

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 380**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**  
**SPRING 2009**

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 1-2 pm and by appointment

This class will introduce students to some of the major debates around the theory, politics, history, and practice of human rights.

**Reading:**

These texts are required for the course. All are available at KB Books.

- Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights, 3rd Edition* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2007).
- Rachel Meeropol, editor, *America's Disappeared: Secret Imprisonment, Detainees, and the "War on Terror"* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005).
- Issa Shivji, *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa* (London: Codesria 1989). *Reprint.*
- *NACLA Report on the Americas*, vol. 41, no. 6 (November/December 2008). *Journal.*

In addition to these four books, we will be reading numerous journal articles and book chapters. Almost all of these are available on-line through Electronic Course Reserves, signified by **\*ECR\*** in the reading schedule. The course's ECR homepage can be found at <http://ecr.sdsu.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1396>. The password is "rogue". Once you have access, you can select, download, and print the relevant articles and book chapters.

Those readings that are not on ECR are available on the internet through publicly accessible websites; URLs are provided in the reading schedule.

I strongly recommend that you print out all the reading materials on Electronic Course Reserves and from the internet. This will make it much easier to read and annotate these pieces, participate in class discussion, and refer back to them when writing papers or studying for exams.

There is no Blackboard site for this class.

**Class Attendance and Participation:**

Formal or informal discussion will be a feature of every class session, and every student is expected to participate in these discussions. This requires attending class and having done the readings. Class attendance is not mandatory, but pop quizzes on the reading will be given throughout the semester, and will account for 20% of your semester grade. I will drop your lowest quiz grade, so you can miss one quiz without any penalty. In addition, consistent and excellent in-class participation can lead to an extra point or two on the semester grade.

**Class Rules:**

*No computers.* I do not allow computers to be used in class.

*No voice recorders.* Electronically recording lectures is not allowed.

*No cell phones.* Turn your cell phone off or put it on silent, and do not check it or use it during the class period.

*No eating in class.* Beverages in spill-proof cups or bottles are fine.

*Proper classroom behavior.* The classroom is a place for open discussion and debate, but to facilitate this, we all need to abide by certain rules and standards. Most importantly, students are expected to be respectful of other students and of other opinions. Students should raise their hand and be recognized by the professor before contributing to the discussion.

*Email.* To get in touch with me via email, a special gmail account has been set up: POLS380@gmail.com. Please use this address for all communications. Treat emails as short letters, not as long text messages. Use a proper salutation, such as Dear Professor/Dr./Mr. Branch, and use full sentences and correct grammar and spelling.

**Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations in class or on tests must make arrangements through Student Disability Services, located at Calpulli Center, Suite 3101, phone number 594-6473, webpage <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/sds/>.

**Grading and Assignments:**

Your semester grade will be determined as follows:

- Final Exam: 40%
- Midterm Paper: 40%
- Pop Quizzes: 20%

**Plagiarism and Cheating:**

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in failure and will be reported to the University. For the SDSU Academic Senate Policy on plagiarism and cheating, see [http://its.sdsu.edu/resources/turnitin/pdf/Plagiarism\\_AcadSen.pdf](http://its.sdsu.edu/resources/turnitin/pdf/Plagiarism_AcadSen.pdf). For a tutorial on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, see <http://infotutor.sdsu.edu/plagiarism/index.cfm>.

If you have further questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me or the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, located at Student Services West, Room 1604, phone 594-3069, webpage <http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/srr/>.

## Reading Schedule

### Theme 1: Human Rights: Introduction

January 22: Introduction to the Course

January 27: Human Rights: History and Theory 1

Reading: Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights, 3rd Edition*, Ch. 1-3.

January 29: Human Rights: History and Theory 2

Reading: Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights, 3rd Edition*, Ch. 5-6.

February 3: Human Rights: History and Theory 3

Reading: Jack Donnelly, *International Human Rights, 3rd Edition*, Ch. 8, 10.

