

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS 171-81, Human Rights and Justice - Fall 2021

*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Students will be notified of changes to the schedule or assigned readings via email. You can always find the most up-to-date syllabus here **so check back frequently.***

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Roni Abusaad, Ph.D
Email:	roni.abusaad@sjsu.edu
Office Location:	Online
Office Hours:	Tuesday 5-6pm or Contact me via Canvas with any inquiries.
Prerequisites:	Core GE, WST test, 100W
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area V: Culture, Civilization, and Global Understanding
JS Competency Area:	Area D: Local, Transnational, Historical

Class Overview

This is a self-paced online class.

The expectation is that you will spend **4-6 hours on each module. First you should** complete the readings, then work through the module deck, watching videos and completing the assignments which include class participation and reflections. You will need to complete work and assignments every week. These are always due by midnight on Sundays - see the due date column below. The only exceptions are related to holidays (in those cases, the Sunday deadline is pushed back to the Tuesday after the holiday weekend).

All quizzes and tests are cumulative and may include material from any point in the course preceding that assessment.

Please send all communication via Canvas. This is where you will complete quizzes and submit assignments, as well.

Preparing for success

I want you to have success in this class and to have

Can I do _____ for my action?

Please refer to the details about this on the syllabus. You need to detail your action plan in your proposal and I will provide feedback on all proposals, including if your proposed action meets the requirements.

Can my presentation be longer than five minutes?

As the saying goes brevity is the soul of wit. The goal is for you to present the most important, relevant and interesting information in a thoughtful and engaging presentation. Please keep the presentation to five minutes. You don't need to re-record your video if you run over by 10-30 seconds, but try to keep the presentation to five minutes.

Can I use photos and a slide deck for my presentation?

No. The presentation shouldn't include any audio or visual aids. What is most important is your ability to present the information in a compelling way.

Find all videos and readings on Canvas.

Module	Topics and Readings	Assignments	Due Date for all readings and assignments
1		Class participation #1 Introductions Complete the “Check-in: Ready for Success?” quiz. Opening Reflection Sign up for the Human Rights Watch Daily	

Introduction to the Course

2	Human Rights History and Theory	Class participation #2 Discussion: What does the public know about human rights? Quiz #1	8/27
3	Human Rights in the U.S. - Understanding Institutional Discrimination through the Right to Education	Quiz #2	9/3
4	Human Rights in International Law	Quiz #3	9/10
5	Case Study	Quiz #4	9/17
6	Interconnections Between Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: COVID-19 and Human Rights	Class Participation #4: Discussion: Human rights in the news	9/24
7	Environmental Rights and Sustainability		10/1
8	Racial Discrimination	Class participation #5: Complete the implicit bias test - Take the test called "Race ('Black - White' IAT)" and post to the discussion.	10/8
9	Racial Justice Appeals to the Human Rights Council	Participation #6 - Class discussion Select your research topic and start thinking about ways to take action. For the rest of the semester, you will be broken into smaller groups with other students researching related topics to collaborate, learn from each other and deepen your analysis.	10/15
9	Going Deeper: <i>Choose one of these modules to go deeper into a topic of interest to you.</i>	Reflection #2 Due	10/22

As you work through the module, take notes aligned with the questions in the assignment prompt and write up your final responses and submit via the form on the assignment in Canvas.

Options:

- Trump's Travel Ban
- Human Trafficking
- Homelessness and Economic Inequality
- Racial Discrimination in the Criminal Justice System
- Human Rights and the Criminal Justice System
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Immigration
- Environmental Rights and Climate Change

10 **Taking Action to Advance Social Change** Proposal due

11 **Civil and Political Rights -**

10/29

Grading Information

Rubrics for all written assignments are posted on Canvas, at the appropriate assignment submission page. Missing, late, or plagiarized work will receive a grade of zero.

Determination of Grades

Discussions	15%
Class Participation (5 assignments)	10%
Module of choice	5%
Environmental rights presentation	5%
Quizzes	15%
Proposal for Final Paper and Action Project	5%
Issue Research Brief	15%
Action report	15%
Presentation	15%

Grading Scale

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-	74-77	C	<60	F
88-89	B+	70-73	C-		
84-87	B	68-69	D+		

Students must achieve a grade of C or better (C- not accepted) to fulfill Justice Studies major requirements.

Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C not accepted), and completion of Core General Education are

prerequisite to all SJSU Studies courses. Completion of, or co registration in, 100W is strongly recommended. A minimum aggregate GPA of 2.0 in GE Areas R, S, & V shall be required of all students.

Course Description

Interdisciplinary exploration of human rights instruments, institutions, and notable human rights campaigns. The historical development of human rights and contemporary threats to the realization of fundamental dignity for human and non-human animals will also be explored.

This course is designed for students to explore questions such as:

How has the concept of “human rights” evolved? How are human rights defined through international law?

Who gets to decide what these rights are and how they are realized?

How have people struggled to define and realize fundamental rights and/or dignity, and to what effects?

Where human rights have been defined, why/where/how/by whom have they been violated? How can human rights concepts shape remedies to such violations?

How does a discourse of fundamental “right” and/or “dignity” affect the way we understand, articulate, and respond to various social problems?

How do struggles and dialogs over the lessons of human rights struggles and scholarship shape culture, policy, and social activism in our

4. CLO 5 - Compare and contrast how “rights” and “dignity” have been defined for human and non-human animals by various cultures throughout the world.
5. CLO 6 - Apply a human rights discourse to analyze social problems, policies, and practices in the U.S.
6. CLO 7 - Work in a team to apply knowledge and solve problems.

Course Format

This course will be conducted entirely online through Canvas. Course materials such as this syllabus, readings, handouts, assignment rubrics, etc. can be found on Canvas at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking the email address associated with your **MySJSU** account to learn of any updates.

With any questions or problems, send me a message via Canvas. Also use Canvas to complete assignments and submit your papers. Hard copy, email, or Turnitin submissions will not be accepted.

Required Texts/Readings

All course readings and materials are available in the class folder on Canvas

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

All quizzes will need to be completed within the Respondus Lockdown Browser, which can be downloaded [here](#).

Course Requirements and Assignments

Final Activism - Research Project

The culminating assignment in this course is an individual research project comprised of three assignments around a current issue in human rights that you want to explore, each worth 15% of your grade:

- 1) Research Issue Brief: Researching the issue to understand the root causes, proposed solutions and pathways to change
- 2) Taking Action: Taking an action that has the potential to promote human rights and make an impact related to this issue
- 3) Presentation: Presenting on your research and the outcome of your action.

See details and rubrics on Canvas.

Optional: Extra Credit

credit up to 5 percentage points. This is optional and could be completed anytime during the semester, but m

Suggested Resources on Activism

- Minieri, J., & Getsos, P. (2007). *Tools for Radical Democracy: How to Organize for Power in Your Community* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. <http://catalog.sjlibrary.org/record=b4943244~S1>
- Shaw, R. (2013). *The Activist's Handbook: Winning Social Change in the 21st Century* (2nd ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press. <http://catalog.sjlibrary.org/record=b4833190~S1>

Online Resources on Activism

- <https://actipedia.org/> - a community-generated wiki to document, share, and inspire Creative Activism
- <http://beautifultrouble.org/case/> - a web toolbox of creative and effective actions
- http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/browse_methods - the Global Nonviolent Action Database
- <http://www.amnestyusa.org/get-involved/take-action-now> - action id` 1đrtp

