“Human rights, cultural renewal, and participatory democracy are implicated, for better or worse, in a common destiny.”

The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* signalled a radical shift in taking global human rights seriously. There followed treaties on genocide and torture, women and minorities, refugees and the conduct of warfare, and the treatment of children. Trade, development and even healthcare have since become subject to standards of human-centered conduct, amid growing socio-political as well as economic globalization. The upshot: individual and collective human rights have ceased to be matters solely of domestic jurisdiction. Their appeal to solidarity and the rule of law now competes strongly with claims of sovereignty, as well as of cultural relativism — though there are fresh tensions that relate to religion and human rights.

We will address a range of themes that involve global and regional engagement with the protection and promotion of human dignity through rights — including the roles of non-state actors, from NGOs to corporations. In particular, we will attend to the gaps between normative regimes and political realities, mindful of the post-9/11 approaches to "security" that are often at odds with the rights of individuals. Multimedia resources will supplement the course texts, both in class and on the Canvas website.

**Evaluation**

Active individual & group participation is expected, with attendance in all sessions. Readings for class discussion / presentation will be assigned weekly on the basis of groups formed at the outset. *Two* short readings-reports (1000 words) are required, of three assigned. The final paper (3000 words) will be based on topics from the syllabus; students may propose their own. The paper is due in class (hardcopy) Nov 28. A penalty of a letter-grade/day applies to late submissions.

Presentation: 20%  Reading Reports (2): 30%  Contribution: 10%  Final Paper: 40%

**Note SFU’s strict policy on academic integrity and on plagiarism – which can involve your failing the course. Ignorance on what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism is no excuse.**

Detailed guidelines on each at:

[http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity.html](http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity.html) and [http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/plagiarism](http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/plagiarism)
Class Presentations

Each group has upto **45 minutes** for all members to present to the class; this is followed by 30 minutes of **class discussion**. You are encouraged to use PowerPoint for effective communication; video clips, maps and handouts are most welcome. Please post your group presentation on the Canvas website **subsequently** (“Discussions” tab).

The **focus** of the presentation should be on **key themes** selected from the reading(s). Start the presentation with a quick summary, and indicate how the group will present the selected themes. You may pose questions to the class for discussion.

Grading is individual, but inevitably influenced by the overall quality of the group’s performance. Class members earn contribution marks for **informed** participation.

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**Texts**

**Required**
- ✤ Readings posted on the **course website**, per weekly schedule below.

**Recommended**

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**On Reserve (Belzberg Library)**

**~ Weekly Outline ~**

“W” = Posted on Canvas website

1 (Sept 5) Scope, objectives and approach of this course. What are human rights, why do they matter — and what about the quarrel with sovereignty? Working groups for this semester.


2 (Sept 12) Locating human rights globally, past and present; domestic to transnational jurisdiction. The “International Bill of Rights,” and its legacy.

**1st Analytical Report assigned.**


**1st Analytical Report due.**

**Class Presentation:** Group 1


**Presentation:** Group 2


**2nd Analytical Report assigned.**

**Presentation:** Group 3

Globalization, Trade, Corporations: recognizing the human costs. Food & health as entitlements. Arms & rights. **Reality Check:** Canadian Arms Sales.

**2nd Analytical Report due.**

**Presentation:** Group 4  

**Presentation:** Group 5.  
**3rd Analytical Report assigned**  
**Read:** Goodhart, Ch 9, 16-17; Carothers, “Civil Society,” *FP* (2000) {W}; Kaldor, “Global Civil Society” {W}. **Bonus:** Falk, Ch 5 and 13.

**8 (Oct 24)** Citizens and Civil Society 2. The politics and culture of participation. What makes civic activism effective?  
**Presentation:** Group 6.  
**3rd Analytical Report due.**  

**9 (Oct 31)** Security and Rights: Which Values, For Whom?  
Geneva Convention on Civilians, 1949; UN Convention on Torture {W}.  
**Presentation:** Group 7.  
**Final Paper Topics.**  

**10 (Nov 7)** Minority Rights, Migration – The End of Universalism?  
**Presentation:** Group 8  

**Presentation:** Group 9


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12 (Nov 21) Back to the Future? Technology, Privacy, Virtual Civil Society ... Orwell.


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13 (Nov 28) Guest Lecture.

**Read:** “Data-driven optimism for global human rights activists,” *OD* 2015 {W}.

- **Final paper due (hardcopy, in class)**
- **Course Evaluation**