

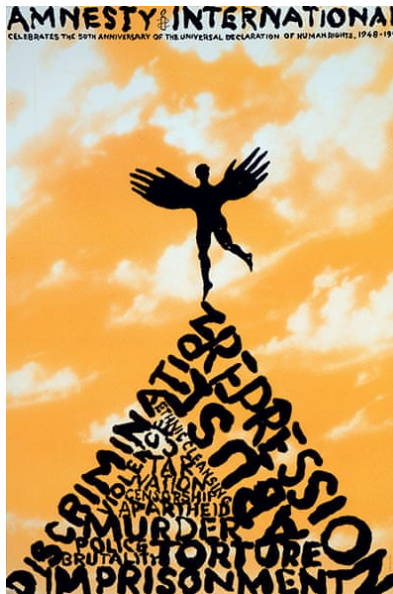
INTD 397-001 – Fall 2023
3 credit hours

Location: ENGTR 1100
Schedule: MW 10:05–11:25am

Professor: Iwa Nawrocki
Email: iwa.nawrocki@mcgill.ca
Office: McTavish 3610, room 16-4
Office hours: MW 11:45am-12:45pm and by appt.

T.A.: Erica Bowler
Email: erica.bowler@mail.mcgill.ca
Office hours: by appt.

Global Human Rights



Course Description

Today, the discourse of human rights is as powerful as it is ubiquitous. Yet from a global history perspective, “human rights” are a surprisingly recent phenomenon. What is more, their rise to prominence was no more steady than smooth. This course will introduce you to the contested past and present of global human rights. Focusing on “human rights” as both a moral and legal concept, it will trace their origins in humanitarian and rights discourses leading up to the defining 1948 United Nations’ “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and the global “breakthrough” of human rights in the 1970s. It will then turn to a series of milestones in the global history of human rights. Finally, it will examine a selection of case studies that have, and continue to shape, global human rights.

By uncovering the “jumps and discontinuities” that characterize the global history of human rights, this course makes a case for bringing history into dialogue with political and legal theory. Doing so helps situate ideas within their historical context. It also reveals how historical events and processes not only shaped the concept, but also informed the enactment, of human rights. Accordingly, this course will pay as much attention to practice as to theory, and so will turn the spotlight on the activists, institutions, and social movements that enabled human rights to go “global.”

Course Objectives

This course aims to familiarize students with the narrative arc of global human rights history; offer illustrative examples (historical and contemporary) that illuminate broader developments; and introduce major topics and themes (both regional and global), together with the key concepts required for their analysis.

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Define and historically situate a range of key features of “global human rights.”
- Identify major trends within scholarship and popular discourse on global human rights.
- Leverage knowledge from the course and the International Development Studies Program to produce an in-depth analysis of a global human rights case of their choosing.

Course Readings and Materials

myCourses: All course readings and materials will be available online through myCourses

Course Format

Lectures will give you a chronological and thematic overview of the global history of human rights, along with the conceptual framework for understanding these.

A portion of in-class time will be dedicated to **class activities and discussion** aimed at enabling you to 1. clarify and solidify your comprehension of assigned readings and course materials, and 2. draw connections between these, lecture content, and your own knowledge base. At least half of the time will be allocated to guided peer discussion and activities in smaller breakout groups. The rest will consist of instructor-led breakout debriefs, Q&As, and class discussion.

At strategic points during the semester, we will collectively brainstorm and discuss **reading, writing, editing, time-management, and class participation strategies**. My hope is that you so will test some of these out throughout the course!

Course readings and materials will provide you with in-depth analyses of (scholarly literature) and historical perspectives on (historical documents) key aspects of the events and processes covered in lectures. You will be expected to work through the course readings and materials assigned for each weekly topic ahead of that week’s scheduled class meetings.

