

Course Outline

Course number							
Course title	Philosophy of International Human Rights Law: Selected Issues						
Credit points	3 ECTS (2LV)	3 ECTS (2LV)					
Total hours	80						
Contact hours	32						
Independent studies	48						
Course level	Bachelor						
Prerequisites	International Human Rights Law						
Category	Mandatory Restricted elective x Free elective						

COURSE RESPONSIBLE

Name	Academic degree	Academic position	
Kate Karklina	PhD Cand. (CEU)	Visiting lecturer	

COURSE TEACHERS

Name	Academic degree	Academic position
Kate Karklina	PhD Cand. (CEU)	Visiting lecturer

COURSE ABSTRACT

This is a course for those interested in the philosophy of international human rights law (IHRL) and willing to explore some of its key contentious issues. The course is structured in 13 thematic sessions on 9 specific issues. One of these substantive sessions will be on a topic chosen by the students. The 3 remaining sessions are for an introduction to the course (Session 1), student presentations (Session 15), and a wrap-up session (Session 16).

The main aim of this course is to equip the students with a fresh perspective on the many layers that constitute the thought of IHRL, and to encourage them to question their beliefs and preconceptions on the various contentious points discussed. Additionally, the course aims to introduce the students to the intricacies of IHRL both in theory and practice, to provide them with a solid base understanding of the field that will allow them to take further courses in human rights in the future, and to consolidate the knowledge they might already have from previous BA courses.

All sessions involve discussion-based learning, continuous reflection on the learning process through a reflective journal, and small exercises in groups to compare students' views with one another. Almost all the sessions require preparatory mandatory reading.

As this course touches upon many controversial issues, the students attending are expected to be respectful to others both when sharing their opinion and when listening to others. This course welcomes all kinds of reflections and observations, but there will be zero tolerance for discriminatory comments of any kind.

GRADING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Class participation	15%
A short presentation	20%
Weekly reflective journal entries	25%
A final written paper	40%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class participation: To pass the course, <u>at least 12 out of 16 sessions must be attended</u>. If more than that is missed, the course instructor should be given a justificatory reason, e.g. a doctor's note. Note that the course consists of several double sessions (lecture + seminar), and 6 out of the 16 sessions are seminars. Attendance of all the seminars is <u>highly</u> recommended. If a student misses more than 4 sessions in total, additional work may be incurred on the part of the student to make up for the missed class time.

If known in advance, students should inform the course responsible for missing a session ahead through e-mail (<u>karklina_kate@phd.ceu.edu</u>) the day before the session.

All the sessions, including lectures, will involve student engagement in some form, e.g. taking part in a short informal discussion or a small group work. In essence, all the sessions are planned to assume a blended form of a lecture with elements traditionally associated with a seminar. However, during sessions marked as seminars, activities based on student participation will take most of the session time. Students are expected to have read all the mandatory readings for the sessions. If the student takes an active part in most sessions attended, the maximum points for student participation will be given by default.

A short presentation: In Session 15, students in pairs will be giving a short (7-9 min) summary presentations on any of the topics covered in Sessions 2-14. The topics will be chosen/divided in Session 12. The aim of these presentations is to summarize and synthesize the issue as discussed in the relevant session. The presentation should be accompanied by a one-page summary to be shared with everyone in the class – this can be a poster, a list of bullet points, pure text, a diagram or any other form of a visual summary of the topic up to the presenters. Essentially, these summaries will help the students to consolidate the knowledge gained throughout the course – no additional research is required beyond overviewing the relevant class materials. A presentation accompanied by the 1-pager summary will account for 20% of the final grade.

Weekly reflective journal entries: Throughout the course, the students will write short reflections (strictly no more than 350 words each) in a reflective journal (4 entries in total). Students can miss one entry without a justification. Each entry will be based on an answer to a prompt and is expected to demonstrate the

student's observations and thinking regarding the particular topic of the week. <u>No additional research is expected</u> to be carried out in writing these entries. This is an effort-based assessment, not merit-based, which means that <u>the substance of the reflections as such will not be graded</u>. If a student has submitted at least 3 entries, 25 points toward the final grade (25%) will be given.

