

San José State University

College of Social Sciences / Department of Justice Studies JS 25-01, Introduction to Human Rights and Justice, Fall 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Natalie Birthelmer
Office Location:	HB 125 (office hours will take place on Zoom due to Covid space regulations)
Telephone:	(408) 924-2753 x42753 – email is the best way to reach me!
Email:	natalie.birthelmer@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	T 9:30 – 11:30am via Zoom
Class Days/Time:	M/W 2:15 – 3:30PM
Classroom:	Canvas / Zoom
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	D

Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses

This course adopts a synchronous online delivery format, with a M/W meeting pattern. **You must have access to a webcam during scheduled class times.** Students are required to have an electronic device (laptop, desktop or tablet) with a camera and built-in microphone. SJSU has a free [equipment loan program](#) available for students. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have access to reliable Wi-Fi during tests. If students are unable to have reliable Wi-Fi, they must inform the instructor, as soon as possible or at the latest one week before the test date to determine an alternative. See [Learn Anywhere website](#) for current Wi-Fi options on campus. ~~A~~Canvas

[Leaning Management System course login website](#). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) to learn of any updates.

Course Description

This course is a lower division introduction to the history of human rights as a concept and body of international law, and to the complicated role of human rights in contemporary social justice campaigns.

GE Area: D

Note: A grade of "C" or better is required for graduation.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

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

1. Place contemporary social issues in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts. (GELO1)

2. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. (GELO2)
3. Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and international levels. (GELO3)
4. Examine and discuss forces that shape individuals and modern society. (GELO4)

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

1. Confidently discuss contemporary issues and change in human rights and justice. (CLO1)
2. Understand the historical context, definition and continuous importance of human rights. (CLO2)
3. Recognize how international human rights relate to human rights struggles and social problems in the U.S. and our local communities. (CLO3)
4. Make critical assessments of and draw logical

Participation (GELO1-4 & CLO1-5)

This class should be engaging for everyone, and therefore relies on student participation. All students will be expected to have read all assigned readings and completed any assignments before class, to be able to successfully participate in class discussions. Come to class ready to engage, debate, and discuss! Your participation grade will not be based on simply being present in the classroom but on meaningful participation.

Reading Responses (GELO1-4 & CLO1-5)

Students will write weekly reading responses to the required readings. Reading responses are due as listed on the Course Schedule below on Canvas. Late work will not be accepted. Reading responses should be no less than one (1) page and no more than two (2) pages long, and must be written in formal English, in Times New Roman, 12pt. font, and double-spaced. You must cite the assigned chapter or article at least three (3) times in your reading response and show that you have read and understood the material through informed discussion. In-text citations and references must be in APA-style formatting.

Midterm (GELO1-4 & CLO1-5)

The midterm will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions and will cover all materials assigned from week 1 to week 6. The midterm will take place on Canvas (see Canvas schedule).

Human Rights Presentation (GELO1-4 & CLO1-5)

Individually or in groups of up to 3, you will sign up to present a current human rights issue (domestic or international) by completing a series of tasks, including: (1) summarizing the issue (2) discussing past approaches/attempts to resolve the issue, (3) presenting ideas of policy changes to resolve the issues presented and (4) generating discussion questions. Each member of the group will present one task, but your presentation must be cohesive. As a group, you will create a power point to guide your presentation. Your discussion of the material should be thoughtful and analytical, and invite participation by all students. For grading, you will receive both individual and group grades. Further instructions and expectations will be discussed.

Final Examination or Evaluation (GELO1-4 & CLO1-5)

The final will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions and will cover all materials assigned from week 7 to week 16. The final will take place on Canvas (see Canvas schedule).

Technical difficulties during exams

- Internet connection issues:

Canvas autosaves responses a few times per minute as long as there is an internet connection. If your internet connection is lost, Canvas will warn you but allow you to continue working on your exam. A brief loss of internet connection is unlikely to cause you to lose your work. However, a longer loss of connectivity or weak/unstable connection may jeopardize your exam.

