

HIS 210: 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.)

(Links to an external site.)

Classroom SOEB 226 Monday and Wednesday 12:00-12:50

SOEB 226 Friday 12:00-12:50 (Section 01)

Bryan 112 Friday 1:00-1:50 (Section 02)

Instructor Information:

[\(Links to an external site.\)](#) [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Professor Mark Elliott

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

Teaching Assistant Kayla Chadwick-Schultz

E-mail: kmchadwicks@uncg.edu

Office Hours: Thursday 10-11 am by [Zoom appointment \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

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.

MAC Global Engagement (C9) Competency

Courses in this competency provide students with knowledge and critical understanding of similarities and differences across world cultures over time and emphasize the development of global perspectives and skills to engage cross-culturally.

Upon successful completion of this global engagement and intercultural learning through the humanities and fine arts OR through the social & behavioral sciences course, students will:

1. Describe dynamic elements of different cultures. These elements may include (but are not limited to) aesthetic systems, communication systems, economics, physical environments, ethics, gender norms, geography, history, politics, religious principles, or social beliefs, norms and practices.
2. Explain how similarities, differences, and connections among different groups of people or environmental systems affect one another over time and place.

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 all 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. **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.](#)). 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

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](#)

Attendance

Attendance is required for this class. There are no excused or unexcused absences (please no doctor's notes). Every student has 4 "sick days" for emergencies of any kind. After missing 4 classes, each additional missed class will impact the student's overall grade by deducting 15 points off their total points for the class. Students should use their 4 unpenalized absences wisely and save them for true necessities.

UNCG COVID-19 Policy

As we return for Fall 2022, all students, faculty, and staff and all visitors to campus are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. While face-coverings are optional in most areas on campus, individuals are encouraged to wear masks. All individuals and visitors to campus are asked to follow the following actions:

- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
- Staying home when ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill
- Completing a [self-report \(Links to an external site.\)](#) when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive
- Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the [COVID-19 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Students who are ill, quarantining, or isolating should not attend in-person class meetings, but should instead contact their instructor(s) so alternative arrangements for learning and the submission of assignments can be made where possible.

As we continue to manage COVID-19 on our campus, we are following the lead of the local health department and we will adjust our plans to balance student success,

instructional requirements, and the hallmarks of the collegiate experience with the safety



and wellbeing of our campus community." ([Links to an external site.](#))

Assignments:

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

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. [SLO: GHP 1,2; GL 1]

Tests: There will be three cumulative tests 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]

Grading Breakdown:

50 Points: Class Participation in Discussion Sections

110 Points: Quizzes and Discussion Board Posts

100 Points: Term Paper

10 Points: Term Paper Topic

50 Points: Term Paper Sources

50 Points: First Exam

50 Points: Second Exam

80 Points: Final Exam

Negative Points: -15 Points for each unexcused absence over 4.

Extra Credit: +15 for each Extra Credit Assignment

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.

Elasticity Statement:

This syllabus is subject to change according to circumstances and the needs of the instructor. Students will be notified of any important change made after the semester begins.

Optional online textbooks available via UNCG:

Peter Stearns, [Human Rights in World History \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
WEITZ, ERIC D. [A World Divided: The Global Struggle for Human Rights in the Age of Nation-States \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (2019)

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

Aug. 17 Human Rights and World History

Aug. 19 Discussion Section

Week 2. HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Aug. 22 The Foundations of International Human Rights International Law

Aug. 24 The Resurgence of Human Rights after 1989

Aug. 26 Discussion Section

Week 3. HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR TIMES

Aug. 29 China, Russia and the new Cold Wars

Aug. 31 Refugees and the Right to Asylum

Sept. 2 Discussion Section

Week 4. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Sept. 5 NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Sept. 7 The Origins of the Human Rights Tradition

Sept. 9 Discussion Section

Week 5. REVOLUTIONARY RIGHTS

Sept. 12 The Enlightenment and Revolutionary Ideas

Sept. 14 Political Revolt in America and France

Sept 16 Discussion Section

Week 6. ABOLITIONISM

Sept. 19 **First Exam**

Sept. 21 Emancipation and the Collapse of Racial Slavery

Sept. 23 Discussion Section

Week 7. WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Sept. 26 Women and Abolitionist Movements

Sept. 28 Suffrage Rights and Gendered Identities

Sept. 30 Discussion Section

Week 8. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Oct. 3 Marxism and Socialism

Oct. 5 Rise of International Communism

Oct. 7 Discussion Section

Week 9. IMPERIALISM

Oct. 10 **NO CLASS (Fall Break)**

Oct. 12 The Scramble for Africa

Oct. 14 Discussion Section

Week 10. ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Oct. 17 Non-Violence Resistance in South Africa and India

Oct. 19 Decolonization and Human Rights

Oct. 21 Discussion Section

Week 11. GENOCIDE IN THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

Oct. 24 Crimes Against Humanity

Oct. 26 The Holocaust and other atrocities of WW II

Oct. 28 **Second Exam**

Week. 12 THE NEW WORLD ORDER AFTER WORLD WAR II

Oct. 31 War Crimes Trials and Genocide Conventions

Nov. 2 Partitions and the Rise of the Cold War

Nov. 4 Discussion Section

Week 13. THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Nov. 7 Mandela and the Fight Against Apartheid

Nov. 9 The Global Civil Rights Movement

Nov. 11 Discussion Section

Week 14. EXPANDING RIGHTS AND REACTION

Nov. 14 The New Feminism and LGBT Rights

Nov. 16 Geopolitics of Human Rights

Nov. 18 Discussion Section

Week 15. TERRORISM

Nov. 21 Islam and the Middle East

Nov. 23 **NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Break)**

Week 16. Global Politics

Nov. 28 Israel and Palestine

Nov. 30 Resurgence of Nationalism and Racism

FINAL EXAM

December 7 Wednesday, 12:00-2:00