



# IRPG830

## The Politics of International Human Rights Law

S1 Day 2015

*Dept of Modern History, Politics & International Relations*

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#### Disclaimer

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Jonathan Symons

[jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au](mailto:jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au)

Contact via [jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au](mailto: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>Tutorial Presentation</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

### Tutorial Presentation

Due: **Various**

Weighting: **20%**

This task is designed to develop and assess your oral communication skills and ability to work with others. At the beginning of semester we will assign tutorial topics to presenters who will work in pairs. Together, you will run the first 15-30 minutes of the tutorial. Any form of presentation is acceptable, except you must not read a written paper. You could conduct a debate, show some images, run a role play, conduct a quiz, put students in small groups for discussion, 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.

Each group must email [jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au](mailto:jonathan.symons@mq.edu.au) (or your tutor if this is not Jon) a 700 word paper at least 24 hours before your presentation. This paper should explain how you have sought to engage the group, what you have sought to achieve in the class and outline the resources you have drawn on. You will be assessed on five criteria:

- Preparation

- Organization
- Content
- Creativity
- Engagement

You will be marked as a group for this task and further information/discussion about the task will be available on ilearn.

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;
- 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

## 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](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](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](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/](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](http://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](http://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](http://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

- 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

## **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).