These reflections can also be used to raise outstanding questions, confusion, and revelations with regard to the broader conversation happening within the course, and are meant to track the student's learning progress. More information on the journal of reflections will be shared in Session 1.

A final written paper: At the end of the course, the students will submit a written paper (2000-2500 words) on a specific issue on one of the topics covered in the course (the deadline is two weeks after the end of the course). The topic is chosen by the students themselves but <u>must be approved by the course instructor</u> by the final week of the course. The paper is expected to <u>demonstrate the student's understanding</u> of the specific topic, <u>engage with the literature</u> covered in the session, <u>raise different arguments</u> pertaining to the problem issue at hand and <u>present the student's own observations/conclusions</u>. The rubric for the assessment of this paper will be shared with the students in the introductory class (Session 1) of the course.

COURSE PLAN - MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	Main subjects	Planned hours
1.	Introduction to the course: general requirements, expectations, setting learning outcomes.	2
2.	Natural human rights v. legal human rights	2
3.	Philosophical conceptions of human rights	2
4.	The concept of human dignity as the source of human rights	2
5.	Westphalian sovereignty vis-à-vis international obligations	4
6.	Universality and relativity of human rights	4
7.	Post-colonial critiques to international human rights law	4
8.	The notion of international community and international responsibility	2
9.	Subsidiarity in human rights protection	2
10.	Accountability of global governance structures	2
11	Topic chosen by the students	2
12	Summary presentations of the course contents	2
13	Wrap-up and an assessment of course learning outcomes	2

COURSE PLAN – SESSIONS

Session	Session subjects and readings				
1	In the very first session, we will build a roadmap of the course following the syllabus, and discuss all the requirements for passing this course as well as the students' expectations from it. Preparation: none. Mandatory readings: none. What are Human Rights? Natural v. legal rights. As the first substantive point in our roadmap, we will discuss the difference between the notion of natural rights and that of legal rights, and what this distinction means for the conceptualization of international human rights law. Preparation: Before doing the mandatory readings for this session, think about how you would define the term human rights based on your studies so far: what do you understand with this term, what does it mean to you, and what courses have shaped this personal perspective of yours? Mandatory readings (33 pages): 1) Onora O'Neill, "The Dark Side of Human Rights", in International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) Vol 81, No. 2 (March 2005), pp. 427-439. 2) Joseph Raz, "Human Rights Without Foundations", University of Oxford Faculty of Law Legal Studies Research Paper Series Working Paper No 14/2007 (March 2007). Recommended readings (24 pages): Lon L. Fuller, "The Case of the Speluncean Explorers", Harvard Law Review Vol. 112, No. 8 (June 1999), pp. 1851 – 1875. Food for thought: What (if anything) makes human rights a special category of rights? Why is it important to be aware of the different conceptions of human rights?				
2&3					
4	Human dignity as the source of human rights: what does it mean and what does it entail? In this class, we are working with the concept of human dignity. First, we review its commonplace in the discourse of human rights (including the key IHRL instruments). Then, we try to understand what human dignity actually means (no right answer!). Finally, we discuss the role of human dignity as the source of individual right entitlements, and what it means for the broader aspiration of universal human rights. Preparation: Have a look at the shared preamble of the two Covenants and make a note of how the concept of human dignity is used in the text. Think about what could the concept	Seminar			

