

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 2105 A – Social Justice and Human Rights
TERM:	Fall 2025
PREREQUISITES:	1.0 credit from LAWS 1001 and LAWS 1002, or HRSJ 1101 and HRSJ 1102, or PAPM 1001 and PSCI 2003.
CLASS:	Day & Time: Wednesdays 11:35 am - 2:25 pm Room: Please check Carleton Central for current Class Schedule IN-PERSON
INSTRUCTOR:	Dr. Deniz Pinar Konuk
CONTACT:	Office Hrs: By appointment Telephone: Email: denizkonuk@cunet.carleton.ca
BRIGHTSPACE:	https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/370913

CALENDAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theories and practices of law and social justice. Issues examined may include: civil democracy and repression; global governance and the rule of law; democratic movements and social power; human rights instruments, regimes and remedies; armed conflict; and humanitarian intervention.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores how people in different times and places have enacted the ideals of justice. From international legal frameworks for human rights to grassroots political organizations and social movements, this course offers an overview of some of the key debates and events that have shaped the current notions of rights, justice, and equality. There will be three sections. Students will engage with critical scholarship to think through different historical accounts of human rights and humanitarianism (*Section 1*), right discourses and their limitations (*Section 2*), and struggles for social justice and alternative imaginations for the future (*Section 3*). Some of the issues we will discuss include declarations of human rights; Western humanitarianism; the war on terror; the “refugee crisis”; settler colonialism; social movements challenging race, class, and gender inequalities; police violence; open-source technologies of investigation; degrowth and climate justice; and mass

incarceration.

In this second-year course, students will begin to develop necessary research and writing skills by practicing close reading, analytical writing, and critical engagement with the materials. There will also be in-class activities and discussions. Students are expected to participate actively in these discussions and activities throughout the course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate the key debates that have shaped current practices of human rights and the notions of social justice
- Identify different meanings of 'rights' and 'social justice' in different historical and social contexts
- Identify and explain concrete examples/case studies and their links to abstract ideas of rights and social justice
- Analyze the assumptions and limitations of idealistic notions of human rights
- Critique and assess arguments made by scholars and activists
- Describe and explain how new ideas emerging from the class materials challenge their own understanding of an idea related to the rights and justice

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required texts will be available on Brightspace. Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course. However, if you prefer, you may order a hard copy of the book assigned for Weeks 6 and 7:

Gina Starblanket and Dallas Hunt, *Storying Violence: Unravelling Colonial Narratives in the Stanley Trial* (ARP, 2020).

Note: library e-book available and hard copy is \$15 at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave., Ottawa

EVALUATION

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

COURSE COMPONENTS

1. Short Reading Reflections (6): 30%
2. Class Attendance + Contribution (10): 10%
3. Book Analysis: 25%
4. Take Home Final: Academic Blog Post / Podcast: 35%

Short Reading Reflections (30%)

Reading is extremely important in this course and as such, students are expected to do all of the weekly required readings BEFORE each class. To help encourage weekly reading and develop critical writing skills, students are required to write **6 short reflections**. Students may select any 6 weeks to write their reflection, excluding week 1, week 6, week 7 and week 12. The reflections should demonstrate critical engagement with the readings and materials of that specific week. They must be argumentative meaning they should have an underlying question related to that week's readings and other materials. These reflections are not intended to be summaries or reviews. They provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their critical thinking skills, express their curiosity about the subject, and show their ability to pose insightful questions. Each reflection should be **350-500 words** and is **due before each class**.

Class Attendance & Contributions (10%)

Students are expected to attend the classes throughout the course but **may miss/skip up to 3 classes** without penalty. The classes will incorporate a mix of lectures, case studies, Q&A, and small-group discussions. Active participation in these discussions and activities is required to earn full marks. At the end of certain classes, students may be required to write posts on the Brightspace discussion forum.

Book Analysis (25%)

Students are required to read *Storying Violence: Unravelling Colonial Narratives in the Stanley Trial* by Dallas Hunt & Gina Starblanket and write a critical paper that analyses the authors' argument and how it relates to human rights and social justice issues. The analysis should be **2000-2250 words** and should follow the instructions outlined in the assignment sheet (instructions will be posted). Book analysis papers will be due on **October 28**.

Take Home Final: Academic Blog Post OR Podcast (35%)

To help students connect and apply what they learn about social justice and human rights to our contemporary world, they will be required to **write an academic blog post OR record a podcast** on a topic they choose. The topic should fit within the themes of the course. Students will do research and produce a concise blog post, or a podcast episode catered to an academic audience relevant to the course materials and social justice issues covered in class. Detailed instructions will be posted on Brightspace.

All components must be successfully completed in order to get a passing grade.

