



PSCI 3355
Global Perspectives on Human Rights in Action
CAPA LONDON PROGRAM

Course Description

The notion of human rights has become central to global politics today. It is not a single subject but a broad field of potential investigation: this intensive seminar provides a multi-disciplinary introduction to the topic, critically examining the politics of human rights, their contentious nature and uneven global implementation. Throughout, the focus will be on practical issues and the contested politics of human rights in action through a range of topical case studies. Students will evaluate key debates about the politics and morality of human rights, analyze and explore the theoretical foundations of human rights concepts and topical issues relating to human rights from a variety of global, regional and local perspectives. The course critically examines the history and development of concepts of human rights and the philosophies underpinning them, as well as current frameworks of international human rights law and the relationship among current debates in human rights, political power and social injustice, with a particular focus on London as a global centre for human rights advocacy, practice and activism. Topics to be covered will include the practical implementation and enforcement of human rights; the relationship between human and civil rights; postcolonial and feminist critiques of human rights; the intersection of human rights with gender, sexuality, ethnicity and class; and women's, children's and indigenous peoples' rights.

Course Aims

Students will be encouraged to examine critically the political character of human rights and their own views and assumptions about them, as well as consider the ways in which human rights values can impact local, national and global issues. By the end of the course, participants will be able to demonstrate a fundamental understanding of human rights systems and issues in global, European and British contexts.

Requirements and Prerequisites

There are no formal prerequisites for this course, which is aimed at all students with an interest in human rights and assumes no previous knowledge of the subject. Critical thinking and a willingness to participate actively will be necessary in order to complete the course successfully.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will have the knowledge, understanding and skills to be able to:

- a. Appreciate the major concepts, history, development and structure of international human rights
- b. Evaluate key debates about the political and moral character of human rights
- c. Use a human rights framework to analyze and assess topical issues of rights, social justice and inequality
- d. Understand the contentious character of human rights claims and differing political perspectives towards them
- e. Articulate and explain complex ideas about human rights in oral and written forms
- f. Appreciate the role of London as a location for human rights activism and advocacy at local, national and global scales.

Developmental Outcomes

Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, and appreciation of differences.

Class Methodology

This class will meet for 3 hours 20 minutes per week over 13 weeks. As an intensive seminar, emphasis is placed on discussion and active student participation in debate. The course will therefore be taught interactively with a variety of student exercises, debates and presentations to enable students to gain competence and confidence in using core human rights terminology and utilizing and applying core principles within the field of human rights. A variety of guest speakers actively engaged in human rights activism and legislation will explore their implementation in local, national and global contexts.

Field Components

CAPA provides the unique opportunity to learn about the city through direct, guided experience. Participation in field activities for this course is required. You will actively explore the Global City in which you are currently living. Furthermore, you will have the chance to collect useful information that will be an invaluable resource for the essays/papers/projects assigned in this course.

The assigned field components are listed in the schedule below.

Field components listed in the syllabus are provisional as the program will take advantage of students' interests and opportunities to engage with course themes as they appear. London is an important centre of research and policy-making in the field of global human rights and there are many relevant institutions, organizations and activist groups in the global city. Guest speakers and relevant field studies and site visits will therefore vary from semester to semester and may include, among others:

The Centre for the Study of Human Rights, London School of Economics: www.lse.ac.uk/humanRights

The Equality and Human Rights Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org

The British Institute of Human Rights: <https://www.bihhr.org.uk/>

Liberty: <https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/>

Islamic Human Rights Commission: <http://www.ihrc.org.uk/>

Privacy International: <https://www.privacyinternational.org/>

Human Rights Lawyers Association: <https://www.hrla.org.uk/>

Amnesty International UK: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/>

Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in **co-curricular** program activities, among which the following are suggested:

Relevant "My Global City" events and activities, or other optional activities (such as LSE Public lectures etc), will vary from semester to semester.

