HIS 210: Human Rights in Modern World History

History Department website: https://his.unCG.edu

Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/

Instructor Information:

Professor Mark Elliott  E-mail: mark.elliott@uncg.edu

Faculty webpage: https://his.unCG.edu/faculty/elliott.html

Office: 2125 MHRA

Office Hours: Tues. 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

Teaching Assistants:

Mr. Connor Harney  E-mail: cbharney@uncg.edu
Ms. Abigail Shimer  E-mail: aeshimer@uncg.edu
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Office: 2323 MHRA

Office Hours: by appointment

Monday and Wednesday Lectures:

Sections 01-05  10:00-10:50  SOEB 118  Dr. Elliott

Friday Discussion Sections:

Section 01  10:00-10:50  BRYAN 205  Mr. Harney
Section 03  10:00-10:50  COLE 319  Ms. Shimer
Section 05  10:00-10:50  BRYAN 110  Mr. Skelton
Course Description:

This course provides a conceptual and historical introduction to the concept of human rights, surveying major developments in the advocacy of human rights from 1760 to the present. Focusing on a selection of important events, historical figures, and international issues of global significance, this course explores human rights issues in international law, transnational movements, and global causes. Because of its broad sweep, the variety of topics covered in this course make no claim to be comprehensive. No single course can examine all of the important topics that relate to human rights over two hundred and fifty years.

One of the major themes of this class will be the dialectic between the human capacity for brutality and the desire for world peace and happiness. Human rights initiatives have arisen nearly always in response to atrocities of shocking magnitude. Torture, slavery, genocide, imperialism and war are the historical counterparts of human rights activists.

Understanding the proliferation of such atrocities will be essential to the understanding of the efforts to forge national constitutions, international treaties and governing bodies to restrain peoples from engaging in genocidal actions, crimes against humanity, and violations of human rights. The concept of “human rights” has not remained static over time; it has been a contested idea that remains at the source of debate and disagreement among its advocates as well as its detractors. Placing the debates and uses of “human rights” in historical context will be the main endeavor of this course.

In addition, this course serves as an introduction to historical thinking and to world history as an approach. Studying world history is about understanding the interconnectedness of ideas and events that cross national borders and thinking comparatively about developments around the globe. Students will be trained to think as historians by analyzing evidence and learning to ask questions that help them to understand the historical context of the evidence. Students will learn to analyze different types of evidence and make arguments based on such evidence. Primary and secondary sources will be studied as sources for historical understanding. It is hoped that the material explored in this course will provide students with a springboard to further study in history in upper level courses.

Course Objectives

General Education Historical Perspectives (GHP) Student Learning Outcomes:
1. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing.

General Education Global Perspectives (GL) Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Find, interpret, and evaluate information on diverse cultures.
2. Describe interconnections among regions of the world. (Must include substantial focus on at least one culture, nation, or sub-nationality beyond Great Britain and North America).
3. Use diverse cultural frames of reference and alternative perspectives to analyze issues

Accessibility:

It is the University’s goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. For students with recognized disabilities, please see the resources below.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with recognized disabilities should register with the Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (OARS). OARS is located on the second floor of the Elliott University Center (EUC) in Suite 215 and maintains a webpage at http://ods.uncg.edu/ (Links to an external site.). The mission of OARS is to provide, coordinate, and advocate for services which enable undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities to receive equal access to a college education and to all aspects of university life.

Recording class sessions:

It is impermissible to make a video or audio recording of the class without the instructor’s permission. The instructor will only provide such permission given evidence of physical limitation of the student’s ability to take notes, and provided that the recording will not be used for any purpose other than studying for exams, or shown to anyone other than the student who received permission to make the recording.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in through Canvas so that the “Turnitin” function will scan your paper for plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense of academic dishonesty. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details: https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Each class, an attendance sheet will be circulated and you must arrive at class in time to sign your name before the sheet is collected by the Teaching Assistants. You are allowed four days for sickness, religious observance, or other personal reasons, over the course of the semester. These "sick days" should cover all illnesses and personal emergencies. Each absence after your fourth missed class will cause a 20-point deduction to your final grade. Two late arrivals to class will be counted as one absence. If you must leave class early, please contact the professor in advance by e-mail in order to be excused.
Assignments:

