History of Human Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt holding the Spanish-language version of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Palais de Chaillot, Paris, December 1948.

Course Description
The concept of – and struggle for – human rights is powerful, pervasive. Its origins, development, and strategies of implementation contested. Have human beings always had the "right to have rights"? How did the concept of "rights" arise? What does it mean, and how has it been used? This course explores human rights' genealogy and uneven historical evolution from the European Enlightenment through the late twentieth century human rights revolution and experience of globalization. We will examine Atlantic Revolutionary era articulations of "rights of man" and "human rights," the interwar institutionalization of rights, the post-WWII shift from minority to individual human rights, the human rights revolution of the late 1970s, and the relationship between globalization and human rights using a variety of primary and secondary sources, with special attention to relations between human rights and mass atrocity prevention. This course fulfills a core requirement for the Human Rights minor.

Required Texts
• Peter N. Stearns, *Human Rights in World History 2nd edition* (Routledge, 2023): eBook link https://www.routledge.com/Human-Rights-in-World-History/Stearns/p/book/9781032332109
• Lynn Hunt*, Inventing Human Rights* (Norton, 2007)
• Scott Straus, *Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention*: free pdf download; or $2.99 Kindle version https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/reports-and-resources/fundamentals-of-genocide-and-mass-atrocity-prevention

Course Objectives
By the end of the course, students will have:
1) Gained a deeper understanding of the patterns and processes, ruptures and continuities in the human rights history narrative which have shaped today's world, its politics, ideas, and ambitions;
2) Explored how human rights connects us to other people, places, and times;
3) Used primary source and secondary source evidence to analyze fundamental problems in human rights history;

4) Engaged in an environment of open inquiry to exchange ideas and interpretation of concepts, with the understanding that scholarly inquiry is a multidimensional conversation.
5) Become better prepared to negotiate the variable applications of human rights concepts in today's globalized world.

Course Requirements and Grade Evaluation
This is an overview of the assignments you will complete over the course of the semester by assignment type. Grades will be calculated by assignment type, whose relative weights are listed below. You will receive more detailed instructions in class and on Brightspace.

1) **Reading Questions (RQs): 20%**
You will engage thoughtfully with many of the readings through a google doc set of questions. You will answer one of the questions on the document. **Reading questions are due before the class session for which the reading is listed.** Each answer receives one point. Points will be updated weekly on Brightspace. You are expected to reach a minimum of 12 points. A maximum of 15 points is possible.
2) **Short written assignments and class activities: 20%**
You will complete short written in-class exercises through the quiz tool on Brightspace. **These writing exercises and activities are due in class.** Each answer receives one point. Points will be calculated based on the number of in-class writing exercises and activities we complete over the course of the semester.
3) **Four Short Essays: 45%**
You will write four short (2-3 double-spaced pages, or 500-750 words) essays in class which provide a thoughtful response to a prompt based on a section of the course. You may use your handwritten notes from your readings and a handwritten outline. The essays shall adhere to the following format: double-spaced, one-inch margins, in 12-point Times New Roman font, paginated.
4) **Case Study Project: 15%**
This project is intended to connect your examination of human rights instruments and institutions established in the postwar period and in the 1990s with mass atrocity prevention. You will be randomly assigned one of the following case studies to examine, each of which represents developments in how the international community has confronted mass atrocities: Somalia, Bosnia, Rwanda, Kosovo, East Timor, Libya, Sudan, and Syria. There are many other cases, but these examples help us to understand the precedents the international community draws most often for policy making. Your case study project will take the shape of five (5) slides, each answering a direct question. People working on the same case study will meet as groups during class time and complete a slide worth 10 points of the total 100 points individual project grade. More details to follow in class.

Grade scale:
A = 94-100; **A-** = 90-93; **B+** = 88-89; **B** = 83-87; **B-** = 80-82; **C+** = 78-79; **C** = 73-77; **C-** = 70-72; **D+** = 68-69; **D** = 63-67; **D-** = 60-62; **F** = 0-59

Attendance/Participation
- This course follows Purdue's academic regulations regarding attendance, which states that students are expected to be present for every meeting of the classes in which they are enrolled. Evidence suggests that regular class attendance improves your learning, academic performance, and social and emotional well-being. Per Purdue policy, "ultimately students are responsible for

all required coursework and bear responsibility for any academic consequences that may result due to absence."