Final Exam

The final exam consists of two parts:

- C) Short questions with open answers on topics covered in class
- D) Short essay writing on the thematic clusters

Assessment/Grading Policy

Descriptor	Alpha	UK	US	GPA
Excellent	A	75+	93+	4.0
	A-	70-74	90-92	3.7
Good	B+	66-69	87-89	3.3
	B	63-65	83-86	3.0
	B-	60-62	80-82	2.7
Average	C+	56-59	77-79	2.3
	C	53-55	73-76	2.0
Below Average / Poor	C-	50-52	70-72	1.7
	D+	46-49	67-69	1.3
	D	40-45	60-66	0.7
				1.0
Fail	F	<40	<60	0

Grade Breakdown and Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Assessment Task	Grade %	Learning Outcomes	Due Date
Class participation/Small group discussion	20%	all	Weekly
Oral Presentation 1 X 15-20 min. group presentation	15%	all	Week 6

Field Study Reports x 2 @ 500 words each	10%	all	As indicated
Research Paper, 2000 words	25%	all	Week 13
Final Exam	30%	all	Week 14

Assignments

Participation: 20%

This is an intensive seminar class. As such, active participation in classroom discussion and field studies is an expected component of the course and will enhance students' understanding of the material for their research and field study papers, presentation and exam. Lecture material and field studies encourage discussion based on students' observations as well as insights from course materials. Students are expected to have completed the readings prior to each class and to contribute to discussion in an informed manner through relevant comments, questions, and analysis. Silent attendance of class will not result in a strong participation grade. It is students' responsibility to ensure on the day that they are included on the register for classes and field studies. Grades will be based on the quality of participation in class discussions, such as taking an active role in asking questions, making comments, as well as evidence that required reading has been completed on time.

Oral Presentation: 15%

In-class presentations of 15-20 minutes will take place either singly or in groups depending on class size. Students will produce a presentation (including questions) based on their research project into a specific human rights issue, allowing students to investigate key themes in greater detail and share their findings with their peers. These presentations will also give students the opportunity to receive formative feedback from peers and their instructor before submitting the final research paper.

Field Study Reports x 2 @ 500 words each: 10%

Students will submit two 500 word reports based on their field study visits during the course. These reports will enable them to relate the findings from their visits to the broader context of key themes in human rights and consider the ways in which the field of human rights is represented in different ways in the social dynamics, institutions and grassroots and activist organizations of the global city. Further guidance and additional notes will be provided by the instructor.

Research Paper: 2000 words: 25%

Students will submit one 2000 word paper that will draw on the topic selected for their in-class presentation and which will situate a specific human rights issue, project or organization within both the 'local' context of London and the 'global' context of relevant concepts and debates in human rights. A shortlist of suitable topics and case studies will be provided by the instructor. Students must not select a topic or organization which they have already covered for their field study report. Papers should be analytical rather than descriptive and based on a clearly-stated thesis and supported by specific details from the field studies, class handouts and readings where appropriate. Written analysis must be supported by a **minimum of eight secondary sources**, which should be cited in the text and in a final bibliography.

Students must demonstrate their ability to search the literature and broader resources to produce a critical, cohesive and balanced argument drawing on this research and relevant concepts and debates in the field of human rights. Relevant resources will be found in the CAPA Resource Centre, as well as through students' institutional online access to scholarly journals and the SUNY Online Library: <http://libraryguides.oswego.edu/capa>

Final Exam: 30%

The final exam (2.5 hours) consists of two sections: a) a choice of short answer questions and b) an essay answer chosen from a selection based on the key themes covered in the course.

Dress Code

To be advised. Smart casual will be required for visiting law courts.

Course Materials

Required Reading:

The required textbook for this course is:

Goodhart, M., ed. (2016): *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Additional required readings will be provided in xerox or electronic form via Canvas as indicated in the weekly schedule below.