Assignments

- **Take-Home Midterm:** 25%
- **Quizzes:** 10%
- **Final Project Proposal:** 15%
 - Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (10%)
 - Final Project Discussion (5%)
- **Final Project:** 35%
 - Human Rights Report (25%)
 - Human Rights Campaign Design (10%)
- **Accountability Points:** 10%
- **Participation:** 5%

Detailed instructions for each assignment will be posted to myCourses well ahead of the deadline

Personal Statement:

Due: Friday, September 15 by 11:59pm

To help me, your T.A., and your classmates get to know you, write 100-250 words about yourself: your preferred name and pronouns, and anything else you'd like to share (ex. where you call home, your non-academic interests, something fun or surprising about you, etc.). Please also share why you're taking this class (including topics and countries you're most interested in) and whether you have any previous academic or activist experience with human rights.

Your personal statement will count toward your participation grade.

Take-Home Midterm: 25%

Due: Friday, October 20 by 11:59pm

Short response and short essay format. Will cover content from Topics 1–8.

Final Project Proposal: 15%

- **Final Project Proposal:** 10%

Due: Friday, November 17 by 11:59pm

Tentative focus, thesis statement, and outline plus annotated bibliography

Length: 2-3 pages single-spaced, 12 pt. font

- **Final Project Discussion:** 5%

Monday, November 20 – Friday, November 25

20-minute discussion one-on-one with the professor or T.A. to refine final project focus, thesis, outline, and bibliography. Time slots to be scheduled.

Final Project: 35%

Due: **Tuesday, December 5 by 11:59pm**

Human Rights Report (25%) analyzing a global human rights case of your choice.

Length: 7–9 pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font

Human Rights Campaign Design (10%)

Length: 2–3 pages double-spaced, 12 pt. font

Quizzes: 10%

Multiple-choice questions on course readings and materials as well as lecture content.

- **Quiz I:** 5%
Available to take between Friday, October 6 and Sunday, October 8. Covering Topics 1-6.
- **Quiz II:** 5%
Available to take between Friday, December 1 to Sunday, December 3. Covering Topics 8-14.

Accountability Points: 5%

To encourage developing a sustainable writing process, we will discuss setting incremental goals for the **take-home midterm** and **final project**. After completing each of these assignments, you will submit a short reflection on what enabled and/or prevented you from meeting the goals you set for yourself. You will receive full points for thoughtfully completed reflections.

Participation: 5%

In addition to your personal statement, your participation grade will reflect attendance and active involvement in discussion of the course readings and materials. In recognition of diverse learning styles, it will also take into account a range of alternative forms of engagement (office hours attendance, discussion boards, etc.)

*** Extension and Late Assignment Policy ***

I recognize that all of you balance multiple academic, professional, and personal commitments. I also know that physical and mental health struggles and other personal issues can affect your ability to meet course deadlines. In light of this, I am happy to grant **extensions** when warranted. If you're struggling with any aspect of the course, I encourage you to reach out to me sooner rather than later. That said, I know that life happens, so please don't hesitate to contact me even at the eleventh hour.

* Please note that the syllabus could change during the course of the term as a result of factors beyond the instructor's control. *

Part I. Toward Global Human Rights

1. Defining “Global Human Rights”

Dates Wednesday, August 30

Historical Documents

- United Nations General Assembly, “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf> (8 pages)
 - United Nations General Assembly, “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,” <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf> (26 pages – *skim*)
 - United Nations General Assembly, “International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,” <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cescr.pdf> (8 pages – *skim*)
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2. Rights Before Human Rights

Dates Wednesday, September 6

Scholarly Literature

- Philip Kaisary, “The Haitian Revolution and Socio-economic Rights,” in *Social Rights and the Politics of Obligation in History*, edited by Steven L. B. Jensen and Charles Walton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 82-98. (17 pages)

Historical Documents

- “The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen,” <https://revolution.chnm.org/d/295> (5 pages)
 - Olympe de Gouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen,” <https://pages.uoregon.edu/dluebke/301ModernEurope/GougesRightsofWomen.pdf> (2 pages)
 - “The Haitian Declaration of Independence,” translated by Laurent Dubois and John Garrigus,” <https://wp.stu.ca/worldhistory/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/07/Haitian-Declaration-of-Independence.pdf> (4 pages)
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3. Humanity Before Human Rights

Dates Monday, September 11
Wednesday, September 13
Friday, September 15 → Personal Statement due by 11:59pm