Session	Session subjects and readings	Lecture/ Seminar			
	have meant back in the days of drafting the two Covenants: do you think its meaning has changed over the decades?				
	Mandatory readings (18 pages):				
	1) Pawel Lukow, "A Difficult Legacy: Human Dignity as the Founding Value of Human Rights", in <i>Human Rights Review</i> Vol. 19 (2018), pp: 313-329.				
	2) Manuel Wackenheim v France, Communication No 854/1999, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/75/D/854/1999 (2002), available at:				
	https://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/Microsoft%20Word%20- %20Manuel%20Wackenheim%20v.%20Fr.pdf				
	Recommended readings (42 pages): Adeno Addis, "The Role of Human Dignity in a World of Plural Values and Ethical Commitments", in Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights Vol. 31, No.4 (2013): pp. 403-444.				
	Food for thought: Some scholars have labeled the concept of human dignity as empty and useless due to the indeterminacy of its meaning. Others claim that its vagueness is its best trait and that it should be used to further the claim of the universality of human rights. What do you think?				
	Westphalian sovereignty & international obligations: human rights catch-22. In this class we are sketching out the inherent contingency of international human rights on the individual commitment of sovereign states.				
	Mandatory readings (32 pages):				
	Anne Peters, "Humanity as the A and Ω of Sovereignty", in <i>The European Journal of International Law</i> Vol. 20, No. 3 (2009), pp. 513-544.				
5&6	Recommended readings (20 pages):				
	Hélène Ruiz Fabri, "Human Rights and State Sovereignty: Have the Boundaries been Significantly Redrawn?", in Philip Alston and Euan Macdonald (eds) <i>Human Rights, Intervention and the Use of Force</i> (Oxford University Press, 2008): pp. 33-53.				
	Food for thought: There are many avenues for states to uphold their sovereignt in the process of international law-making, e.g. reservations, non-ratification, persistent objection etc. Do you consider this a weakness or rather a strength o international human rights law? Why?				
7&8	The universality and relativity of human rights: a binary choice or rather a spectrum?	Lecture & Seminar			
	This session is devoted to the topic of cultural relativism and what it means for the claim of the universality of human rights. We look at both in turn and then work with some contentious examples, e.g. FMG, child brides, and selected punishment practices.	Commu			

Session	Session subjects and readings				
	Ultimately, we try to understand whether relativism of human rights is an upside or a downside of human rights thought.				
	Preparation: please watch these 2 short videos on tribal punishment systems – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egi4LZAtBYg & https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLSiHWPggx4 (together approx. 10 min) – and think about how they fit into the conversation on universalism/relativism of human rights.				
	Mandatory readings (41 pages):				
	1) Karin Mickelson, "How Universal is the Universal Declaration?", in <i>University of New Brunswick Law Journal</i> Vol. 47 (1998), pp. 19-48.				
	2) Jack Donnelly, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Analytic Critique of Non-Western Conceptions of Human Rights", in <i>The American Political Science Review</i> Vol. 76, No. 3 (1982), pp. 303-316.				
	Recommended readings (17 pages): Oritsegbubemi Anthony Oyowe, "An African Conception of Human Rights? Comments on the Challenges of Relativism", <i>Human Rights Review</i> Vol. 15 (2014), pp. 329-347.				
	Food for thought: What does the notion of 'universality' mean to you in the context of the debate between universalism and relativism of human rights? Which human rights would you personally choose to label as universal? Why?				
	When there aren't enough chairs at the table: IHRL and post-colonial critiques.				
	In this class, we are examining TWAIL-ian critical approaches toward international law-making and human rights, by extension. We discuss who was and who was not "at the table" at the time of drafting the foundational instruments of IHRL, and what it means for the claim of universality of IHRL. Additionally, we brainstorm some of the ways that the IHRL framework could accommodate critical perspectives.				
9&10	Preparation: Have a quick search into the history of the UNGA and its members at the time of its origins. Now, think about the key international human rights instruments that you know – under what auspices have they been developed? Who drafts them now and who drafted them 50 years ago? How does that affect the legitimacy of the <i>universality</i> of international human rights?	Lecture & Seminar			
	Mandatory readings (14 pages): 1) Antony Anghie, "The Evolution of International Law: Colonial and Postcolonial Realities", in <i>Third World Quarterly</i> Vol. 27, No. 5 (2006), pp. 739-753;				
	2) Karin Mickelson, "How Universal is the Universal Declaration?", in <i>University of New Brunswick Law Journal</i> Vol. 47 (1998), pp. 19-48.				
	Recommended readings (24 pages): B. S. Chimni, "Third World Approaches to International Law: A Manifesto", in <i>International Community Law Review</i> Vol. 8, No. 1 (2006), pp. 3-28.				