LATE PENALTIES AND REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS*Late Penalties*

Assignments will be penalized as follows:

- Deduction of 3% marks per day of delay in handing the assignment after the due date
- There will be no extensions for reflection papers.

Extensions

The granting of extensions is at the discretion of the instructor, who will confirm whether an extension is approved and its duration. For information about requesting short-term or long-term extensions, deferrals for final exams, or academic consideration due to illness, injury, or other extraordinary circumstances, please visit the Academic Consideration Policy page and complete the relevant forms as required. All requests must be submitted to the instructor before the assignment due date or, in the case of exam deferrals, directly to the Registrar's Office. Full details and instructions can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-consideration-policy/>.

Extensions for longer than 7 days will normally not be granted. In those extraordinary cases where extensions lasting longer than 7 days are granted, the student will be required to provide additional information to justify the longer extension (up to a maximum of 14 days).

SCHEDULE**!! No class on September 3 !!****Week 1 | September 10: Introduction - Studying Rights and Justice**

Syllabus

Section 1: HISTORIES**Week 2 | September 17: The Political Language of Human Rights**

Hunt, Lynn (2007) 'Introduction' and 'They Have Set a Great Example: Declaring Rights' in *Inventing Human Rights*, pgs. 15-34; 113-145

Look over: the three Declarations in Hunt's Appendix, pgs. 215-229

Week 3 | September 24: From Humanism to Humanitarianism

Douzinas, Costas (2007) 'End of Human rights?' in *Human Rights and Empire: The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*, pgs. 3-33

Week 4 | October 1: Silenced Histories

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph (1995) 'An Unthinkable History: The Haitian Revolution as a Non-event' in *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History*, pgs. 70-108

Section 2: COURTS AND STATES

Week 5 | October 8: Rights, Nation, and the State(lessness)

Benhabib, Seyla (2004) 'The Right to Have Rights: Hannah Arendt on the contradictions of the nation-state' in *The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents and Citizens*. New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pgs. 49-69

Loick, Daniel (2020) Europe's Necropolitics Sparked the fire at Moria camp. September 19, 2020 (ROAR Magazine, online: <https://roarmag.org/essays/europe-necropolitics-moria-camp/>)

Week 6 | October 15: Settler-Colonial Narratives in Courts

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. "Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Volume One: Summary", pgs. 1-24

Starblanket, Gina & Dallas Hunt (2020) *Storying Violence: Unravelling Colonial Narratives in the Stanley Trial*, ARP Books (Introduction, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2)

Reading week | No class on October 22

Week 7 | October 29: The Limits of Rights (I): Indigenous Justice

Starblanket, Gina & Dallas Hunt (2020) *Storying Violence: Unravelling Colonial Narratives in the Stanley Trial*, ARP Books (Chapter 3, Chapter 4, and Conclusion)

Look over: "Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper (Executive Summary)" <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/community-tools-resources/>

Week 8 | November 5: The Limits of Rights (II): Class, Race, Gender, and Queer Politics

Davis, Angela Y (1983) 'Class and Race in the Early Women's Rights Campaign.' In *Women, Race & Class*, 46–69. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

Spade, Dean (2015) "What's Wrong with Rights?" in *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. Pgs. 38-49.

Suggested:

Brown, Wendy (2002) 'Suffering the Paradoxes of Rights' in *Left Legalism/Left Critique*, pgs. 420-434

Section 3: COMMONS

Week 9 | November 12: Protest, Visibility, and the Politics of the Street

Scott, Ellen C. (2018) "Close-Up: Black Images Matter: Introduction: Black Images Matter: Contextualizing

Images of Racialized Police Violence” Black Camera: An International Film Journal 9, no. 2, pgs. 76–81

Safiya Umoja Noble (2018), “Close-Up: Black Images Matter: Critical Surveillance Literacy in Social Media: Interrogating Black Death and Dying Online” Black Camera: An International Film Journal 9, no. 2, pgs. 147–160.

L (2022) Figuring a Women’s Revolution: Bodies Interacting with their Images. October 5, 2022 (Jadaliyya) <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/44479>

Suggested:

Butler, Judith (2015). Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street in Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly Harvard University Press, pgs. 64-98
similar version is available online: (2011) Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street [Internet]. Online unter: [http:// www. eipcp. net/ transversal, 1011.](http://www.eipcp.net/transversal_1011)

Mirzoeff, Nicolas (2019) ‘Persistent looking in the space of appearance #BlackLivesMatter’ in Cultures, Citizenship and Human Rights Routledge, pgs. 11- 30 similar version is available online: (2018) Tactics of Appearance for Abolition Democracy #BlackLivesMatter https://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/tactics_of_appearance/

