

PSCI 3307C – Politics of Human Rights

Tuesdays, 11:35 - 2:25, Southam Hall 517

Professor Keith Haysom

Office: Loeb B646

Hours: Fridays, 12:30-2:00 or by appointment

Email: HaysK730@newschool.edu

Course Description:

In this course, we will examine the cause of human rights as both a political project and a site for political conflict and contestation. After setting the contemporary discourse of human rights in its proper post-war historical context, we will inquire into its philosophical origins, and the controversies attendant with those origins. Only by understanding human rights as a concept can we decipher the institutional, legal and above all else, political, conflicts that circulate around it. Once we have a strong conceptual basis, we will then proceed to examine more specific controversies concerning, first, the meaning and content of human rights (e.g. property rights or social rights?), second, the various contexts in which the application of human rights comes into play (e.g. the nation vs. the globe) and third, the dynamics of the spread of human rights in contemporary international politics, focusing on the related controversies of American hegemony and arguments for and against humanitarian intervention. Finally, we will ask about the broader ethical projects that lie alternately beyond and behind that of human rights.

Reading Materials:

Diligent reading is necessary for successful completion of this course. Class notes will only prepare you so much for your various assignments. Moreover, to the extent that class participation is an important element of your final mark, you will need to have read the assigned course readings in order to fully participate in class discussions.

There is one course textbook, which is mandatory: *The Global Struggle for Human Rights: Universal Principles in World Politics* by Debra L. DeLaet. This book can be purchased at the Carleton University Bookstore

There is also **one course reader**, containing all required reading materials for the course that fall outside the DeLaet text. It will be available for purchase at Allegra Print & Imaging (1069 Bank St.)

Materials for panel presentations will be available on 24 hr. reserve at the library.

Marks, etc.

There will be four different components to your grade. First, attendance will be worth 10%. Second, you will be responsible for at least one class presentation, to be worth a total 40% of your final mark. Third, you will be responsible for either two short papers (7-10 pgs each), or one long paper (15-20 pgs). If you choose to write two papers, each will be worth 25% of your final mark, whereas one long paper will be worth 50%. Finally, there are up to 5 bonus marks available for those who regularly participate in class discussions. The marking scheme is represented below:

Attendance	10%
Panel Presentation	40%
Papers	50%
	(either 1 x 50% or 2 x 25%)
Class Participation	Up to 5 bonus marks

Attendance – Attendance is mandatory. Every class an attendance sheet will be sent around. Mark your initials on it by your name. We have 11 regular classes throughout the term, so each class will be worth 1/11th of the attendance mark, or 0.9% of the final mark.

Class Participation – Participation is highly recommended, and can come in the form of questions or comments, directed either to me or class presenters. I will not be assessing the quality of your interventions so much as your initiative to participate. This is not to reward blowhards who talk too much, but students with the initiative to ask questions and advance the knowledge of the whole class.

Panel Presentation – Each class, a group of no less than 3 and no more than 6 students will form a panel to discuss additional readings on the topic of that week. Students should decide which panel they want to be part of within the first week of class and then sign up for it – a sign up sheet will be posted on my office door and be available in class. Members of panels will be assigned a collective mark for the entire group, but it is **imperative** that each member of the panel present some aspect of the group discussion. In several cases, the panel reading will be a single book by an expert on the given topic, to be discussed in depth by panel members. In others, panel members will have to divide between them a number of articles by different authors concerning the same topic.

Panel members will be responsible, collectively, for the following tasks:

- 1) summarizing the additional reading materials for the benefit of the class
- 2) relating this additional material to the required readings
- 3) offering relevant analysis, critique and general discussion of the readings and the topic in general
- 4) putting together handouts for the class that allows it to view the salient points of the presentation in hard-copy form

Important Note: Panel presentations should be approximately 45 minutes long in total. Depending on the size of panels, individual presentations should be between 7-10 minutes. There will be a premium on concision, and a penalty for long-windedness. Individual presenters will lose 2.5 marks (or ½ a grade point) off their mark for every 5 minutes they exceed their allotted time.

Papers

As indicated above, you have a choice between writing one long paper or two short papers. You do not need to declare your preference, per se. However, if you choose to write two short papers, the first of these papers will be due by March 4th at the latest. The second will be due by April 1st. If you decide to write only one, longer, paper, this will also be due on April 1st.

Short papers should be analytical summaries and critiques of specific articles from the reading list. The best kind of article to choose for a paper of this sort is an argumentative, rather than explanatory, piece, and I have thus indicated on the reading schedule below which pieces (either required or presentation readings) are best suited for these purposes – look for an * next to the reading. Students who wish to write on any other pieces that are not so indicated should seek my permission first.

Important Note: There are three crucial rules regarding short papers:

- 1) you cannot write a short paper on the same topic as your presentation;
- 2) short papers are due the day of the class in which we are to discuss the piece in question, at the beginning of class. For example, a student wishing to write a short paper on the Judith Shklar piece “The Liberalism of Fear”, reading for the class of February 12th, would have to hand it in to me at the beginning of class on February 12th and no later.
- 3) short papers should focus on individual essays or chapters; for books that are indicated as appropriate for short papers, you should pick either a chapter or at most a section of the book to focus on. *Do not try to write about the whole book*

Long papers are to be argumentative pieces in themselves, concerned with advancing an argument for and/or against one or more approaches to human rights as we have studied in the course. Students wishing to write long papers should consult with me during my office hours first as to suitability of the topic.

Penalties

Late papers will be penalized at a rate of -10% a day, weekend days included. Papers that are late within the same day will be penalized at -5%. Class presentations cannot be made up, and thus absence for a scheduled presentation will be penalized at -100%, except where inability to attend is professionally documented and the professor is alerted at least one day in advance.

