

Course Outline

COURSE:	LAWS 4601 B (Winter) (Transnational Law and Human Rights)
TERM:	Winter 2025-2026
PREREQUISITES:	Prerequisite(s): LAWS 2908 , 0.5 credit from LAWS 3503 or LAWS 3602 , and fourth-year Honours
CLASS:	Day & Time: Tuesdays 14:35 pm – 17:25 pm (<i>Please refer to the public schedule on Carleton Central</i>) This is an in-person class; attendance in class is required. Room: Check Carleton Central
INSTRUCTOR:	Doris Buss
CONTACT:	Office: Loeb D589 Office Hrs: Online via zoom: Wednesdays 2:00- 3:00 pm* In person Tuesdays 5:20-6:00 pm Telephone: OR by appointment 613-520-2600 x. 8011 Email: Doris.buss@carleton.ca *Please confirm in advance

CALENDAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examination of the role of law in addressing human rights issues that transcend traditional categories of domestic and international law; the potential and limits of law in addressing human rights issues; the growth of transnational approaches to law and human rights.

(From the Undergraduate Calendar)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the transnational dimensions of human rights through a focus on human rights and natural resource exploitation. Mining companies, many of which are

registered as Canadian corporations, are the focus of growing advocacy concerns, and multi-scalar law and policy interventions to address the human rights abuses, and development limitations linked to resource extraction. The various initiatives to address the mining-human rights nexus span multiple scales - transnational, global, international, and local - and regulatory types; state laws, international law, norms, rules, best practices, guiding principles, frameworks. This course will explore human rights abuses and related challenges arising from transnational resource extraction in the global South. In the process, we will also delve deeper into the different operations of power in and through extractive frontiers and their legal regulation.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students will be better able to:

- a. explore and analyze in multiple assignments the transnational dimensions of human rights resulting from resource extraction and the potential for social movement advocacy to redress human rights;
- b. identify and be able to explore key concepts and arguments by scholars writing on colonial and contemporary displacements linked to resource extraction in an in-person exam;
- c. identify and evaluate new forms of regulating resource extraction in Canada and transnationally in class discussion, written assignments and a presentation;
- d. demonstrate an ability to write and present analyses of legal developments for policy makers;
- e. Demonstrate engaged participation in an academic course by staying up to date on readings, attending class regularly, following class discussion (which might include participation, but could also be demonstrated through other means such as incorporating class discussion into written assignments), active participation in all group activities (including classroom small-group work).

Required Text: Course materials are available on ARES and on web addresses provided (but the readings are also easily found through Carleton Library's online catalogue).

Evaluation: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval 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.

ASSESSMENTS (further information is provided in a separate **assignment instruction document**, uploaded to Brightspace).

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|--|---------------------|
| 1. Biography of yourself: 3% | Due 2:35 pm, Jan 13 |
| 2. In class short assignments Part 1: 15%
3 assignments x 5% | Jan 13-Feb 3 |

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| 3. In class Essay/Quiz: 18% | Feb 10 |
| 4. In class short assignments Part 2: 10%
2 assignments x 5% | Feb 24-Mar 17 |
| 5. Final Assignment: | |
| a. Small group written submission + oral presentation: 18% | |
| b. Individual essay: 20% | Due April 8 at midnight |
| c. Peer Review: 4% | |
| d. Participation: 12% | |
| TOTAL: 100% | |

Other assessment related instructions, including requests for extensions (in addition to those found on Brightspace):

- Assignments handed in more than 45 minutes past the due date will be marked late. Late assignments will be deducted 2 grades/day. Assignments more than three days late will be graded “0”. Extensions will only be granted in extreme cases and with appropriate documentation. All late assignments will be put on the bottom of the marking pile. I cannot guarantee that late assignments will be marked prior to the end of term.
- 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. 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/>.
- Students requiring more than two of these extensions will be required to meet with me prior to any further extensions.
- **Extensions for longer than 7 days will normally not be granted (see further information on accommodations below).**
- **Students are required to complete all assignments to pass this course.**

F. COMMUNICATING

I have regular office hours including immediately after our class (in person), or by zoom. You can also make an appointment to see me at an agreed time. I also respond to emails within a few days. BUT PLEASE NOTE: I do not look at email on the weekends or in the evenings.

Final Grade Approval

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval 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 Dean.

Plagiarism, collaboration, academic good practice, generative AI

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.

Collaboration: Reading groups, discussion groups, supportive help and guidance among graduate students is to be encouraged. Good scholarship, while often individually authored, is usually the result of ongoing conversations, suggestions and encouragement.

However, as graduate students it is essential that ALL YOUR work is generated by you , in your own words, and is original for each course. Assignments, in whole or in part, cannot be submitted to one or more assignment requirement or course. Re-using any portion of previous work, regardless of its extent, will be treated as a violation of academic integrity.

