Human rights have become the dominant frame for thinking about social justice, and the path to human rights is paved with written words. A generation of human rights activists came of age through writing. For example, Amnesty International coalesced into a social movement by asking people to write letters to prisoners of conscience. This course will question the received wisdom about the role of human rights in struggles for justice. We will study primary texts, historical, political, and anthropological readings about human rights, and case studies, including on equality, indigenous self-determination, genocide, and post-2008 activism. We will learn about and practice various modes of human rights writing. Based on our study of research and writing about rights, students will develop and share their own research projects.¹

**Required Texts**

- Course Reader (available at Copy Central on Bancroft, and on reserve)
- Additional materials distributed through bspace or in class.

**Reference Texts**

These reference texts may be helpful resources. Students are not required to purchase them.


**Learning Objectives**

This is a four-unit course satisfying the second half of UC Berkeley’s Reading and Composition requirement. You should already have taken R1A. The course teaches skills in critical reading and effective writing. This course will equip you to:

- Read and critically engage with a variety of primary and secondary sources about human rights, including identifying an author’s point of view and main argument and assessing its credibility and persuasiveness
- Understand the broad outlines of the scholarly literature on human rights
- Become a competent and versatile writer, including through writing logical and coherent essays, with an introduction, argument, and conclusion
- Apply insights from critical reading to developing and researching a human rights question and sharing your research in written and oral form

¹ I acknowledge the contributions of Emily Bruce, Andrew Deak, Stefan Ludwig-Hoffmann, and Tina Piper to the design of this course.
Attendance

- This course is planned as a collaborative and participatory learning space. You must come to class to create the group dynamic and learn from each other.
- You have three unannounced, unexcused absences for the semester; these absences will not have any impact on your final grade.
- After your third absence, any additional absence will reduce your final grade by one third (i.e. B+ to B). This applies to absences for any reason (illness, alarm clock malfunction, personal emergency). I suggest saving your absences for when you need them.
- I take attendance by asking you to complete a mini-feedback & question form at the end of each class. You must hand in this form to be counted as present.

Participation

- You must participate in class to learn from this course.
- There are many ways to participate, including speaking in class, speaking in group work, active listening, thoughtful preparation of readings and response papers, and diligent contributions to peer review.
- Please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings.
- Please bring your readings to class.

Readings

This is a college-level reading course. The readings are intended to challenge you. Different types of readings will teach you different ways of reading: some texts will need to be read closely and deliberately, while others should be skimmed. You should plan on spending three hours reading for every class session. A page count is provided per class session to help you budget your time. You are not expected to master every detail of every reading. You are expected to grapple with moving effectively through a volume of reading, a necessary skill in embarking on individual research projects. The course schedule also includes optional and recommended readings to provide a springboard for further research.

Writing Assignments

Further instructions for assignments will be provided. Due dates are in the course schedule.
- 6 one-page Reading Response papers
- 2-page Baseline Essay
- 2-page summary and critique of an Optional Reading
- 3 1-page assignments
- Essay 1 - 4-page essay and revision
- Essay 2 - 6-page research paper and revision
- Essay 3 - 14-page research paper and revision

Format of Writing Assignments

- Please include your name in the header of each page.
- Double-space your work, use a 12-point font, include page numbers, and set your margins to 1” top and bottom, 1.25” left and right.
- Please follow instructions on submitting electronically or in hard-copy.
Grades

This course must be taken for a letter grade. A C- grade is required to fulfill your R1B requirement. Grades will be calculated as follows:

20% Participation:
Reading response papers, baseline essay, classroom participation, peer review, research paper building blocks, presentation

12% Short Writing Assignments (graded pass/fail)
2-page Optional Reading Summary and Critique*
3 1-page assignments

8% Essay 1 – Draft and Revision (4 pages)

18% Essay 2 – Draft and Revision (6 pages)

42% Essay 3 – Draft and Revision (14 pages)

* You may do an additional Optional Reading assignment for extra credit.

Deadlines and Penalties

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments are due at noon. Reading responses and the Optional Reading Summary and Critique are due at noon on the day before class.

As a courtesy to your colleagues, please submit written work on time. Classroom discussion and peer review exercises depend on it. Late work will be penalized as follows:

• Reading responses and Short-Writing Assignments – no credit if turned in late
• Final Essays 1, 2, and 3 – 1/3 of a grade per day.

Academic Honesty

• I follow UC Berkeley’s policy on plagiarism. Broadly understood, plagiarism is the presentation of another’s words or ideas as one’s own without attributing the proper source. Plagiarism includes copying material from books and journals, as well as taking material from the Internet. Plagiarism also includes privately purchasing or obtaining papers from others, which one then presents as one’s own. Any material taken word-for-word from another source must be placed in quotation marks and footnoted or cited within the text. You can use ideas and information from other authors without directly quoting from them, but you must acknowledge them in your citations.
• I will work with the Office of Student Conduct to investigate suspicions of plagiarism to the fullest extent possible. Please ask if you are in doubt.
• An important part of avoiding accidental plagiarism is carefully and consistently citing any ideas or quotations that are borrowed from other authors. You must use a consistent, clear citation, and recognizable system in your written work.