Scholarly Literature

- Lynn Hunt, “The Paradoxical Origins of Human Rights,” in *Human Rights and Revolutions*, edited by Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom et. al., 2nd edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 3-20. (16 pages)

Historical Documents

- John H. Harris and E. D. Morel, “The Congo Atrocities: A Lecture to Accompany a Series of 60 Photographic Slides,” *Antislavery Usable Past*, <http://www.antislavery.ac.uk/items/show/1285#> (30 pages)
- “Congo Atrocities Lantern Lecture (Photographs),” *Antislavery Usable Past*, <http://antislavery.nottingham.ac.uk/solr-list?q=&facet=collection%3A%22Congo+Atrocities+Lantern+Lecture%22> (55 photographs)

4. The 1940s and the World War II Conjunction

Dates Monday, September 18
Wednesday, September 20

Scholarly Literature

- G. Daniel Cohen, “The Holocaust and the ‘Human Rights Revolution’: A Reassessment,” in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, edited by Akira Iriye et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 53-71. (16 pages)

Historical Documents

- Ho Chi Minh, “Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, 1945,” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay (New York: Routledge, 2007), 324-325. (2 pages)
 - M. K. Gandhi, “A Letter Addressed to the Director-General of Unesco by Mahatma Gandhi,” in *Human Rights: Comments and Interpretations*, edited by UNESCO (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 18. (1 page)
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5. The 1960s and Decolonization

Dates Monday, September 25
Wednesday, September 27

Scholarly Literature

- Steven L. B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights: The 1960s, Decolonization, and the Reconstruction of Global Values* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 102-137. (36 pages)

Historical Documents

- African National Congress (ANC), “The Freedom Charter,” <http://www.sahistory.org.za/article/freedom-charter> (4 pages)
- Kwame Nkrumah, “Speech on Decolonization at the United Nations, 1960,” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents from Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay (New York: Routledge, 2007), 325-326. (2 pages)
- Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet,” <https://sites.middlebury.edu/soan365/files/2013/02/Malcolm-X-The-Ballot-or-the-Bullet.pdf> (12 pages)

6. The 1970s and the “Breakthrough” of Global Human Rights

Dates Monday, October 2
Wednesday, October 4
Friday, October 6 to Sunday, October 8 → Quiz I available online

Scholarly Literature

- Samuel Moyn, *Human Rights and the Uses of History* (New York: Verso, 2017), 158-187. (Chapter 6. “Human Rights in History”) (30 pages)
- Simon Stevens, “Why South Africa? The Politics of Anti-Apartheid Activism in Britain in the Long 1970s,” in *The Breakthrough: Human Rights in the 1970s*, edited by Jan Eckel and Samuel Moyn (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 204-225. (22 pages)

Historical Documents

- “1970: South Africa Cricket Tour Called Off,” *BBC News*, 22 May 1970, http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/may/22/newsid_2504000/2504573.stm

- “Boycott Apartheid,” Getty Images, curated by Sarah McDonald, <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/-AWRwYxBzBEA8A>
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7. *Fall Break*

Dates *Monday, October 9 – no class*
Wednesday, October 11 – no class

8. The 1990s and the “Asian Values Debate”

Dates Monday, October 16
Wednesday, October 18
Friday, October 20 → Take-Home Midterm due by 11:59pm

Scholarly Literature

- Diane K. Mauzy, “The Human Rights and ‘Asian values’ Debate in Southeast Asia: Trying to Clarify the Key Issues,” *The Pacific Review* 10:2 (1997): 210-236. (20 pages)
- Makau Mutua, *Human Rights: A Political and Cultural Critique* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 154-157 (Conclusion). (4 pages)

Historical Documents

- National Archives of Singapore, “Speech by Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Senior Minister of Singapore, at the CREATE21 ASahi Forum on 20 Nov 92, Tokyo,” 1-4, 15-27, <https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/lky19921120.pdf> (18 pages)
 - “Final Declaration of the Regional Meeting for Asia of the World Conference on Human Rights [1993 Bangkok Declaration on Human Rights].” (5 pages)
 - United Nations World Conference on Human Rights Preparatory Committee, “Report by the Secretariat: Bangkok NGO Declaration on Human Rights,” 19 April 1993, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/170675?ln=en> (22 pages)
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Part II. Milestones in Global Human Rights