Reading Schedule

Legend: * = Suitable as a topic for a short paper

*+=Suitable as a topic for a short paper when considered with the next reading in the list

(3) = Chapter available for download from class website, not in course pack

January 8th – **World War II and the Modern Origins of Human Rights Discourse**
Required Reading: Course Pack: Paul Gordon Lauren, *The Evolution of International Human Rights*, chs 5&6

January 15th – **Human Rights Advocacy and the International System**
Required Reading: DeLaet, chs 2, 8 (p.135-147) / Course Pack: Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, “Human Rights Advocacy Networks in Latin America”*

Presentation: Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, ch 6*

January 22nd – **The Politics of Human Rights**
Required Reading: Course Pack: Michael Ignatieff, *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry*, “Human Rights as Politics”*

Presentation: Ignatieff, “Human Rights as Idolatry”* in *Human Rights asP Politics and Idolatry*

January 29th – **Philosophical Origins: From Natural Rights to The Rights of Man**
Required Reading: Course Pack: Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, chs (3)&4*

Panel Presentation: Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, chapter 2; Jurgen Habermas, “The Classical Doctrine of Politics in Relation to Social Philosophy”* in *Theory and Practice*; George Grant, *English Speaking Justice*, Section II*

February 5th – **Philosophical Critique: Burke, Marx and Beyond**
Required Reading: Course Pack: Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, chs 5*&(7)*

Panel Presentation: Jeremy Waldron, *Nonsense Upon Stilts*

February 12th – **Philosophical Arguments: Democracy and Human Rights**
Required Reading: Course Pack: Jurgen Habermas, “Remarks on Legitimation Through Human Rights”*; Etienne Balibar, “Is a Philosophy of Human Civic Rights Possible? New Reflections on Equaliberty”*

Panel Presentation: Judith Shklar, “The Liberalism of Fear” in *Political Thought and Political Thinkers**; Claude Lefort, “Human Rights and the Welfare State” in *Democracy and Political Theory*; Jurgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, chapter 9; Etienne Balibar, “Democratic Citizenship or Popular Sovereignty? Reflections on Constitutional Debates in Europe”, in *We, The People of Europe?*

February 26th – **Contested Rights: Poverty, Property and Development**
Required Readings: DeLaet, chapter 6 / Course Pack: Tremblay, et al., “Labour Rights as Human Rights in the Age of Globalization”

Panel Presentation: Tara Smith, “On Deriving Rights to Goods from Rights to Freedom”* in *Law and Philosophy*, Vol. 11, No. 3. (1992); Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, chapters 1&2*,4&5* / Thomas Pogge, “The Priorities of Global Justice”* in *Metaphilosophy*, Vol. 32, Nos. 1/2, January 2001

March 4th – **Contested Rights: Gender**
Required Readings: DeLaet, ch. 7 / Course Pack: Charlotte Bunch, “Women’s Rights as Human Rights”

Panel Presentation: V. Spike Peterson and Laura Parisi, “Are women human? It’s not an academic question”* in *Human Rights 50 Years On* (Evans, 1998) / Fiona Robinson, “The Limits of a rights-based approach to international ethics”* (in Evans, 1998) / Martha Nussbaum, “Women’s Capabilities and Social Justice”* in *Journal of Human Development*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2000

March 11th – **Contexts of Contestation: Cosmopolitan Right and the Nation State**
Required Readings: DeLaet, ch. 4, 5 / Course Pack: Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others*, ch. 1*

Panel Presentation: Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, chapter 9* / Etienne Balibar, “*Droit de cité* or Apartheid?” in *We, The People of Europe?* / Seyla Benhabib, *The Rights of Others*, chs.2&5

March 18th – **Contexts of Contestation: The Question of Universality vs. Relativity**
Required Readings: DeLaet, chapter 3; Course Pack: Seyla Benhabib, “‘Nous’ et les ‘Autres’: Is Universalism Ethnocentric?”

Panel Presentation: Adamantia Polis & Peter Schwab, “Human Rights: A Western Construct with Limited Applicability”*+ in *Human Rights: Cultural and Ideological Perspectives* (Polis/Schwab, 1979) / Heiner Bielefeldt, “Western vs. Islamic Human Rights Conceptions? A Critique of Cultural Essentialism in Human Rights Discussions”* in *Political Theory*, Vol. 28, No. 1. (Feb., 2000) / Judith Butler, “Universality in Culture”, in *For Love of Country* (Nussbaum, 1996) / Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, chapter 10*

March 25th – **Power, Empire and Humanitarian Intervention**
Required Readings: Delaet, ch. 8 (p.147-157) / Course Pack: Tony Evans “Power, Hegemony and the Universalization of Human Rights”*

Panel Presentation: Geoffrey Robertson, *Crimes Against Humanity*, chapter 11*; Alex J. Bellamy, “Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq”* in *Ethics & International Affairs*; 2005, Vol. 19 Issue 2; Michael Ignatieff, “American Exceptionalism and Human Rights”* in Ignatieff (ed), 2005

April 1st – **Beyond Human Rights?**
Required Readings: Course Pack: Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, ch. (10)*&13;

Panel Presentation: Ernst Bloch, “The Marxist Distance to Right and Even to Natural Right”, in *Natural Law and Human Dignity*; Axel Honneth, “Integrity and Disrespect: Principles of a Conception of Morality Based on a Theory of Recognition”* in *The Fragmented World of the Social*; Jean-Francois Lyotard, “The Other’s Rights” in *The Politics of Human Rights* (Savic, 1999); Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” in *Ethics*

Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first in-class test or CUTV midterm exam**. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadline for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: **March 14th, 2008** for April examinations.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.