Accommodations

• If you need any accommodations for the course, please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester so that I can make the necessary arrangements.
• If you are – for any reason – uncomfortable speaking in class, please feel free to come to my office hours and we can work together to develop a strategy for your participation.
Classroom Code of Conduct

To be agreed and incorporated

Contacting Me

• I will respond to email queries about administrative or logistical matters, generally within 24 hours.
• Please come to office hours with any questions or concerns about the course material, research, or writing. I will not engage in lengthy substantive discussion over email.

Campus Resources

Disabled Students’ Program (DSP),
260 Cesar Chavez Student Center, 642-0518, http://dsp.berkeley.edu
• The DSP serves students with disabilities of all kinds, including mobility, visual, or hearing impairments; speech impairments; chronic illnesses such as AIDS, diabetes, and lupus; seizure disorders; head injuries; painful conditions such as back injuries & carpal tunnel syndrome; psychological disabilities such as bipolar disorder and severe anxiety or depression; attention deficit disorder; & learning disabilities. Services are individually designed & based on the specific needs of each student as identified by DSP’s specialists.

Student Learning Center (SLC)
642-9494, http://slc.berkeley.edu
• As the primary academic support service for students at the University of California, Berkeley, the SLC assists students in transitioning to Cal: navigating the academic terrain; creating networks of resources; and achieving academic, personal, and professional goals.

Student Life Advising Services (SLAS)
642-4257, http://slas.berkeley.edu
• SLAS is an academic counseling/advising service that assists all undergraduate students, with a primary focus on Education Opportunity Program students and students who participated in outreach programs. The SLAS office assists students in counseling/advising on academic, personal, and social matters.

Ombudsperson for Students
102 Sproul Hall, 642-5754
• The Ombudsperson for Students provides a confidential service for students involved in a University-related problem (either academic or administrative), acting as a neutral complaint resolver and not as an advocate for any of the parties involved in a dispute. All matters referred to this office are held in strict confidence. The only exceptions, at the sole discretion of the Ombudsman, are cases where there appears to be imminent threat of serious harm.

Tang Center Counseling and Psychological Services
2222 Bancroft Way, 642-9494, http://uhs.berkeley.edu
• The UHS Counseling and Psychological Services staff provides confidential assistance to students managing problems that can emerge from illness such as financial, academic, legal, family concerns, and more. In the realm of sexual harassment, UHS coordinates education programs, crisis counseling, advocacy, and medical care for women and men who have been harassed or assaulted.
Course Timetable

This course timetable may be revised. You are responsible for heeding classroom and bspace announcements. Page count is listed before the class meeting date. Assignments due are listed after the class number. Assignments due outside of class time are shaded gray. All readings are in the course reader unless noted.

Abbreviations: P = primary text, O = optional, R = recommended as a starting point for further research, RR = reading response, W = watch on Internet

Tue 22-Jan – 1

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Course

53 Thu 24-Jan – 2

1.2 What are Human Rights?

1.3 What are Critical Perspectives?

59 Tue 29-Jan – 3 – Diagnostic Essay

2 The Human and Humanity

2.1 The Universal Human
P Declaration of Independence, first two paragraphs, last full paragraph
P Dred Scott v. Sandford, 60 U.S. 393 (1857) excerpt
P Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Preamble, Article 1 and 2
O Thomas Laqueur, “Mourning, Pity, and the Work of Narrative in the Making of ‘Humanity,’” (read entire article)
2.2 The Human and the Other


Pierre Clastres, “Of Torture in Primitive Societies” Society against the State, (Zone Books, 1987) 177-188

R Judith Butler, Gender Trouble New York: Routledge, 1999. 32-33, 128-136

49 Thu 31-Jan – 4 – RR, Group A

3 The State & Sovereignty


P Johnson v. M’Intosh, 21 U.S. (8 Wheat.) 543 (1823)


W Address by His Excellency President Nasheed, Maldives, at the Climate Vulnerable Forum, 9 November 2009. (watch at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlzVnH_8jFA)


75 Tue 5-Feb – 5

*** Research Skills Workshop: Approaches to Knowing, Argument and Persuasion


4 Constitutional Rights and Declarations of Sovereignty

40 Thu 7-Feb – 6 – RR, Group B

4.1 Early Modern Constitutional Rights

P US Declaration of Independence (copy in unit 2.1)

P US Bill of Rights

P De Tocqueville, Democracy in America, Chapter 4, 53-55


50 Tue 12-Feb – 7 – RR, Group A

4.2 Responses to Constitutional Rights

P De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Chapter VI (Judicial Power), Chapter VIII (The Federal Constitution), parts 2, 5


W-13-Feb, Essay 1

10 Thu 14-Feb – 8

*** Writing Workshop: Peer Review


45 Tue 19-Feb – 9 – RR, Group B

4.3 Indigenous Engagements with Sovereignty

P *UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

P *Deskahathe, Red Man's Appeal to League of Nations* (bspace)

