



IRPG830

The Politics of International Human Rights Law

S1 External 2015

Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	8
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	9
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	11

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Jonathan Symons

jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au

Contact via jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MIntRel or PGDipIntRel or PGCertIntRel or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntRel or MIntRelMIntTrdeComLaw or MTransInterMIntRel or MAppAnth or PGDipAppAnth or MDevCult or PGDipDevCult or MA in (History or Modern History) or PGDipArts in Modern History or PGCertArts in Modern History or MIntPubDip or MGlobalHlthDevStud or GradDipIntRel or GradCertIntRel

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

It is impossible to comprehend or participate in contemporary international relations without an understanding of the politics of human rights. This unit explores the evolving system of international law, rules and principles that seek to promote human rights. Students will examine contemporary theories of 'human rights', the historical development of international human rights practice and its impacts within contemporary global politics. We will also examine the ways in which international human rights practice influences contemporary political controversies over issues such as refugees, sexual rights, torture and economic development.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law

Identify and explain the connections between the principles, norms, rules and decision-

making procedures that make up the international human rights regime;
Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument
Work collaboratively within tutorials to create critical, dynamic discussion
Explain and reflect upon some of the major international issues occurring within international relations and the role that human rights plays within these issues

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Online Discussion Leadership</u>	20%	Various
<u>Online Quiz</u>	10%	Week 6
<u>Research Essay</u>	40%	Week 8
<u>Take Home Exam</u>	30%	Week 13

Online Discussion Leadership

Due: **Various**

Weighting: **20%**

This task is designed to develop and assess your written communication skills in informal settings, and your ability to lead and manage discussion. At the beginning of semester we will assign tutorial topics to presenters. Working with at least one other student (using online discussion tools to plan your presentation) you will lead online discussion for a week, using materials or activities to engage your audience. Remember, don't post an essay online and keep presentations short. The point of the exercise is to lead discussion: which means you need to prompt and encourage participation rather than dominate it. Any form of presentation is acceptable. You could conduct a debate, show some images, run a role play, conduct a quiz, show media etc. Your presentation should help others to gain greater understanding by analysing the week's topic and linking it to current human rights issues. For example a presentation on the topic of 'International Enforcement' may consider the doctrine of "Responsibility to Protect" and perhaps link this to the current situation in Syria or the recent military action in Libya. .

Your group must email jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au (or your tutor) a 700 word paper by Friday 5 pm the week prior to your presenting week. This paper should outline the resources you have drawn on and explain how you have sought to engage the group and what you have sought to

achieve in the class. It may contain some of the posts/materials that you intend to use to prompt class discussion.

You will be assessed on five criteria as a group:

- Preparation
- Organization
- Content
- Creativity
- Engagement

You will be assessed as a group and your group will receive a mark out of 20 for your presentation.

All students are expected to engage in each other's presentations. Failure to engage in a meaningful manner with at least 50% of presentations will lead to a grade penalty being imposed.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law
- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
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- Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument
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Online Quiz

Due: **Week 6**

Weighting: **10%**

A mid-semester test comprising 10 multiple choice questions (worth 1 mark each and therefore 10% of the total assessment) covering material presented in the unit up to and including week 5. The test itself will be conducted at the end of week 6 and will cover material presented in the first 5 weeks. The test will be administered on-line. You will have access to the test from 9am Thursday Week 6 - 5pm Saturday. Once you open and start the test, however, you will have only a certain amount of time in which to finish it (e.g. 20 mins). You will need to revise all the

material presented in the first 5 weeks of the course to answer the questions before you start the test. You won't be able to attempt to simply look answers up during the test.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law

Research Essay

Due: **Week 8**

Weighting: **40%**

Students are required to submit a research essay of no more than 2500 words in length.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law
- Identify and explain the connections between the principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that make up the international human rights regime;
- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
- Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument
- Explain and reflect upon some of the major international issues occurring within international relations and the role that human rights plays within these issues

Take Home Exam

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **30%**

An end-of-semester take home exam will cover content drawn from the entire unit. The exam will consist of 4 questions and the maximum word length will be 2000 words.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law
- Identify and explain the connections between the principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that make up the international human rights regime;

- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
- Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument
- Explain and reflect upon some of the major international issues occurring within international relations and the role that human rights plays within these issues

Delivery and Resources

Technologies Used

This unit has an online presence in iLearn. Students will require access to reliable broadband and a computer.

Tutoring Staff

Dr Jonathan Symons

Texts

Textbook: Goodhart, Michael, ed. *Human rights: politics and practice*. Oxford University Press, 2013

All readings will either be drawn from the textbook or will be available electronically (via the library or via links from the unit's iLearn page).

Unit Schedule

Week 1

Introduction: Overview of International Human Rights Practice

Thursday 26 Feb 2015

Week 2

Twentieth Century History of International Human Rights

Thursday 5 March 2015

Week 3

Contemporary Theories of Human Rights

Thursday 12 March 2015

Week 4

Implementation: Socialisation, Persuasion & Civil Society

Thursday 19 March 2015

Week 5

International Enforcement

Thursday 26 March 2015

Week 6

Civil and Political Rights: Torture

Thursday 2 April 2015

Online Quiz: Thursday 2nd April- Saturday 4th April

MID SEMESTER BREAK: 3 April to 19 April 2015

Week 7

Social and Economic Rights: Development

Thursday 23 April 2015

Week 8

Individual to Group Rights: Self-Determination

Thursday 30 April 2015

Week 9

Refugees & Asylum Rights

Thursday 7 May 2015

Research Essay due 4 May 2015

Week 10

Genocide and Crimes against Humanity

Thursday 14 May 2015

Week 11

Sexual Rights

Thursday 21 May 2015

Week 12

Conclusions & the Future of Human Rights

Thursday 28 May 2015

Week 13

Final Examination Released on ilearn at 9 am Wednesday 3 June - due for submission 11 pm

Thursday 4 June 2014.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide

appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Work collaboratively within tutorials to create critical, dynamic discussion

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and development of international human rights law
- Identify and explain the connections between the principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that make up the international human rights regime;
- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
- Explain and reflect upon some of the major international issues occurring within international relations and the role that human rights plays within these issues

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and explain the connections between the principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures that make up the international human rights regime;
- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;
- Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Undertake independent research and present that research during discussions and in written form;

- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
- Identify and organise relevant theories, concepts and case studies to communicate (orally and in written work) a persuasive, coherent, critical argument
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PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Critically evaluate and analyse arguments surrounding the international human rights regime – both orally and in written work
- Explain and reflect upon some of the major international issues occurring within international relations and the role that human rights plays within these issues

Changes from Previous Offering

The Unit is being convened by Jonathan Symons for the second time in 2015. Topics and readings have been slightly reorganised in response to student feedback in 2014 (for example, there is now no lecture in the final week).