students should also communicate with their instructor, academic advisor, and financial aid advisor.
- State policy on "WAs" (withdrawal due to absences). Some instructors choose to WA a student after a specified number of absences; other instructors never issues WAs. If you choose to, you may include this language:

An instructor has the option, but is not required, to request the registrar to assign a grade of WA (Withdrawal Due to Absences) to a student who has excessive absences from a **class by the last day to withdraw from the specific course**. The determination of what constitutes excessive absences is the prerogative of the instructor.

Incomplete Grades Policy: The grade of I (Incomplete) is given at the sole discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the dean. A grade of I must always be requested by the student; it is not automatically earned. To qualify for an Incomplete, students must have completed no less than one-half of the work in a course and have attended no fewer than one-half of the scheduled class meetings. The student must be able to document that the situation qualifies as exceptional. Exceptional circumstances include but are not restricted to a death in the immediate family; the onset of a serious medical condition; or an unexpected change in job or family circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances do not include situations that can be considered a normal part of living. Course work must be completed and a grade submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar no later than October 1 for summer courses, March 1 for fall courses and July 1 for spring courses, or a grade of F will be entered on the transcript.

Disability Services/Special Circumstances: St. Edward's University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disability Act and would like to request accommodation, please let me know early in the semester or as soon as you are eligible. Students will need to present documentation of their disability to the disability coordinator in Academic Planning and Support Services located in Moody Hall. Documentation guide: <http://think.stedwards.edu/apss/requirementsproperdocumentation>

Student Support Services: Links to all student services may be found on the New College advising page: <http://think.stedwards.edu/newcollege/helpful-links>

Computer Competencies: All Undergraduate and New College students are required to satisfy the Computer Competency Requirement. New College students will not be allowed to register for Moral Reasoning, a CGI class, or Capstone until all competencies are completed. For more information: <http://academic.stedwards.edu/competency/>

9. Time Needed to Complete Course

This course runs for 13 weeks (not including Thanksgiving and during most weeks you will need to complete reading, posting, writing, and research. Each week's period will be about 5 hours reading, 3 hours posting, 1 hour writing, and 1 hour of research. The goal is to divide up the workload evenly throughout the semester. The average student will spend about 135 hrs. completing the course.