February 5: The US and Human Rights

Reading: Noam Chomsky, "The United States and the Challenge of Relativity" pp. 124-155 in *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2000). \*ECR\*

February 10: Human rights in Practice 1: Transnational Level

Reading: Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink, "The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction," pp. 1-38 in *The Power of Human Rights* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1999). \*ECR\*

February 12: Human Rights in Practice 2: Local Level

Reading: Mark Goodale, "Introduction: Locating Rights, Envisioning Law between the Global and the Local," pp. 1-38 in *The Practice of Human Rights* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2007). \*ECR\*

February 17: Movie

### Theme 2: The Politics of Human Rights

February 19: Human Rights and the Right to Have Rights 1

Reading: Hannah Arendt, "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man," pp. 267-302 in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: HBJ, 1968). \*ECR\*

February 24: Human Rights and the Right to Have Rights 2

Reading: Claude Lefort, "Politics and Human Rights," pp. 237-272 in *The Political Forms of Modern Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986). \*ECR\*

February 26: Human Rights and the Right to Have Rights 3

Discussion

March 3: The Politics of Human Rights Interventions 1

Reading: David Chandler, "The Road to Military Humanitarianism: How the Human Rights NGOs Shaped a New Humanitarian Agenda," *Human Rights Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (Aug. 2001). \*ECR\*

March 5: The Politics of Human Rights Interventions 2

Reading: David Chandler, "The Limits of Human Rights Theory," pp. 89-119 in *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention*, (London: Pluto Press, 2002). \*ECR\*

March 10: Feminist Perspectives on Human Rights Interventions

Catherine MacKinnon, "Are Women Human," pp. 41-43, and "Women's September 11," pp. 259-278, in *Are Women Human? And Other International Dialogues* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2006). \*ECR\*

March 12: Discussion

Paper Topic Handed Out

### **Theme 3: Human Rights and Africa**

March 17: Human rights and Social Movements in Africa 1

Reading: Issa Shivji, *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa*, pp. 1-63.

March 19: Human rights and Social Movements in Africa 2

Reading: Shivji, *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa*, pp. 69-110.

March 24: International Human Rights Interventions in Africa 1

Reading: Makau wa Mutua, "Savages, Victims, and Saviors: The Metaphor of Human Rights," *Harvard International Law Journal* 42, no. 1 (Winter 2001).

March 26: Paper Due

---Spring Break---

April 7: International Human Rights Interventions in Africa 2

Reading: Alex de Waal, "Human rights organizations and the political imagination: how the West and Africa have diverged," *Journal of Human Rights*, vol. 2, no. 4 (December 2003), pp. 475 – 494. \*ECR\*

April 9: International Criminal Prosecutions in Africa

Reading: Adam Branch, "Uganda's Civil War and the Politics of ICC Intervention," *Ethics & International Affairs* vol. 21, no. 2 (Summer 2007), pp. 179-198. \*ECR\*

April 14: Human Rights and Armed Conflict in Africa

Human Rights Focus, "Fostering the Transition in Acholiland" (2007).  
[http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~abbranch/Publications/index\\_pub.html](http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~abbranch/Publications/index_pub.html)

#### **Theme 4: Human Rights in the United States**

April 16: US and Human Rights: Introduction

Reading: Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet," pp. 23-44 in *Malcolm X Speaks* (New York: Grove, 1965). \*ECR\*

April 21: Prisons and Race in America

Reading: *States of Confinement: Policing, Detention, and Prisons*, Joy James, ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 53-83, 205-229. \*ECR\*

April 23: The US/Mexico Border and Human Rights

Reading: *NACLA Report on the Americas*, November/December 2008.

April 28: Persecution and Detention of Immigrants

Reading: Deepa Fernandes, *Targeted: National Security and the Business of Immigration?* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2007), pp. 35-71, 191-200. \*ECR\*

April 30: War on Terror and Human Rights 1

Reading: Rachel Meeropol, ed. *America's Disappeared: Secret Imprisonment, Detainees, and the "War on Terror,"* selections.

May 5: War on Terror and Human Rights 2

Reading: Rachel Meeropol, ed. *America's Disappeared*, selections.

May 7: Conclusion and Operation Sudden Fall

Reading: Citybeat, [http://www.sdcitybeat.com/cms/story/detail/sudden\\_fall/6969/](http://www.sdcitybeat.com/cms/story/detail/sudden_fall/6969/)

May 12: Review Session

**May 19 & 21: Final Exam 10:30 – 12:30**