Session	Session subjects and readings	Lecture/ Seminar
	Food for thought: Before this week, had you thought about critical perspectives toward international law, international relations and international human rights law? If yes, in what context? If not, why do you think that is the case?	
	International responsibility, R2P and humanitarian intervention.	
	This week we turn to a topic that lies at the very intersection of public international law and human rights, the principle of non-interference in states' internal affairs and international responsibility in a humanitarian crisis: R2P and humanitarian intervention. We will first review the theoretical intricacies of these politically questionable activities and compare the two concepts against each other. Then, we will move on to the few examples that have been experienced in this century of both R2P and humanitarian intervention to review their implications in real-life situations.	
	Preparation: Do a quick search on examples of R2P and humanitarian intervention in the 21st century. Be ready to discuss some of the characteristics of both types of interventions that you find.	
11	Mandatory readings (24 pages):	
	Janina W Dacyl, "Sovereignty versus Human Rights: From Past Discourses to Contemporary Dilemmas", in <i>Journal of Refugee Studies</i> Vol. 9, No. 2 (1996), pp. 136-165.	
	Recommended readings (22 pages): 1) Fernando R. Teson, "Just Cause in Humanitarian Intervention", in <i>Debating Humanitarian Intervention: Should We Try to Save Strangers?</i> (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 39-76.	
	2) Fernando R. Teson, "Why Sovereignty (Still) Matters", in <i>Debating Humanitarian Intervention: Should We Try to Save Strangers?</i> (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.172-191.	
	Food for thought: What is the difference between R2P and humanitarian intervention? Is there more to it than just phrasing? What is the 'international community' and how could it be defined?	
	The notion of subsidiarity in human rights protection.	
	Subsidiarity is a notion that underpins the whole framework of international human rights law. What does it mean? Why is it needed? In this class, we will find answers to these questions, and track the route of subsidiarity within the legal framework of IHRL.	
12	Mandatory readings (42 pages):	
	Paolo Carozza, "Subsidiarity as a Structural Principle of International Human Rights Law", in <i>The American Journal of International Law</i> Vol. 97, No. 1 (2003), pp. 38-79.	
	Recommended readings (23 pages): Sanele Sibanda, "Beneath it all lies the principle of subsidiarity: the principle of subsidiarity in the African and European regional human rights systems", in <i>The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa</i> Vol. 40, No. 3 (2007), pp. 425-448.	

Session	Session subjects and readings	Lecture/ Seminar
	Food for thought: How does the notion of subsidiarity play into the conversation on the universality/relativity of human rights?	
	Accountability of global governance structures.	
	With the rise of globalization, a growing web of global governance structures is assuming a role in the dynamics of the IHRL. This has given way to the notion of global administrative law, as a way to cure the accountability crisis of global governance actors. In this class, we will examine a real-life example of the pitfalls of the lack of strong accountability mechanisms within the global governance web, that is, the case of the cholera outbreak in Haiti in 2010.	
13	Mandatory readings (16 pages):	Seminar
.5	Gisela Hirschmann, "Human Rights Accountability in Complex Global Governance (Introduction)", in <i>Accountability in Global Governance: Pluralist Accountability in Global Governance</i> (Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 1-16.	
	Recommended readings (16 pages): Rajeshwar Tripathi, "Concept of Global Administrative Law - An Overview", in <i>India Quarterly</i> Vol. 67, No. 4 (2011), pp. 355–372.	
	Food for thought: Consider the conversation on the lack of accountability of global governance structures at the background of the post-colonial critiques we discussed in the previous sessions. Does anything ring a bell?	
	Students' choice of topic (TBD in Session 10).	
14	The final substantive class of this course is left open for a topic chosen by the students. The course instructor will gather the students' ideas in Session 8, these ideas will be then discussed and voted on.	Lecture
	Mandatory readings: TBD.	
	Student presentations.	
15	In the second to last session of the course, the students will be doing short presentations in pairs on one of the topics covered in the previous substantive sessions. Details will be shared during our 1st Session.	Lecture
	Wrapping-up.	
16	In the final session of the course, we will be taking stock of the major themes covered in the course, and discuss the final paper assignment.	Lecture
	Preparation: none.	
	Readings: none.	