Academic good practice means citing appropriately, and using quotation marks where needed. Passing off work as your own that relies on the words, phrases, or ideas of others, including by generative AI, is NEVER PERMITTED.

Use of Generative AI

- permissible: brainstorming; creating draft outlines (ie helping you organize your thoughts). Any such use needs to be documented: what technology did you use, what questions did you ask to generate your brainstorming or outline; how did you adapt these for your purposes. This explanation will not negatively impact your mark in any way. Its just good practice (and good for you to create a record of which prompts worked well for you, and which did not).
- Unacceptable use: writing and/or compiling of an assignment. Student might be tempted to generate and rely upon readings summaries produced through some generative AI interface (whether Chat GPT or otherwise). You cannot REPRODUCE these summaries in any form. Doing so, in any way, is a form of plagiarism that will not be tolerated.

But, more importantly, use of generative AI for summarizing readings is strongly discouraged. Why?

- a. The most utilitarian reason: generative AI is still not able to do this well and at a level of depth and comprehension appropriate to an MA. The summaries it will generate for you will be superficial and may even be inaccurate.
- b. Assessments in this class require you to read more deeply than an AI-generated summary. The 'short cut' of an AI summary will end up costing you in marks, but also means you will not develop the skills you need for this course and for your future.

My colleague Philip Kaisary puts it this way:

“The course readings are supposed to be challenging: the process of reading and rereading them to make sense of them can be a struggle, but this process of struggle is fundamental to developing a mastery of the course materials. Or, to put in another way, you can hire someone to lift weights for you, but that defeats the point. The value lies in the struggle itself.”

- c. Need more reasons? See this [study](#) comparing groups of students using generative AI (referred to as large language models in this study, or LLMs) to write an essay. The findings: students who use only their brains (the “brain only” group) had “stronger memory and greater semantic accuracy”. The LLM group showed “weaker memory, reduced self-monitoring, and fragmented authorship” (p 138). That is, the ease of LLMs will impact your cognitive abilities. Do you want that?
- d. Environmental and security concerns: Data centers needed for generative AI consume enormous amounts of electricity and water. They are expected to exponentially increase their draws of both electricity and water, becoming a key driver of climate change and water loss. See [here](#) and [here](#) Oh, and there are other related issues about national and individual security (Canadian national ownership of digital infrastructure is woeful. We are under the thumb of the tech bros and why add to that?)
- e. And, if you are not already convinced: generative AI gets better, stronger and more profitable for the owners (a small group of uber wealthy guys in the US mostly) when YOU use it. That is, each time you use generative AI you are helping to make the tech better, and the tech bros wealthier. Why would you?

No recordings of class discussion are permissible – ever.

PLEASE SEE end of course schedule for more information on: University and Departmental Policies on academic accommodations.

SCHEDULE AND Topics

1. Jan 6 - Introduction
 - a. Amnesty International. 2016. *This is what we die for : Human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo power the global trade in cobalt.*
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr62/3183/2016/en/>
 - b. <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/mar/03/toronto-hidden-history-how-city-built-mining>
2. Jan 13 - Colonialism and Extractives
3. Jan 20 - Transnationality and Introducing Legal Geography: space, scale and law’s violence
4. Jan 27 - Resource Frontiers: Expulsion and New (?) Patterns of Exploitation
5. Feb 3 - Governance Gaps (?) and Global Regulation

6. Feb 10 – In class exam

Feb 17 – Winter Break – No Class

7. Feb 24 – Conflict mining and the new era of transnational legal regulation

8. March 3 - Risk- Based Governance and Private Sector: Due Diligence and the Rise of Standards

9. March 10 - Critical Minerals and a “Just” Transition

10. March 17 – Canada and Critical Minerals: What place for FPIC?

11. March 24 – FPIC and Canadian Critical Minerals continued and student presentations

12. March 31 – Student Presentations

University Grading system

Grade Point Equivalence Percentage Conversion

A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	less than 50

Winter 2026 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/	
January 5, 2026	Winter term begins.
January 16, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) for Winter courses.
January 31, 2026	Last day to withdraw from full winter courses and the winter portion of fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
February 16, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
February 16-20, 2026	Winter break. No classes.
March 15, 2026	Last day for academic withdrawal from Winter courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for April full winter, late winter, and fall/winter final examinations from the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
March 25, 2026	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full winter term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official April final examination period.
April 3, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
April 8, 2026	Winter term ends.
	Last day of winter and fall/winter classes.
	Classes follow a Friday schedule.
	Last day for take home examinations to be assigned.
April 9-10, 2026	No classes or examinations take place.
April 11-23, 2026	Final examinations in fall term courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.
April 23, 2026	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.

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](#).