- Other technical difficulties:

Immediately email the instructor a current copy of the state of your exam and explain the problem you are facing. Your instructor may not be able to respond immediately or provide technical support. However, the copy of your exam and email will provide a record of the

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Grading Information

Department of Justice Studies Course Grade Determination

Total Points	Grade	Total Points	Grade	Total Points	Grade
98.0 to 100	A plus	84.0 to 87.99	B	71.0 to 73.99	C minus
94.0 to 97.99	A	81.0 to 83.99	B minus	68.0 to 70.99	D plus
91.0 to 93.99	A minus	78.0 to 80.99	C plus	64.0 to 67.99	D
88.0 to 90.99	B plus	74.0 to 77.99	C	61.0 to 63.99	D minus

Determination of Grades

Human Rights Pr

5. **Limit Your Distractions/Avoid Multitasking:** You can make it easier to focus on the meeting by turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, and putting your smartphone away (unless you are using it to access Zoom).
6. **Use Appropriate Virtual Backgrounds:** If using a virtual background, it should be appropriate and professional and should NOT suggest or include content that is objectively offensive or demeaning.

University Policies

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](#).

Academic Integrity / Plagiarism

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 \[pdf\]](#) requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the [Student Conduct and Ethical Development](#) website for more information.

- **Plagiarism:** San José State University defines plagiarism as the act of representing the work of another as one's own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism includes:
 - 1.2.1 Knowingly or unknowingly incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts of, or the specific substance of another's work, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one's own work;
 - 1.2.2 Representing another's artistic/scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawing, sculptures, or similar works as one's own.
- **Sanctions:** There shall be two major classifications of sanctions that may be imposed for violations of this policy: Academic and Administrative. Academic sanctions are actions related to the coursework or grades determined by the faculty member. Administrative sanctions are actions that address a student's status on campus and are determined by the Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Development.

Academic sanctions and Administrative sanctions may be imposed simultaneously.

To ensure compliance with academic integrity policies, all work in this class must be turned in through Turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection service with which San José State University contracts. Students are responsible for ensuring their work is accepted and evaluated by Turnitin.com. Inability to do so will lead to an incomplete grade for affected assignments. In case plagiarism is detected once, the plagiarized assignment will receive a failing grade. If plagiarism is detected multiple times, students will receive a failing grade for the course.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, **please inform me immediately by emailing me or by making an appointment with me as soon as possible.** [Presidential Directive 97-03](#) requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](#) (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#) requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
 - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Department of Justice Studies 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.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
9	M – 10/11	Political and Civil Rights: Discrimination and Equality Reading Response 6 Clapham Chapter 8: Discrimination and Equality
	W – 10/13	Armaline Chapter 19: Sex Trafficking: In our Own Backyard?
10	M – 10/18	Reading Response 7 Armaline Chapter 20: The US Culture of Violence
	W – 10/20	<i>Murder to Mercy: The Cyntoia Brown Story</i>
11	M – 10/25	Political and Civil Rights: Immigration and Border Conflicts Reading Response 8 Armaline Chapter 12: US Asylum and Refugee Policy: The “Culture of No”
	W – 10/27	<i>Separated: Children at the Border (Frontline S37 E1)</i>
12	M – 11/1	Reading Response 9 Armaline Chapter 11: Erosion of Political and Civil Rights: The Patriot Act
	W – 11/3	Clapham Chapter 4: Torture
13	M – 11/8	Social Rights: Homelessness and Food Insecurity Clapham Chapter 7: Food, Education, Health, Housing, and Work
	W – 11/10	Canvas: Report of Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights on his mission to the U.S.
14	M – 11/15	Reading Response 10 Armaline Chapter 6: Hurricane Katrina and the Right to Food and Shelter
	W – 11/17	Presentations due <i>When the Levees Broke</i>
15	M – 11/22	Presentations
	W – 11/24	Thanksgiving—Campus Closed
16	M – 11/29	Presentations
	W – 12/1	Presentations
17	M – 12/6	Final Review
Final Exam		Final on Canvas