

## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

### POLI 2313/CRIM 2313/IND 2319: HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

**Instructor:** Dr. S. Serajul Islam, Ph.D. (McGill)

**Consultation:** Students may contact me through the course or via my personal Lakehead University e-mail account: [sislam2@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:sislam2@lakeheadu.ca).

#### Introducing Myself

Hi everyone, welcome to this class of Human Rights and Civil Liberties. Before getting into the course outline I want to briefly introduce myself. This is Dr. Islam, Professor in the Department of Political Science at Lakehead University. I graduated with my doctorate from McGill University. Since obtaining my doctorate I have been teaching courses in international law and politics. I have taught in many universities in many countries of the world. I have written 9 books and nearly 80 articles in internationally reputed journals. If you would like to know more about me, please visit the university's Political Science website.

Let's now go through the course outline.

#### CONTENT

This course explores aspects of human rights that have both national and international application. It first introduces the concept of human rights from interdisciplinary perspectives and then moves into examining the practices of human rights in various areas of our life through the perspectives of laws on human rights. Thus, the course is divided into two parts. The first part deals with theoretical foundations and concepts of Human Rights. The second part analyzes practical issues of Human Rights in different dimensions of human life in domestic, constitutional, regional, and international contexts.

## **OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOME**

- a. Students will be able to understand the key concepts human rights.
- b. Students will be able to analyze the contemporary challenges and trends in human rights theory and practice.
- c. Students will have the understanding of international treaties, covenants, and conventions on human rights.
- d. Students will be able to see the application of human rights in the Canadian context.
- e. In the future, students will be able to make policy arguments on human rights issues.

### **Teaching Methodology:**

The course material will consist of online modules, discussions, and audio-visu­als. For assistance using Desire2Learn (D2L), please visit the Getting Started link under the Important Information link on the navigation bar above. You may also contact the Teaching Commons for technical assistance with D2L. They can be reached by email at [teachingcommons@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:teachingcommons@lakeheadu.ca)

## **MARKING SCHEME:**

<b>Midterm Test</b>	<b>40% - available October 20 between 6:00 a.m. and 11.59 p.m. EST - 80 Minutes</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>40% - available December 11 between 6:00 a.m. and 11.59 p.m. Est.</b>
<b>Participation</b>	<b>20% - posting comments (in Discussion forums).</b>
<b>Discussion Forums</b>	

### **DISCUSSION FORUM WILL OPEN/CLOSE EACH WEEK ON MONDAY AT 6 a.m.**

Thirteen discussion areas are set up for this course.

- a. Introduction is for introducing yourself and discussing any difficulties you may be having a particular concept, for collaborating with peers, or for discussing anything you want to share with your fellow students.
- b. The other twelve discussion areas are for responding to and discussing the weekly discussion question. Participation in the latter forums will be graded. For

participation marks in the graded forums, students are required to comment on each topic of the week. Students have one week to respond to others in forum. Students can debate, raise questions, and comment on each others' responses.

I will be visiting the Discussion Forums regularly, but grading will be done in total at the end of the semester, not after every forum.

### **Tips for Participating on a Discussion Board**

- Think ideas through before responding. You do not want your response to be considered flaming. It often helps to outline responses before posting. Be polite and respectful.
- Use good communication skills. Keep your comments concise, but do meet the requirements posted for discussion by the instructor. Avoid brief affirmations such as "Amen", "Ditto", and "I agree." Don't quote or copy long passages from a previous post. Quote only the relevant portions to make your response clear.
- Pay careful attention to instructions. Be sensitive your use of language.
- Use subject lines in your post to keep the flow going for a certain discussion item. Be sure to change the subject line if you are changing the direction of the discussion.
- Try to stay on track and respond directly to comments being made. (Adapted from Dakota State University, Distance Education Orientation website)

*Mandatory participation is required to obtain participation marks. Students will participate in these forums by accessing the "Discussion Area" under the Discussions link on the navigation menu bar in D2L.*

**Participation marks will be determined on the basis of of threads/postings (Number of postings each week) and quality of comments in Discussion.**

## EXAMINATIONS

### Preparation:

There are No papers in this course. There are two exams: Mid Term and the Final Examinations. Both examinations will be taken ONLINE from any computer, even from your home. Each examination must be taken on the assigned dates.