- Active participation and regular attendance in this course are expected. **You will not receive participation credit for the days you are absent.** At times, missing class is unavoidable. Some alternative assignments are possible, but only if I am contacted on the day of class (except in case of emergency.) Abuse of this grace policy will result in a point deduction. If you have a special case or concern, please contact me, in advance, if possible, to discuss alternatives.
- Class success also depends on: (1) respect for each other (students, professor); (2) collegiality and civility of discourse; (3) being fully present, meaning: your attendance, your professional courtesy of arriving on-time, silencing your phones and other devices; (4) your commitment to the hard work of learning largely new, different, and complex material with many unfamiliar names of people and places and terms.

Late Assignment Policy
All assignments are expected to be turned in on time. Rare exceptions will be made, as determined by the instructor or in special circumstances. Assignments are generally tied to in-class discussions, where your preparation is tied to the learning of your fellow students. Please alert me to any problems as far in advance as possible. Leaving assignments to the last minute and encountering unexpected problems does not constitute an emergency. Late assignments will be treated as uncompleted and receive no points.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

DISCLAIMER
In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted on Brightspace once the course resumes or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE
Outside of class or office hours, communicate with your professor by email. Emails are generally read between 8am to 5pm. I will usually respond to your emails within 24 hours, except for weekends. Begin your subject line with "HIST 33805," and state the reason for your email (ex: Question about essay"). Include a full salutation (ex: "Dear Professor") and closing with your full name (ex: "Sincerely, Eleanor Roosevelt"). Use full sentences, correct grammar, and punctuation. If you fail to follow this etiquette, I will not respond to your email.

CHEATING / PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution. University Regulations contain further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and will be treated as such in this class. **You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials**. Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University policies allow. Any instances of academic dishonesty will likely result in a grade of F for the course and notification of the Dean of Students Office. Please make sure that you are familiar with Purdue's academic integrity policies:
https://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academic-integrity/undergraduate.html
Using an AI-content generator such as ChatGPT to complete assignments without proper attribution violates academic integrity. By submitting assignments in this class, you pledge to affirm that they are your own work, and you attribute use of any tools and sources.

AI/LLM POLICY

- Submitting AI/LLM generated writing or research as your own is academic dishonesty and carries the same penalties as plagiarism. If any portion of your assignment was generated by a chatbot/AI/LLM application without expressed permission from the instructor, you are in violation of the academic integrity expectations of this course and the university. It may result in failure or rewrite of the assignment. Serious cases may result in failure of the course and will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities for further review of your status at this University.
- The purpose of this policy is not to be punitive, but to make clear that in this class, your own reading, analysis, and writing are more valuable than AI. **You are serving as your own historian, a task that AI cannot replace.** If I want to know what Chat GPT thinks, I can feed it prompts and read its responses. In this class, I am evaluating YOUR analysis and the maturing of your knowledge, ethics, values, and wisdom.
- If you have concerns or questions about the AI/LLM policy, please come speak to me. This technology is quickly evolving.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY

- In this class, I encourage you to exercise your rights to free inquiry and expression. You are welcome to discuss and express any view relevant to subject matter introduced by me (the instructor) or other class members, at appropriate times and places within the structure of the course. (Of course, we cannot lose sight of our course progress, so sometimes discussions will need to continue informally after class or in office hours.) You will be held responsible for learning the content of this course, but you remain free to take reasoned exception to the views presented and to reserve judgment about matters of conscience, controversy, or opinion. As we examine a range of competing ideas over the course of the semester, you are each encouraged to engage vigorously with the material, while being respectful of each other and the instructor. I urge you to speak your mind, listen attentively to others, explore ideas and arguments, play devil's advocate, and engage in civil but robust discussions. When you encounter ideas that you find offensive, unwise, immoral or wrong-headed, I encourage you to engage them with the proper currency of intellectual discourse – reasons, evidence, and arguments. No relevant ideas or positions are out of bounds. Your course grade will be based upon your academic performance, and not upon opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.
- While our commitment to freedom of expression means that no relevant ideas or positions are out of bounds in our discussions and assignments, disruptive or disorderly behavior (including threats or harassment) is strictly prohibited. Such behavior will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students, in accordance with Purdue University policy.