**Midterm and Final exams:** Each half of the semester will have a cumulative test on the readings, lectures, and videos required during that portion of the semester. [SLO: GHP 1,2; GL 2]

**Quizzes and Discussion Posts:** Most weeks will include either a quiz or a required Canvas discussion about the reading with a select group of students from your section. [SLO: GHP 1,2; GL 2]

**Term Paper:** Topics will be distributed in class. You will be required to collect some sources from the Jackson Library. Your paper will be an historical analysis of 1200-1500 words in length. Late papers will be marked down 10 points for each day they are late. [SLO: GHP 1,2; GL 1]

**Grading Breakdown:**

- 100 Points: Midterm Exam
- 100 Points: Final Exam
- 100 Points: Quizzes and Discussion Board Posts
- 100 Points: Term Paper
- 25 Points: Term Paper Sources
- 75 Points: Class Participation in Discussion Sections

Negative Points: -20 Points for each excessive absence.

Extra Credit: +20 for each Extra Credit Opportunity

**Final Grade Scale:**

- A 465-500; A- 450-464; B+ 435-449; B 415-434; B- 400-414; C+ 385-399; C 365-384; C- 350-364; D+ 335-349; D 315-334; D- 300-314; F 0-299.

**Textbook available on-line through the Jackson Library:**

Peter Stearns, *Human Rights in World History*

**Week 1.** INTRODUCTION: Contextualizing “Human Rights” in History

**Aug. 21** Human Rights and World History
Aug. 23  Discussion Section

**Week 2.  HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

Aug. 26  The Foundations of International Human Rights Law
Aug. 28  The Resurgence of Human Rights after 1989
Aug. 30  Discussion Section

**Week 3.  HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR TIMES**

Sept 2.   LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)
Sept 4.   LGBTQ Rights, Refugees and other Issues
Sept 6.   Discussion Section

**Week 4.  HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

Sept 9   The Origins of the Human Rights Tradition
Sept 11  The Enlightenment and other influences
Sept 13  Discussion Section

**Week 5.  REVOLUTIONARY RIGHTS**

Sept 16  Revolutionary Ideas
Sept 18  Political Revolt in America and France
Sept 20  Discussion Section

**Week 6.  ABOLITIONISM**

Sept 23  The Slave Trade and the Haitian Revolution
Sept 25  British and American Emancipation
Sept 27  Discussion Section

**Week 7.  WOMEN’S RIGHTS**

Sept 30  Women and Abolitionist Movements
Oct. 2      Suffrage Rights and Gendered Identities

Oct. 4      Discussion Section

Week 8.   INTERNATIONAL PEACE MOVEMENTS

Oct. 7      Peace Societies and International Law

Oct. 9      World War I and the Challenge of World Peace

Oct. 11     Midterm Exam

Week 9.   IMPERIALISM

Oct. 14     FALL BREAK (No Class)

Oct. 16     The Scramble for Africa

Oct. 18     Discussion Section

Week 10.  ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Oct. 21     Non-Violence Resistance in South Africa and India

Oct. 23     Decolonization and Human Rights

Oct. 25     Discussion Section

Week 11.  GENOCIDE IN THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

Oct. 28     Crimes Against Humanity

Oct. 30     The Holocaust and other atrocities of WW II

Nov. 1      Discussion Section

Week 12    THE NEW WORLD ORDER AFTER WORLD WAR II

Nov. 4      War Crimes Trials and Genocide Conventions

Nov. 6      The Cold War

Nov. 8      Discussion Section

Week 13.  THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT
Nov. 11    Mandela and the Fight Against Apartheid
Nov. 13    The Global Civil Rights Movement
Nov. 15    Discussion Section

Week 14.   EXPANDING RIGHTS: WOMEN, GENDER, SEXUALITY

Nov. 18    The New Women's Movement
Nov. 20    LGBT Rights
Nov. 21    Discussion Section

Week 15.   GENOCIDE IN OUR TIME

Nov. 25    From Cambodia to Myanmar
Nov. 27    THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)
Nov. 29    THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)

Week 16.   TERRORISM AND GLOBAL POLITICS

Dec. 2     Islam and the Middle East
Dec. 4     Resurgence of Nationalism and Racism

Week 17    FINAL EXAM

Dec. 12:00-3:00 pm