Recommended Reading:

- Alston, P. & R. Goodman (2012): *International Human Rights*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Boal, G. (2000): *Theatre of the Oppressed*, 3rd edition, Pluto Press
- Chakrabarti, S. (2015): *On Liberty*, Penguin, London
- Clapham, A. (2015): *Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Colon, C., A. Gristwood & M. Woolf, eds. (2016): *Human Rights in Action: Power, Politics, and Practices*, CAPA Occasional Publications No. 5, CAPA, Boston, MA, available at: <https://info.capa.org/capas-human-rights-in-action>
- Crawshaw, S., J. Jackson (2010): *Small Acts of Resistance: How Courage, Tenacity and a Bit of Ingenuity Can Change the World*, Union Square, London
- Crawshaw, S. & A. Weiwei (2017): *Street Spirit: The Power of Protest and Mischief*, LOM Art, London
- Donnelly, J. (2013): *Universal Rights in Theory and Practice*, 3rd edition, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY
- Follesdal, A. and R. Maliks, eds. (2014): *Kantian Theory and Human Rights*, Routledge, New York, NY
- Gearty, C. (2016): *On Fantasy Island: Britain, Europe, and Human Rights*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Ghandhi, S. (2012): *Blackstone's International Human Rights Documents*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Hopgood, S. (2013): *The Endtimes of Human Rights*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.
- Ife, J. (2010): *Human Rights from Below: Achieving Rights through Community Development*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Klug, F. (2015): *A Magna Carta for All Humanity: Homing in on Human Rights*, Routledge, London
- Moyn, S. (2010): *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA
- Moyn, S. (2014): *Human Rights and the Uses of History*, Verso, London
- Madison, D. S. (2012): *Acts of Activism: Human Rights as Radical Performance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Rae, P. (2009): *Theatre and Human Rights*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
- Risse, M. (2012): *On Global Justice*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ
- Stammers, N. (2009): *Human Rights and Social Movements*. Pluto Press, London
- Wallace, R. M. M. & K. Dale-Risk (2001): *International Human Rights: Text and Materials*, Sweet & Maxwell, London
- Wells, H. G. ([1940] 2015): *The Rights of Man, or What are we Fighting for?* A. Smith, ed., Penguin, London

Useful Websites and Related Resources:

- OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) (1976): *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*, United Nations Human Rights, available at www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx
- OHCHR (1990): *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, United Nations Human Rights, available at www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx 153

OHCHR (2012): *The Corporate Social Responsibility to Respect Human Rights – An Interpretive Guide*, United Nations Human Rights, available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Business/RtRInterpretativeGuide.pdf

United Nations General Assembly (1948): *General assembly resolution 217 A: Universal declaration of human rights*, available at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

United Nations General Assembly (1966): *International covenant on civil and political rights*, available at <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume20999/volume-999-I-14668-English.pdf>

United Nations Human Rights Committee (1999): *General comment no. 27: Freedom of movement*, available at <http://hasbrouck.org/documents/UNHRC-general-comment-2.pdf>

United for Human Rights: <http://www.humanrights.com/home.html>

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/>

Van Heerden, A. (2010): "Making Global Labor Fair", TED Talk, available at: https://www.ted.com/talks/au-ret_van_heerden_making_global_labor_fair

Weekly Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction: What are Human Rights?

Introduction to the course, field studies and assignments; key concepts in human rights discourse
Categories of rights and topical issues of concern

Activity: Human Rights Squares: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/hrsquares/original.pdf>

Screening and discussion: Berti, B. (n.d.): "What are the Universal Human Rights?" TED Talk, available at: <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-are-the-universal-human-rights-benedetta-berti>

Follow-up Reading:

Goodhart, M. (2016): "Introduction: Human Rights – Politics and Practice" in *Human Rights*, pps. 1-8

United Nations General Assembly (1948): *General assembly resolution 217 A: Universal declaration of human rights*, available at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

Week 2: The Historical Development of Human Rights

Lecture and discussion: the historical development of human rights and rights language; precursors of human rights - the Code of Hammurabi, Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.

Reading:

Langlois, A. J. (2016): "Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights," in M. Goodhart, ed., *Human Rights*, Chapter 1, pps. 12-25

Minogue, K. (1979): "The history of the idea of human rights," in W. Laqueur & B. Rubin, eds., *The Human Rights Reader*, pps. 3-17, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA

Week 3: Are Human Rights Universal?

Lecture and class debate: human rights and cultural difference; questioning the legitimacy of human rights claims; universalist versus relativist views of human rights.