Week 10 | November 19: Art and Technologies of Human Rights Investigations

Weizman, Eyal (2010) 'Forensic architecture: Only the criminal can solve the crime', Radical Philosophy 164, Nov/Dec 2010, pgs. 9-24

Weizman, Eyal (2017) ‘Introduction: At the Threshold of Detectability’ in Forensic Architecture: Violence at the Threshold of Detectability New York; Zone Books, pgs. 13-47

Look over:

- Earshot: Sonic investigations for communities affected by corporate, state, and environmental injustice, <https://earshot.ngo/>
- Forensic Architecture, <https://forensic-architecture.org/>
- Rabih Mroué’s Pixelated Revolution, <https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/905>
- SITU Research, <https://situ.nyc/research>

Suggested:

Fuller, Matthew & Eyal Weizman (2021) Investigative aesthetics: conflicts and commons in the politics of truth: Introduction, pgs. 8-36

Week 11 | November 26: Collective Struggles in the Neoliberal Times

Listen: Growth, Degrowth, Agrowth. The Ecopolitics Podcast EPISODE 2.11 <https://www.ecopoliticspodcast.ca/episode-2-11-growth-degrowth-agrowth/>

Listen: Ruth Wilson Gilmore Makes the Case for Abolition. June 10, 2020, Intercepted Podcast Series <https://theintercept.com/2020/06/10/ruth-wilson-gilmore-makes-the-case-for-abolition/>

Week 12 | December 3: Review

No required reading

POLICY ON PERMISSIBILITY OF SUBMITTING SAME WORK MORE THAN ONCE, PERMISSIBILITY OF GROUP OR COLLABORATIVE WORK, AND PERMISSIBILITY OF USING GENERATIVE AI**Permissibility of Submitting Substantially the Same Piece of Work for Academic Credit**

Students are allowed to re-use a portion of their own work from previous assignments or courses, provided they acquire necessary approvals from the instructor and acknowledge and properly cite the portions that were previously submitted. For instance, if a student has already written a paper on a similar topic, they may incorporate findings or arguments from that earlier work but must indicate where these come from. Students should seek approval from the instructor if they are unsure whether their submission meets the criteria. Submitting work without clear acknowledgment of reused material will be considered a violation of academic integrity.

Cooperation or Collaboration

Collaboration is permitted in specific instances where the instructor allows it. For example, group projects or collaborative assignments may be part of the course, in which case students are encouraged to work together and divide the tasks evenly. In all other cases (such as individual assignments), students must complete their work independently.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

Students may use AI tools like ChatGPT, but only in specific, limited ways. AI tools can be used to assist with tasks such as gathering ideas, researching initial sources, or proofreading a final draft for grammar and style. However, students are not allowed to use AI to organize or communicate their core ideas. The focus of the course is on developing original thought and critical thinking skills, so AI should not be relied upon for creating the main content of an assignment. Any use of AI must be clearly documented and cited, including the prompts used and how the tool assisted in the process.

Fall 2025 Sessional Dates and University Closures	
<i>Please find a full list of important academic dates on the calendar website:</i> https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/	
September 3, 2025	Fall term begins.
September 16, 2025	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) for fall, and fall/winter courses.
September 30, 2025	Last day to withdraw from fall term and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment (financial withdrawal).
October 13, 2025	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 20-24, 2025	Fall break. No classes.
November 15, 2025	Last day for academic withdrawal from fall courses.
	Last day to request formal exam accommodations for fall, and fall/winter examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities.
November 24, 2025	Last day for summative tests or examinations or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade in the fall or fall/winter before the official examination period.
December 5, 2025	Fall term ends.
	Last day of fall term classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for take home examinations to be assigned.
December 6-7, 2025	No classes or examinations take place.
December 8-20, 2025	Final examinations in fall term courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.
December 20, 2025	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
December 24, 2025 – January 2, 2025	University closed.

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;

- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

- <https://wellness.carleton.ca/get-help-now/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows.

Pregnancy and Family-Status Related Accommodations

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details about the accommodation policy, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities \(EIC\)](#) website.

Religious Obligation

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please go to: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. You can find the Paul Menton Centre online at: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for

accommodation is known to exist. Read more here: <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>.

For more information on academic accommodation, please visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>.

Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfill the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented.

Students must contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible, and normally no later than 24 hours after the submission deadline for course deliverables. If not satisfied with the instructor's decision, students can conduct an "informal appeal" to the Chair of the department within three (3) working days of an instructor's decision. We have created a webform specifically for appeals to the Chair, which can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/law/application-for-review-of-refusal-to-provide-academic-consideration/>. *Note: This form only applies to LAWS courses and is not the same as a formal appeal of grade.* More information about the academic consideration can be found [here](#).