

HIS 210-01: 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.)

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Office Hours: Mondays 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.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn how to historically contextualize and analyze a range of primary and secondary 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.
- 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.
- Explain how similarities, differences, and connections among different groups of people or environmental systems affect one another over time and place.

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.](#)). 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](#)

As we continue our return to campus, 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](#) 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](#)

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 well being of our campus community.

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. The weekly discussion board posts must be completed by midnight on Sundays.

Film Choice: Early in the semester, you will be asked to choose one of the films listed under the "Pages" link (**link will appear by the 3rd week of class**) 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. (1/9-1/15) INTRO: Contextualizing “Human Rights” in History

Human Rights and World History

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 2. (1/16-1/22) HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The Foundations of International Human Rights Law

The Resurgence of Human Rights after 1989

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 3. (1/23-1/29) HUMAN RIGHTS IN OUR TIMES

"Arab Spring" and Nationalism

Refugees and the Right to Asylum

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 4. (1/30-2/5) 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. (2/6-2/12) REVOLUTIONARY RIGHTS

Revolutionary Ideas

Political Revolt in America and France

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 6. (2/13-2/19) ABOLITIONISM

The Slave Trade and the Haitian Revolution

Emancipation and the Collapse of Racial Slavery

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 7. (2/20-2/26) WOMEN’S RIGHTS

Women and Abolitionist Movements

Suffrage Rights and Gendered Identities

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 8. (2/27-3/5) SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Marxism and Socialism

Rise of International Communism

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 9. (3/6-3/12) IMPERIALISM

The Scramble for Africa

World War I and Empire

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 10. (3/13-3/19) ANTI-IMPERIALISM AND NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE

Non-Violence Resistance in South Africa and India
Decolonization and Human Rights

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 11. (3/20-3/26) GENOCIDE IN THE EARLY 20th CENTURY

Crimes Against Humanity
The Holocaust and other atrocities of WW II

Film Analysis Annotated Bibliography Due!

Wk 12. (3/27-4/2) 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. (4/3-4/9) THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Mandela and the Fight Against Apartheid
The Global Civil Rights Movement

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 14. (4/10-4/16) EXPANDING RIGHTS

The New Feminism and LGBT Rights
Globalizing Women's Rights

Discussion Board & Quiz

Wk 15. FINAL PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT ON FRIDAY APRIL 19th!