P *Küë Petitions protesting annexation of Hawaii*, Example (bspace)


W-20-Feb, Essay 1 Revision
50  Thu 21-Feb – 10

***  Research Skills Workshop: Topics and Research Questions, Reviewing Literature
Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2011, 31-68
Luker, Kristin. “Reviewing the Literature” *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences Research

5  Human Rights: Declarations of Humanity or Sovereignty

49  Tue 26-Feb – 11 – RR, Group A

5.1  Founding of the United Nations
*UN Charter*, Preamble & Chapter I
*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
Mazower, Mark. *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of

37  Thu 28-Feb – 12 – Bibliography

5.1  Founding of the United Nations (continued)
Hannah Arendt, “The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man” *Origins
of Totalitarianism*, Part Two, 1968, 147-182
Asad, Talal. “Redeeming the Human through Human Rights” in *Formations of the Secular:

86  Tue 5-Mar – 13 – Abstract

5.2  The Rise of Modern Human Rights Activism
*International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*
*International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights*
Samuel Moyn, “The Purity of this Struggle” in *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*
(2010), 120-176
Buchanan, Tom. 2002. ""The Truth Will Set You Free": The Making of Amnesty
International". *Journal of Contemporary History.* 37, no. 4: 575-597.

6  Human Rights Action: Ways of Knowing and Doing

73  Thu 7-Mar – 14 – RR, Group B

6.1  Protecting
*Genocide Convention* (excerpted in Power)
Samantha Power, “Lemkin’s Law” and “Rwanda” *A Problem from Hell. America and the

M-11-Mar, Essay 2

55 Tue 12-Mar – 15

*** Writing Workshop: Peer Review

46 Thu 14-Mar – 16 – RR, Group A

6.2 Punishing
P Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Preamble, Arts. 1-5, 25, 28
W Excerpt of Robert Jackson Opening Statement, Nuremberg Tribunal (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L50OZSeDXeA) (7 minutes)
W “The Reckoning” excerpt of video on International Criminal Court (http://www.pbs.org/pov/reckoning/icc_history.php#.UNt0D7Yfk6w) (16:40 minutes)

M-18-Mar – Essay 2 Revision

6.3 Bearing Witness

35 Tue 19-Mar – 17 – RR, Group B

6.3.1 Indicators and Reporting

52 Thu 21-Mar – 18 – RR, Group A

6.3.2 Talking and Writing about Rights from Local and Global Levels
Merry, Sally Engle, Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translating International Law into

P Human Rights Watch World Report 2012 (Time to Abandon the Autocrats and Embrace Rights)

P Reply from Centre for Secular Space (Women and Islam: A Debate with Human Rights Watch)


O Margaret Keck & Kathryn Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998) 1-8


47 Tue 2-Apr – 19

6.3.3 Introducing Treaty Monitoring

P Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women


O Simmons, Beth. 2010 “Treaty Compliance and Violation” Annual Review of Political Science. 13, no. 1: 273-296


30 Thu 4-Apr – 20

6.3.4 Treaty Monitoring Case Study - Role Play

P CEDAW and Fiji Government Reports, tbd (bspace)

P Amnesty International, Submission to CEDAW, 2010 (bspace)

7 What do Rights Promise?

54 Tue 9-Apr – 21 – Research Paper Plan

7.1 Universal Rights in a Plural World


P Obama's Speech on a New Beginning (Cairo, 2009) (or watch, http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=NaxZPiiKyMw, 54 minutes) (bspace)


O Sally Engle Merry, “Human Rights Law and the Demonization of Culture (And Anthropology Along the Way” (2003) 26 Polar: Political and Legal Anthropology Review
55-77.

7.2 Equality

56 Thu 11-Apr – 22 – RR, Group B

7.2.1 Race
President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation

M-15-Apr – Essay 3 Outline

47 Tue 16-Apr – 23 – RR, Group A

7.2.2 Gender and Race
P Sojourner Truth, “Aint I a Woman?” Speech to Women's Convention, Akron, Ohio, 1851
W, P Hillary Clinton, Remarks to UN Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=xXM4E23Efvk) 20:20 minutes, or transcript (bspace)


49  Thu 18-Apr – 24 – RR, Group B

7.3  Self-determination

P  Woodrow Wilson, *The Fourteen Points Address* (1918)


tbd  Tue 23-Apr – 25

7.4  Freedom and Dissent

Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* (bspace)

Emma Goldman on freedom of speech, excerpt TBD (bspace)


Group Case Studies, selected from Arab Spring, Wikileaks, European Anti-Austerity Movement, Occupy, Student Movement University of California, Student Movement Quebec (bspace)

Thu 25-Apr - 26

***  Presentations of Student Research Projects

F-26 Apr – Essay 3

Tue 30-Apr – 27

***  Presentations of Student Research Projects

37  Thu 2-May – 28 - Written Comments

***  Writing Workshop: Peer Review, Essay 3


F-17 May – Essay 3 Revision