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course has the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Know some of the most contentious points within the philosophy of IHRL and specify the tension
 points between the competing arguments/ideas/notions therein, e.g. the clash between the state
 sovereignty and international human rights obligations, post-colonial critiques of the human rights
 discourse, the different taxonomies of human rights and their effect on the implementation of the rights
 etc;
- Describe the ways in which the competing narratives within the philosophy of IHRL engage the fields of public international law, constitutional law, human rights theory and law, and how these dichotomies affect the reality of human rights protection on the ground.

Skills:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- 3. Identify and reflect on the possibly overlapping, as well as contrasting, aspirations of the functioning of the legal framework of IHRL from the perspective of public international law, constitutional law, global administrative law, and human rights law when dealing with specific realities of IHRL on the ground.
- 4. **Defend and provide arguments for the multi-faceted nature of the field of IHRL** and the difficulties of providing a one-size-fits-all answer to the questions and discussions raised throughout the course.

Competencies:

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

- 5. Critically evaluate the different sides of the argument regarding the key issues discussed in the course, e.g. universalism and relativism of human rights, natural and legal rights, non-interference in states' internal affairs versus humanitarian intervention, shortcomings of the global administrative regime etc.
- 6. **Provide one's own assessment and perspective** on the specific philosophical issues discussed throughout the course, referring to substantive arguments, scholarly literature, and real-life examples.

Learning	Evaluation criteria				
outcomes	(40-69%)	(70-89%)	(90-100%)		
Knowledge	The student is able to mention some of the most contentious points within the philosophy of IHRL discussed throughout the course. Can describe the major points of tension that characterize the competing narratives of IHRL discussed in the course broadly, without specific examples and without reference to relevant literature.	Is able to describe the ways in which the competing narratives engage other fields of law, such as public international law, constitutional law, human rights theory and law. Can describe how these dichotomies might affect the reality of human rights protection on the ground in the abstract.	The student can apply the knowledge gained in the presence of specific case-studies and real-life examples of issues under IHRL through independent analysis.		
Skills	Name/list some pairs of contrasting ideas regarding key contentious issues under IHRL in the abstract, such as universality v. relativity of human rights, state sovereignty v. international obligations, non-interference v. humanitarian intervention etc by reference to literature and examples discussed in the course.	Identify the existence of these contrasting perspectives facing concrete case studies. Present the various perspectives on the relevant contentious issues by reference to arguments substantiating the different sides of the debate.	Reflect on the spectrum of aspirations toward the legal framework of IHRL from the perspectives of public international law, constitutional law, global administrative law, and human rights law in abstract and when faced with concrete cases.		
Competencies	When faced with contentious issues under the philosophy of IHRL, the student will be able to spot specific dichotomies and potential clash of perspectives present in the human rights discourse at large.	Critically evaluate these characteristic dichotomies by providing one's own assessment/opinion on issues discussed in the course by reference to substantive arguments and the relevant scholarly literature.	Further substantiate the critical evaluation with one's own assessment of real-life examples and empirical evidence supporting the student's perspective.		

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

Please analyse the contribution of defined grading criteria to learning outcomes. Number of grading criteria and learning outcomes should correspond to previously defined one.

