

# Course Syllabus

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## **HIS 210-02: Human Rights in Modern World History**

History Department website: <https://his.uncg.edu> (Links to an external site.)

Facebook

page: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/> (Links to an external site.)

**Instructor: Mr. Felton Foushee**

**Email: [fwfoushe@uncg.edu](mailto:fwfoushe@uncg.edu)**

**Office Hours: Wed. 10a-11a or by appointment**

### **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 since the Enlightenment. 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.

**!THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS!**

## Course Objectives

- Students will think comparatively how the concept of “human rights” has impacted different nations, cultures, and peoples.
- Students will analyze interconnections between different parts of the globe
- Students will examine the role of human agency in historical change
- Students will learn how to historically contextualize and analyze a range of primary sources representing different points of view.
- Students will use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently.
- Students will examine the role of human agency in historical change, as well as understand the larger economic, political and social structures that shape human experience.
- Students will improve their reading, writing, and online communication skills.

## Accessibility:

It is the University’s goal that online learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. For students with recognized disabilities, please see the resources below. Students must be able to access Canvas. Attending live meetings during office hours will require access to Zoom. **You will require a computer and online access.**

## Students with Disabilities

Students with recognized disabilities should register promptly 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.](#))[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. Students who have concerns about accessing any of the course material should contact OARS for assistance or let the professor know immediately.

### Health and Well-Being Statement

- Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> (Links to an external site.) or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> (Links to an external site.) or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu)

## 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 that involves taking the work of another person and misrepresenting it as your own. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and UNCG's policies regarding [plagiarism \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details and definitions:

[UNCG Academic Integrity Policies](#)

## COVID-19 Spartan Shield Video

UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam has challenged us to create a Culture of Care at UNCG where we all wear face coverings and social distance, less to protect ourselves but rather more to protect everyone around us. It shows that you care about the well being of everyone around you. We have created this video featuring your student body presidents to better explain how and why this is so important.

Please watch this video before the first day of classes.

<https://youtu.be/Mb58551qxEk> (Links to an external site.)

## Assignments:

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE BY 11:59pm ON SUNDAY!**

**NEW MODULES OPEN EVERY MONDAY**

**Weekly Quizzes:** Each week there will be cumulative quizzes on the readings, lectures and videos assigned that week. The weekly quiz must be completed by midnight on Sundays.

**Discussion Posts:** Each week students will contribute to a Discussion Board. Students will be graded based on two posts. First, students will respond to a general prompt for your group written by the professor and, secondly, students will respond to a question posed by one of their fellow students. Like the class discussion, you will be graded based on the quality of your comments which should be informed, intelligent and constructive and should reflect familiarity with the course material for the week. Likewise, It is important for all students to respect each other's opinions, and maintain civility and collegiality when exchanging viewpoints. Antagonistic or rude behavior will lower your participation grade. Each discussion will be worth up to 15 points.

**Film Choice:** Early in the semester, you will be asked to choose one of the films listed under the "Pages" link on the left that will become the basis for further research and a paper.

**You must explain in a few sentences why you chose that film!**

**Film Analysis Sources:** In order to assess the historical validity and value of a film, it is important to conduct some research. You will be required to collect some sources from the Jackson Library for your film analysis.

**Film Analysis Paper:** You will write an historical film analysis paper of 1200-1500 words in length. You will choose a feature film to write about which can be accessed through the "Pages" button on the left side of the Canvas homepage. Details about this assignment will be given on Canvas. Late papers will be marked down 10 points for each day they are late.

**Grading Breakdown:**

25 Points: Film Choice

55 Points: Film Analysis Annotated Bibliography

100 Points: Film Analysis Paper

120 Points: Discussion Board Posts

200 Points: Weekly Quizzes

**Final Grade Scale:** A+ 485-500; A 465-484; 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 299 or less.

## **Optional textbook available on-line:** **Peter Stearns, Human Rights in World History**

<https://www-taylorfrancis-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/books/9780203119952> (Links to an external site.)

**Wk 1. (8/17-8/22) INTRO: Contextualizing "Human Rights" in History**

Human Rights and World History

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 2. (8/23-8/29) HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

The Foundations of International Human Rights Law

The Resurgence of Human Rights after 1989

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 3. (8/30-9/5) HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR TIMES**

"Arab Spring" and Nationalism

Refugees and the Right to Asylum

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 4. (9/6-9/12) HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Origins of the Human Rights Tradition

The Enlightenment and other influences

**Film Choice: Select Film For Analysis**

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 5. (9/13-9/19) REVOLUTIONARY RIGHTS**

Revolutionary Ideas

Political Revolt in America and France

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 6. (9/20-9/26) ABOLITIONISM**

The Slave Trade and the Haitian Revolution

Emancipation and the Collapse of Racial Slavery

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 7. (9/27-10/3) WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

Women and Abolitionist Movements

Suffrage Rights and Gendered Identities

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 8. (10/4-10/10) SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS**

Marxism and Socialism

Rise of International Communism

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 9. (10/11-10/17) IMPERIALISM**

The Scramble for Africa

World War I and Empire

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 10. (10/18-10/24) ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE**

Non-Violence Resistance in South Africa and India

Decolonization and Human Rights

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 11. (10/25-10/31) GENOCIDE IN THE EARLY 20th CENTURY**

Crimes Against Humanity

The Holocaust and other atrocities of WW II

**Film Analysis Annotated Bibliography Due!**

**Wk 12. (11/1-11/7) THE NEW WORLD ORDER AFTER WORLD WAR II**

War Crimes Trials and Genocide Conventions

Partitions and the Rise of the Cold War

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 13. (11/8-11/14) THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

Mandela and the Fight Against Apartheid

The Global Civil Rights Movement

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 14. (11/15-11/21) EXPANDING RIGHTS**

The New Feminism and LGBT Rights

Globalizing Women's Rights

**Discussion Board & Quiz**

**Wk 15. FINAL PAPER DUE BY NOON ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 3RD!**