Remember the test can be written at any time within the specified time period but **once you start your test you get 80 minutes for Midterm Test and all day only for Final exam.**

NO request for supplemental tests or alternative dates will be accepted, including ones concerning technical issues with your computer. It is your responsibility to ensure you have access to a reliable system at all times throughout the term.

Midterm test will consist of 80 multiple choice and T/F (true and false) questions respectively. Every question has to be answered. Each question has a weight of .5 marks. Each question will contain 2 to 4 answer choices.

**The *Mid Term* test will cover the materials discussed in the first 5 weeks ( modules and from the respective Chapters in the textbook).**

**Exam quizzes will be available on the set date and time in QUIZZES.**

All exams are to be done independently. Since the tests and exam are timed, spending time looking through your notes and textbook increases your risk of running short on time. Time is a part of the challenge in writing tests and exams! Use your time wisely! A sample exam is available under Quizzes (found under the Quizzes link in D2L) to give you a sense of the format of the exam questions and provide you with some familiarity of the quizzing tool. When taking the real exams, please remember to continually save your answers throughout the exams to avoid loss of work in the event of a technical issue. A reminder about this will be visible each exam.

Every student will not get the same set of multiple-choice questions.

**The *Final Exam* will consist of 5 short essay type questions which cover the materials discussed in the last 6 weeks ( modules and respective chapters from the Textbook).**

**Exam questions will be available on the set date in ASSIGNMENT.**

## **YOUTUBE DOCUMENTARIES**

Most of the videos are embedded and may be viewed the D2L site. In order to watch some YouTube documentaries, you may need to copy the URL and paste it a search engine. You may not be able to watch them directly clicking on them. In any case, if you cannot watch any video, there is nothing to worry about as there will be NO questions in the exams from the videos. The videos are provided as useful supplementary information.

## **TEXTBOOK:**

**Michael Goodhart, *Human Rights, and Practices* (Oxford University Press ) (available through the Bookstore).ISBN: 9780198708766 - \$79.90**

OR

Online from Amazon/Publisher: Oxford University Press

### Recommended Books

1. Claude and B.H. Weston, ed. Human Rights in the World Community: Issues and Actions.
2. Mark Janis – European Human Rights Law: texts and materials.
3. D.J. Harris – Law of the European Convention on Human Rights.
4. Henry Steiner & Philip Alston, International Human Rights in Context- Law, and Morals
- Donnelly -International Human Rights-
6. Jack Donnelly – Human Rights in Theory and Practice,
7. Thomas Meron - Human Rights in International
8. Rhona Smith, International Human Rights Law.
9. Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran, David Harris, International Human Rights Law.
10. Rhona Smith, Textbook on International Human Rights

Course Schedule: Modules and Readings			
Date	Module	Topic	Readings
Week 1	Module 1	The Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights	Chapter 1
Week 1		The Politics of Human Rights	Chapter 3
Week 2	Module 4	Human Rights in International Law,	" Chapter 2
Week 2	Module 2	Feminist and Activist Approaches to Human Rights,	" Chapter 4
Week 3	Module 6	Imperialism and Human Rights	' Chapter 5
Week 3		The Social Life of Human Rights	" Chapter 6
Week 4		Human Rights Claiming as a Performative Practice	Chapter 7

Week 4	Module 20	Genocide and Human Rights	"	Chapter 8
Week-5 18	Module 7	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Human Rights,		Chapter
Week-5	Module 10	Human Rights and Religion		Chapter 19
<b>Week 6 Study break and MID TERM TEST (BASED ON LAST 5 WEEK'S READINGS) ONLINE Multiple Choice</b>				<b>80 minutes</b>
Week 7	Module 21	Humanitarian Intervention		Chapter 9
Week 7	Module 22	Transitional Justice,	'	Chapter10.
Week 8		Treaties, Monitoring and Enforcement		Chapter 11
Week-8	Module 14	Political Democracy and State Repression	"	Chapter 12
Week-9	Module 18	Forced Migration and Refugees		Chapter 13
Week 9	Module 23	Human Rights and the Environment		Chapter 14
Week- 10	Module 19	Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights	"	Chapter 15
Week-11		Social Movements and Human Rights		Chapter 16
Week-11		Theory in Practice	"	Chapter 17
Week 12		The Human Right to Water		Chapter 20
Week 12 21		Human Rights and the UN Sustainable Development		Chapter

**FINAL EXAM:**

**ONLINE**

**5 short essay type questions**

**December 11, 2025**