Grading criteria Learning outcomes						
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Class participation (15%)	Х	Х	Х	Х		
A short presentation (25%)	Х	Х	Х	Х		
Weekly reflective journal entries (30%)			Х	Х	Х	Х
A final written paper (30%)	Х	Х	Х	х	Х	х

COURSE LITERATURE

Compulsory literature

No.	Author, year, title, publisher
1.	Onora O'Neill, "The Dark Side of Human Rights", International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) Vol 81, No. 2 (March 2005), pp. 427-439.
2.	Joseph Raz, "Human Rights Without Foundations", <i>University of Oxford Faculty of Law Legal Studies Research Paper Series</i> Working Paper No 14/2007 (March 2007).
3.	Pawel Lukow, "A Difficult Legacy: Human Dignity as the Founding Value of Human Rights", Human Rights Review Vol. 19 (2018), pp: 313-329.
4.	Manuel Wackenheim v France, Communication No 854/1999, U.N. Doc. CCPR/C/75/D/854/1999 (2002).
6.	Anne Peters, "Humanity as the A and Ω of Sovereignty", <i>The European Journal of International Law</i> Vol. 20, No. 3 (2009), pp. 513-544.
7.	Hermann Heller, "The Sovereignty of the State and the Problem of the International Law", in Sovereignty: A Contribution to the Theory of Public and International Law (Oxford University Press, 2019).
8.	Karin Mickelson, "How Universal is the Universal Declaration?", <i>University of New Brunswick Law Journal</i> Vol. 47 (1998), pp. 19-48.
9.	Jack Donnelly, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Analytic Critique of Non-Western Conceptions of Human Rights", <i>The American Political Science Review</i> Vol. 76, No. 3 (1982), pp. 303-316.
10.	Antony Anghie, "The Evolution of International Law: Colonial and Postcolonial Realities", <i>Third World Quarterly</i> Vol. 27, No. 5 (2006), pp. 739-753;
11.	Janina W Dacyl, "Sovereignty versus Human Rights: From Past Discourses to Contemporary Dilemmas", <i>Journal of Refugee Studies</i> Vol. 9, No. 2 (1996), pp. 136-165.

12.	Paolo Carozza, "Subsidiarity as a Structural Principle of International Human Rights Law", <i>The American Journal of International Law</i> Vol. 97, No. 1 (2003), pp. 38-79.
13.	Gisela Hirschmann, "Human Rights Accountability in Complex Global Governance (Introduction)", Accountability in Global Governance: Pluralist Accountability in Global Governance (Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 1-16.

Additional literature and sources

No.	Author, year, title, publisher
1.	Lon L. Fuller, "The Case of the Speluncean Explorers", <i>Harvard Law Review</i> Vol. 112, No. 8 (June 1999), pp. 1851 – 1875.
2.	Adeno Addis, "The Role of Human Dignity in a World of Plural Values and Ethical Commitments", in <i>Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights</i> Vol. 31, No.4 (2013): pp. 403-444.
3.	Oritsegbubemi Anthony Oyowe, "An African Conception of Human Rights? Comments on the Challenges of Relativism", <i>Human Rights Review</i> Vol. 15 (2014), pp. 329-347.
4.	B. S. Chimni, "Third World Approaches to International Law: A Manifesto", in <i>International Community Law Review</i> Vol. 8, No. 1 (2006), pp. 3-28.
5.	Fernando R. Teson, "Just Cause in Humanitarian Intervention", in <i>Debating Humanitarian Intervention: Should We Try to Save Strangers?</i> (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 39-76.
6.	Fernando R. Teson, "Why Sovereignty (Still) Matters", in <i>Debating Humanitarian Intervention: Should We Try to Save Strangers?</i> (Oxford University Press, 2017), pp.172-191.
7.	Sanele Sibanda, "Beneath it all lies the principle of subsidiarity: the principle of subsidiarity in the African and European regional human rights systems", in <i>The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa</i> Vol. 40, No. 3 (2007), pp. 425-448.
8.	Rajeshwar Tripathi, "Concept of Global Administrative Law - An Overview", in <i>India Quarterly</i> Vol. 67, No. 4 (2011), pp. 355–372.