

San José State University
Justice Studies
JS 271, International Human Rights (Online),
Fall 2019

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Roni Abusaad
Email:	Please send communications via Canvas. (For back-up, you can reach me at Roni.Abusaad@sjsu.edu)
Office Hours:	Phone meetings are available by appointments

**Course
Format:
Online Course**

This is an online class. Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. Canvas will be used to facilitate this class including discussion boards and submitting assignments. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at <http://my.sjsu.edu> and Canvas to learn of any updates.

Description

Progress in human rights is one of the 20th century's hallmark achievements. One hundred years ago, more than half the world lived under colonial rule; no country permitted all of its citizens to vote; and state terrorists operated with impunity, protected by the norm of noninterference in the internal affairs of other countries. Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, and gender were accepted official practices. But today, a half century after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there has been a profound transformation in the way that governments are expected to treat their people and each other – even if they often do not comply. Expanding the scope of human rights protections has not been easy. While some important changes emerged out of religious belief and duty, compassion, or a sense of responsibility to others, most were the outcome from war, persecution, slavery, territorial conquest, state terror, torture, the exploitation of women and children, ethnic cleansings, and the mass exterminations of genocide. Furthermore, each attempt to create new visions of rights has been met with powerful opposition and enormous resistance. Winning the protection of rights continues to be a major global struggle – in a race against war and oppression.

This course examines the gradual construction of an international human rights regime and a universal culture of rights. This international regime is characterized by widely accepted norms, binding treaties with implementation mechanisms, access by individual victims to global and regional machinery, and transnational networks of activists who are both better

informed through new communications and less willing to accept the limitations of traditional claims of national sovereignty. The course seeks to understand how and why human rights standards have come into being and how they change over time. While it makes use of legal cases and understands the importance of technological change in fostering new notions of rights, it focuses primarily on understanding the socio-political forces both propelling and opposing this rights regime.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO) (Required)

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

- 1: Have a clear understanding of the basic idea of human rights and the approaches to the concept such as universalism or cultural relativism.
- 2: Understand the logic of human rights violations by states and their implications.
- 3: Have an understanding of human rights documents and institutions to enforce those (conflict resolution).
- 4: Learn to engage in educated discourse on the conflicts between state security/economy and protection of human rights, and how human rights should play a role in US domestic and foreign policies.

Graduate PLOs

- 1: Creating assignments that are engaging, meaningful, and challenging. 2: Providing students meaningful and relatively quick feedback.
- 3: Having high expectations for writing assignments.
- 4: Offering an academic experience that involves meaningful engagement with the professor and among the students to build an online community.

Required Texts/Readings (Required)

Textbook

Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and*

The final course grade will be calculated based on the following standard scale:

98-100	A+	80-83	B-	64-67	D
94-97	A	78-79	C+	60-63	D-
90-93	A-				

The Critical Response assignment post is due on Sunday at 11:59 pm and the 2

the discussion board closes, no additional posts will be accepted.

Class Participation

This course includes several participation assignments that are graded on a pass/fail basis. The objective of these exercises is to put your learning into practice and make space for reflecting on what you're learning, along with your classmates.

Choice of Assignment

30% of your grade will be based upon completing two additional assignments, each worth 15% of your final grade. You can choose from three options and should complete two different assignments on two different topics: an advocacy action, interview or oral presentation. You should be able to relate the issue you focus on to the material covered in the course, including references and citations. Your choice assignments can be focused on any of these topics covered in this course (or any specific subtopic under each):

- Universalism and Cultural relativism
- International human rights law and protection
- National Security and Human Rights
- Vulnerable groups
- Economic rights
- Political rights
- Cultural rights
- Globalization and International NGOs

Option #1: Advocacy Action

You are free to design, plan, and execute an advocacy action that makes sense in the context of a

public hearing of your university/city/state to express your opinion on the issue discussed, etc.

For the assignment, turn in an overview of your action and reflection. Describe what you did and provide evidence that you completed the action ie: documents, photos, etc.

Option #2 - Oral Presentation

For this assignment, summarize and analyze the core content of the week's materials in an engaging presentation. The presentation needs to include essential background on the topic covered in the module of your choice. Presentations need to be five (5) minutes long, without the use of any audio-visual aids, such as photos, videos or slides. You may refer to notes, but you should not be reading the presentation. It is strongly recommended that you practice your talk a few times before recording.

To submit your presentation, record video and upload the file to Canvas. If you need technical assistance, contact the SJSU audiovisual department.

Option #3 - Interview

For this assignment, you will conduct an informal interview with someone working in the field of human rights, for instance someone at a government agency or an NGO. You should anticipate the interview to last 45 minutes to an hour and it is important to stress to you w.

organization (IGOs); legal sources (ie: convention, treaty, declaration, law, court case, etc.); and course readings.

Technical Requirements for Paper

1. Final paper length: 2,000-2,500 words of your original writing. Word count excludes references, headings, etc.
2. Always include: paper title, your name, course name/number, date, and page numbers.
3. You may format the paper as you see fit. However, references must adhere to APA citation style.
 4. Late submissions will not be graded. If you cannot meet a deadline, discuss this with me ASAP.
 5. Plagiarism, including self-plagiarism, would result in a grade of zero

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>"

You are responsible for university policies regarding, but not limited to, drop deadlines, plagiarism, and academic integrity.

Justice Studies Department Reading and Writing Philosophy

The Department of Justice Studies is committed to scholarly excellence. Therefore, the Department promotes academic, critical, and creative engagement with language (i.e., reading and writing) throughout its curriculum. A sustained and intensive exploration of language prepares students to think critically and to act meaningfully in interrelated areas of their lives—personal, professional, economic, social, political, ethical, and cultural. Graduates of the Department of Justice Studies leave San José State University prepared to enter a range of careers and for advanced study in a variety of fields; they are prepared to more effectively identify and ameliorate injustice in their personal, professional and civic lives. Indeed, the impact of literacy is evident not only within the span of a specific course, semester, or academic program but also over the span of a lifetime.

JS 271-01, Int. Human Rights (Online)/ Fall, 2018, Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice and the notice will be made available by email.

Key Resources

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/25	<p>Introduction to Human Rights History and Theory</p> <p>What is the theoretical foundation for human rights? How did this idea evolve and get enshrined in international law and practice? What's the relationship between international and domestic legal developments? What are the roles of the different bodies involved in enforcing human rights? Can human rights ever be effectively enforced? Why or why not?</p> <p><i>Donnelly - Chapters 1 and 2</i></p> <p>Scan through and save the "Key Resources" above to reference throughout this class.</p> <p>Canvas Modules: Intro to Human Rights</p>

Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) Do Muslim
Women Really Need Saving?
Anthropological Reflections on Cultural
Relativism and Its Others. *American
Anthropologist*

<http://www.aegistrust.org/> The Aegis Trust – campaigns to prevent genocide worldwide

<http://www.icc-cpi.int/> International Criminal Court

<http://www.un.org/law/icc/> Rome Statute of the ICC

<http://www.un.org/icty/> International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

<http://www.un.org/icttr/> International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

<http://www.iccnw.org/> Coalition for the International Criminal Court - a global network of over 2,000 NGOs advocating for a fair, effective and independent ICC. Excellent resources related to all aspects of the ICC.

<http://www.crimesofwar.org/> Crimes of War Project - a collaboration of journalists, lawyers and scholars dedicated to raising public awareness