9. Amnesty International and the Global Campaign Against Torture

Dates Monday, October 23
Wednesday, October 25

Scholarly Literature

- Barbara Keys, “Anti-Torture Politics: Amnesty International, the Greek Junta, and the Origins of the Human Rights ‘Boom’ in the United States,” in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, edited by Akira Iriye et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 201-221. (14 pages)

Historical Documents

- Amnesty International, “Situation in Greece: Report by Amnesty International [1968],” <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/204000/eur250011968en.pdf> (8 pages)
 - James Becket, *Barbarism in Greece: A Young American Lawyer’s Inquiry into the Use of Torture in Contemporary Greece, with Case Histories and Documents* (New York: Walker, 1970), vii-xiv, 1-27, 59-65. (41 pages – *read strategically*)
 - Film: *Brazil: A Report on Torture*, directed by Haskell Wexler and Saul Landau (1971), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aUu-zGGg08> (59 mins)
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10. Eastern European Activists

Dates Monday, October 30
Wednesday, November 1

Scholarly Literature

- Robert Brier, “Adam Michnik’s Understanding of Totalitarianism and the West European Left: A Historical and Transnational Approach to Dissident Political Thought,” *East European Politics & Societies* 25:2 (May 2011): 197-218. (18 pages)

Historical Documents

- Charter 77, “Declaration of Charter 77,” Radio Free Europe, <https://www.rferl.org/a/1083022.html> (5 pages)
 - Václav Havel, “The Power of the Powerless,” in *Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990 by Václav Havel*, edited by Paul Wilson (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 127-214.
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11. Latin American Social Movements

Dates Monday, November 6
Wednesday, November 8

Scholarly Literature

- Patrick William Kelly, “The 1973 Chilean Coup and the Origins of Transnational Human Rights Activism,” *Journal of Global History* 8:1 (March 2013): 165-186. (22 pages)
- Brenda Elsey, “‘As the World Is My Witness’: Transnational Chilean Solidarity and Popular Culture,” in *Human Rights and Transnational Solidarity in Latin America*, edited by Jessica Stites Mor (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 177-208. (25 pages)

Historical Documents

- “The Life and Death of Victor Jara” (1975), *The Guardian*
<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/sep/18/victor-jara-pinochet-chile-rocks-backpages> (15 pages)

12. Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect

Dates Monday, November 13
Wednesday, November 15
Friday, November 17 → Final Project Proposal due by 11:59pm

Scholarly Literature

- Samantha Power, *A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), xi-xxi. (Preface) (11 pages)

Historical Documents

- Philip Gourevitch, “After the Genocide,” *The New Yorker*, 18 December 1995,
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1995/12/18/after-the-genocide> (41 pages)
- United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, “When to Refer to a Situation as Genocide,”
<http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/GuidanceNote-When%20to%20refer%20to%20a%20situation%20as%20genocide.pdf> (3 pages)
- Kofi Annan, “Secretary-General Presents his Annual Report to General Assembly [20 September 1999],” <https://www.un.org/press/en/1999/19990920.sgsm7136.html> (4 pages)

Part III. Case Studies in Global Human Rights

13. Women's Human Rights

Dates Monday, November 20

Wednesday, November 22

Monday, November 20 to Friday, November 25 → Final Project Discussions

Scholarly Literature

- Paulina García-Del Moral, "The Murders of Indigenous Women in Canada as Femicides: Toward a Decolonial Intersectional Reconceptualization of Femicide," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 43: 4 (2018): 929-954. (26 pages)
- Kelly J. Shannon, "The Right to Bodily Integrity: Women's Rights as Human Rights and the International Movement to End Female Genital Mutilation, 1970s-1990s" in *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History*, edited by Akira Iriye et. al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 285-310. (17 pages)

Historical Documents

- Ni Una Menos, "Carta Orgánica [Manifiesto]" (2017), <https://niunamenos.org.ar/quienes-somos/carta-organica/> (6 pages)
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14. Indigenous Human Rights