Readings:

Donnelly, J. (2007): "The relative universality of human rights," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29(2), 281-306. Retrieved from <https://login.ezproxy.oswego.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.oswego.edu/docview/204636302?accountid=13025>

Goodhart, M. (2008): "Neither relative nor universal: A response to Donnelly," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 30(1), 183-193. Retrieved from <https://login.ezproxy.oswego.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.oswego.edu/docview/204637059?accountid=13025>

Week 4: Social Movements, Civil and Human Rights

Lecture and Discussion: social movements, community activism and human rights. What are civil rights? The intersection of local, national and global social movements in struggles over human and civil rights.

Readings:

O'Connell, G. (2016): "Geopolitics and Human Rights: Ireland's gay Marriage Vote and the Mediterranean refugee Crisis", in Colon, Gristwood & Woolf, eds, *Human Rights in Action: Power, Politics, and Practices*, pps. 86-95

Stammers, N. (1999): "Social Movements and the Social Construction of Human Rights", *Human Rights Quarterly* 21: 4, 980-1008

Ackerly, Brooke A., and Susan Moller Okin (1999): "Feminist social criticism and the international movement for women's rights as human rights'", *Democracy's Edges*, 134-62

Zivi, Karen (2014): "Performing the nation: Contesting same-sex marriage rights in the United States", *Journal of Human Rights* 13.3: 290-306

Week 5: Human Rights in Action I: London Case Study

Human rights organizations and activist groups in London; working in the field of human rights.

Guest speaker / **Field Study** visit to The Equality and Human Rights Commission: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en> or the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, London School of Economics: www.lse.ac.uk/human-rights

Reading:

Equality and Human Rights Commission (2010): "How Fair is Britain?" overview, Youtube clip: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/how-fair-britain/video-overview>

Jesionka, N. (n.d.): "The first step to working in human rights", *The Muse.com*, online, available at: <https://www.themuse.com/advice/the-first-step-to-working-in-human-rights>

Week 6: Human Rights in Action II: Presentations

Student presentations and discussion of draft projects

Week 7: Mid-Term Break

No class

Week 8: Critiques of Human Rights

Lecture and discussion: Whose rights, exactly? Human Rights, imperialism, neoliberalism and cultural relativism; postcolonial and feminist perspectives on human rights. Challenging assumptions: diversity and human rights.

Readings:

Ackerly, B. (2016): "Feminist and Activist Approaches to Human Rights", Chapter 2 in Goodhart, pps. 28-43

Chandler, D. (2016): "Contemporary Critiques of Human Rights", Chapter 7 in Goodhart, pps. 110-126

Week 9: Place Matters: Geographies of Human Rights

Space, politics and rights; rights of access and place-based human rights struggles; non-western conceptions of human rights. Guest speaker / **field study**: Islamic Human Rights Commission: <http://www.ihrc.org.uk/>

Readings:

Adjovi, R. & C. Mensah (2016): "Human Rights in Africa and Challenges in Perception: An Agenda for International Educators", in Colon, Gristwood & Woolf, eds., *Human Rights in Action: Power, Politics, and Practices*, pps 49-57

Carmalt, J. C. (2007): "Rights and Place: Using Geography in Human Rights Work", *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29: 68–85

Havemann, P. (2016): "Indigenous People's Human Rights," in Goodhart, Chapter 19, pps. 333-350

Week 10: Sexuality, Gender and Human Rights

Screening and Discussion: *Call Me Kuchu* (2012): <https://callmekuchu.com/>

Readings:

Keating, C. & C. Burack (2016): "Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Human Rights", in Goodhart, Chapter 11

Rao, R. (2015): "Global Homocapitalism," *Radical Philosophy*, Nov/Dec: 38-49

Tatchell, P. (2017): "The Global Struggle for LGBT Rights", in Colon, Gristwood & Woolf, eds., *Civil Rights and Inequalities*, pps. 41-51, CAPA Occasional Publications No 6, CAPA, Boston, MA, available at: <https://info.capa.org/capas-civil-rights-and-inequalities-occasional-publication>

Week 11: Women's Rights and the Rights of the Child

Lecture and discussion. Guest speaker: Womankind Worldwide <https://www.womankind.org.uk/>

Readings:

Fraser, A. S. (1999): "Becoming Human: The Origins and Development of Women's Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 21: 853, available at: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/becominghuman/index.html>

MacKinnon, C. (1993): "Crimes of War, Crimes of Peace", *UCLA Women's Law Journal* 4 (1): 59-86, online, available at: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/5435b1mj>

Pupavac, V. (2016): "Children's Human Rights Advocacy," in Goodhart, Chapter 17, pps. 291-310

Week 12: Monitoring and Enforcement of Human Rights Law: Case Study

The monitoring and enforcement of human rights law; supranational, national and local frameworks; criminal justice and human rights. **Field Study visit / guest speaker and discussion** - Human Rights Lawyers Association: <https://www.hrla.org.uk/> or Human Rights Watch: www.hrw.org

Reading:

Landman & Kersten (2016): "Measuring and Monitoring Human Rights", Chapter 4 in Goodhart, pps. 127-144

Smith, R. K. M. (2016): "Human Rights in International Law", pps 60-76, Chapter 4 in Goodhart

Week 13: Synthesis and Review: The Future of Human Rights

Guest Speaker / Discussion: Brexit, the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), and the Human Rights Act.

Readings:

Conor Gearty, "What is the Future of Human Rights in the UK?", Youtube, <https://youtu.be/hgUzceCxrBU>

Gearty, C. (2016): "Introduction: Why the Human Rights Act Matters," in his *On Fantasy Island: Britain, Europe, and Human Rights*, pps 3-14, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Research Paper due

Week 14: Conclusions and Final Exam

Final Exam and Discussion: reflections on student experiences and pathways to careers in human rights.

Attendance, Participation & Student Responsibilities

Attendance: CAPA has a mandatory attendance policy. Attendance is taken at the beginning of every class. Unauthorized absence from class will result in a reduction of the final grade and potentially a failure for the course.

Missing classes for medical reasons: If you need to miss a class for medical reasons or for a family emergency, **you must send an e-mail** to let the academic affairs team know at least one hour in advance of your class or meeting at the following e-mail: excused.absence@capa.org. Note that calling the CAPA Centre (0207 370 7389) is acceptable only if you do not temporarily have access to the internet. An e-mail is still required as quickly as you can get access to the internet again. You will need to provide evidence of the reason for your absence. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. In the event of a missed class or field trip, it is your responsibility to contact your instructor and make up any missed assignments.

Class Participation: Students are expected to participate actively and critically in class discussions, and the participation portion of the class will be graded accordingly. Students must read assignments **BEFORE** the class, and come in on time. Participation is a vital part of your grade: students are expected to participate orally in seminars and in online forums and discussions in a critical and evaluative manner; to interact with the faculty and fellow students with respect and tolerance; and to actively engage in discussion. Derogatory or inflammatory comments about the cultures, perspectives or attitudes of others in the class will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity: A high level of responsibility and academic honesty is expected. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. Plagiarism and cheating will result in dismissal from the program. See the Handbook of CAPA Academic Policies for more information and resources on plagiarism.

Use of electronic equipment in class: All devices such as laptops, i-pods, i-pads, netbooks, notebooks and tablets, smartphones, cell phones, etc. are **NOT** allowed unless you have express permission from the faculty or you have been instructed to do so. If you require an accommodation to use any type of electronic equipment, inform the Associate Director of Academic Affairs at the beginning of Term.

Use of Electronic Translators: In Language courses students are NOT allowed to use electronic translators for writing texts in the target language: those submitting compositions and texts of whatever kind translated in such a fashion will receive a final F grade for the course.

Late Submission: Late submission of papers, projects, journal entries, pieces of homework and portfolios is only permitted with prior approval. A request must be made to the relevant Faculty member no later than two days prior to the due date. Late submission without prior approval will result in a full alpha grade penalty. In either case, work cannot be submitted after feedback has been provided to the rest of the class on the relevant assessment or one week after the due date whichever comes first, after which point a grade of F will be given for the assessment.

Behaviour during Examinations: During examinations, you must do your own work. Unless specifically instructed by the lecturer or instructor, talking during an exam is not permitted, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any failure to abide by examination rules will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and disciplinary action.