Carleton University  
Fall 2011  
Department of Political Science  

PSCI 3307 A  
Politics of Human Rights  
Fridays, 8:35 - 11:25  
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Julia Brotea  
Office: A609 Loeb Building  
Telephone: 613-520-2600 x 2063  
Office Hours: Fridays 11:30 – 12:30 pm or by appointment  
Email: jbrotea@connect.carleton.ca

Course Rationale and Objective:

“What are human rights and how did they come about?” The first half of this course is designed to help answer this question. It is best understood as an attempt to provide a conceptual foundation for discussing human rights. It traces human rights back to their philosophical origins in the liberal tradition and then examines their subsequent growth in modern western civilization. Here, we will also engage the work of both vehement supporters and vehement critics of human rights.

The second half of the course examines modern challenges to the human rights tradition. It will highlight controversial issues that pose challenges to this tradition. Among the guiding questions for this half are: ‘Who guarantees the rights of refugees?’; ‘Is modern warfare a threat to human rights?’; ‘Do we have a right to own our DNA?’; and ‘Can our tradition of human rights accommodate public demands for a right-to-die and animal rights legislation?’

The objective of this course is to familiarize students with the history and tradition of human rights and the rational behind them in order to help them respond to modern human rights challenges.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to attend class regularly, to read all assigned material, to participate in discussions, and to prepare insightful and argumentative written essays. The course evaluation will be based on attendance, a short essay, a longer essay, and a take home final exam.

Course Evaluation:

Attendance: 20%  
Short Essay: 25% Due November 4th in class (4-6 pages)  
Second Term Essay: 30% Due last day of class (12-15 pages)  
Take home final exam 25% Due Monday following last day of class
Attendance: half of the attendance mark (10%) will be given to students for simply showing up to class. Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of class for 1% per class (for a total of 10 classes). The remaining 10% will be awarded based on class participation. During class discussions, students will be asked to contribute relevant and thoughtful arguments, as well as participate in group discussions. The class will be divided into two equal discussion groups labeled A and B. The groups will alternate each week. Thus, every week lectures will be two hours long (including a 20 minutes brake) and the remaining hour will be reserved for discussion with only half of the class.

Short essay: The short essay shall be 4-6 pages (double-spaced) and typed using 12-point font. It will be due in class on November 4th, 2011. It will be based only on the material discussed in class during the first half of the course. NO external sources are to be used unless the instructor approves them beforehand.

Second term essay: This essay shall be 12-15 pages double-spaced typed using 12-point font and it will be due on the last day of class. It shall engage the material discussed throughout the second half of the course and students shall focus on one or more issue identified during lectures or in the readings. Secondary sources will be permitted, but they will not be encouraged.

Take home final: The take home final will be distributed in class during the last lecture and it will also be made available on WebCT. It will consist of 4 questions and students are to select and answer 2 of the 4. This exam will be based on the material used throughout the course and no additional research will be required.

Submission and Return of the Term Work:

Essays must be handed directly to the instructor, in class, or to the departmental office. Attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your final assignment returned to you by mail. Papers submitted may be picked up at the Instructor’s office on a date to be announced in class. Do not put essays in the mailbox or slide them under the Instructor’s door.

Late Paper Policy:

Marks will be deducted for late submissions at the rate of on half-letter grade per day, with weekends counting as two days. Late papers are to be delivered directly to the Instructor or to the Political Science office. If you have serious extenuating circumstances, which would warrant an extension without penalty (such as illness, death, plague and pestilence, foreign invasion or civil war), medical documentation detailing the extent of your incapacitation is required. The medical note need not record your
diagnosis, but it must indicate what you are consequently unable to do, e.g. cannot write, see, etc. Retroactive extensions will not be granted.

You must keep a copy of your paper. As the instructor may require students to pass a brief oral examination on the research essays (see the sections on ‘Plagiarism’ below), you should keep all notes, outlines, working drafts until you have received your final grade in the course.

**Part 1**

**September 9th** - Introduction

**September 16th** - International Law and human rights

Hugo Grotius, *The Law of War and Peace*, Prolegomena
www.mindserpent.com/American_History/books/Grotius/djbp_proleg.htm

**September 23rd** Liberal tradition of human rights I

www.oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-contents.html

**September 30th** – Liberal tradition of human rights II

John Locke, The Second Treatise of Government, Selections TBA
www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm

American Declaration of Independence
www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/

**October 7th** Rousseau and human rights

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, A discourse on the origin of Inequality
www.constitution.org/jjr/ineq.htm

**October 14th** Debating human rights

Edmund Burke, Reflections of the Revolution in France, 1790 Selections TBA
www.constitution.org/eb/rev_fran.htm

Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in a Letter to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, occaisioned by his Reflections on the Revolution in France
www.classicliberal.tripod.com/maryw/vrom.html
October 21st **Women rights and the civil rights movement**

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman; Introduction, Chapter 1*
text.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/WolVind.html

Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” 1963.
www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

October 28th **Critics of human rights**

Karl Marx, “The communist manifesto”
http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/61/pg61.html

Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four chapters on the concept of sovereignty.*
http://pdflibrary.files.wordpress.com/2008/02/schmitt_polittheology.pdf

Part 2

November 4th  - **Short essay due in class.**

**Community vs individual rights**

United Nations Declaration of Human Rights


November 11th  - **the rights of refugees**


November 18th  - **The challenge of modern warfare**

Jeffrey G. Johnston, *The Risk of Torture as a Basis for Refusing Extradition and the Use of Diplomatic Assurances to Protect against Torture after 9/11.*

www.alandershowitz.com/publications/docs/torturewarrants2.html

www.nytimes.com/2004/05/02/magazine/lesser-evils.html
November 25th DNA ownership; genetic privacy; genetic discrimination


December 2nd – Second Term essay due; and Pick up Take home final exam

Animal rights and the right to die


www.city-journal.org/html/10_3_urbanities-animal.html


Reading materials

All the readings are available either on line (at the links indicated on this outline), on webCT, or accessed through University Library’s electronic catalogue.

Recommended readings


Academic Accommodations

For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. 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 assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by (November 11, 2011 for fall term examinations and March 7, 2012 for winter term 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 University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own." This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

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.

Grading: The following is the Carleton University grading system.

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<th>Percentage</th>
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Grades: Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

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.

Connect Email Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.