Dates Monday, November 27

Wednesday, November 29

Thursday, November 30 (Monday schedule) – *Writing Workshop*

Friday, December 1 to Sunday, December 3 → Quiz II available online

Scholarly Literature

- Mauro Barelli, "The Interplay between Global and Regional Human Rights Systems in the Construction of the Indigenous Rights Regime," *Human Rights Quarterly* 32:4 (November 2010): 951-979. (29 pages)

Historical Documents

- Rigoberta Menchú Tum, "Nobel Peace Prize Lecture" (1992), *The Nobel Prize*, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/1992/tum/lecture/> (10 pages)

- Ken Saro-Wiwa, “On Environmental Rights of the Ogoni People in Nigeria (1995),” in *The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents From Ancient Times to the Present*, edited by Micheline R. Ishay, 3rd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2023), 384-386. (3 pages)
 - Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, “Calls to Action [2012],” https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf (11 pages)
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15. Human Rights Trials

Date Monday, December 4

Tuesday, December 5 → Final Project due by 11:59pm

Scholarly Literature

- Kathryn Sikkink and Hun Joon Kim, “The Justice Cascade: The Origins and Effectiveness of Prosecutions of Human Rights Violations,” *The Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 9 (2013): 269-285. (13 pages – *skim*)
- Patrick Vinck and Phuong N. Pham, “Consulting Survivors: Evidence from Cambodia, Northern Uganda, and Other Countries Affected by Mass Violence,” in *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and its Discontents*, edited by Steve J. Stern and Scott Straus (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 107-124. (15 pages)

Historical Documents

- Amnesty International, “How General Pinochet’s Detention Changed the Meaning of Justice,” 16 October 2003, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2013/10/how-general-pinochets-detention-changed-meaning-justice/> (3 pages)
 - *Granito: How to Nail a Dictator*, directed by Pamela Yates, Peter Kinoy and Paco de Onis (2011; Brooklyn: Skylight Pictures).
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McGill University (Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal) is situated on the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka, a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst many First Nations, including the Kanien'kehà:ka of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Huron/Wendat, Abenaki, and Anishinaabeg. McGill honours, recognizes and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

L'Université McGill (Tiohtiá:ke/Montréal) est située sur le territoire traditionnel de la Première Nation Kanien'kehà:ka, un lieu qui a longtemps servi de lieu de rencontre et d'échange entre multiples Premières Nations, y compris les nations Kanien'kehà:ka de la Confédération Haudenosaunee, Huron/Wendat, Abenaki et Anishinaabeg. McGill honore, reconnaît et respecte ces nations à titre d'intendants traditionnels des terres et de l'eau sur lesquelles nous nous réunissons aujourd'hui.

*In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the **right to submit in English or in French** any written work that is to be graded.*

*Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le **droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais** tout travail écrit devant être noté.*

*McGill University values **academic integrity**. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).*

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*As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an **inclusive and equitable learning environment** that accommodates your diverse backgrounds and lived experiences. If you experience learning barriers in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me. If relevant, you can also contact [Student Accessibility and Achievement](#), 514-398-6009.*

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Workload management skills: We will be discussing **reading, writing, editing, time-management, and class participation strategies** throughout the course, and you are always welcome to reach out to me for support in any of these areas.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by your academic work and/or would like to further develop your time and workload management skills, you can also seek support from [Student Services](#).

[Teaching and Learning Services](#) (TLS) also provides resources on topics such as time management, study strategies, group work, exam prep, and more. TLS further offers opportunities to connect with an academic peer mentor through [Stay on Track](#) and to attend workshops.

For further individualized support, you can check out the programs and resources from [Student Accessibility & Achievement](#).

Wellness: Many students may face mental health challenges that can impact not only their academic success but also their ability to thrive in our campus community. Please reach out for support when you need it; wellness resources are available on campus, off campus, and online through the [Wellness Hub](#).

Basic needs: If you have difficulty affording food or if you lack a safe and stable place to live, and believe that these circumstances may affect your performance in this course, I encourage you to contact the Dean of Students at deanofstudents@mcgill.ca, who can connect you with support services. If you feel comfortable doing so, please let me know as well so we can discuss how I can best support your learning.

** In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change **