

**INR 4075.001**

Spring 2017, 3 credits

Meeting Time: W 4:00–6:50pm

Meeting Place: DW 109

Course website: <https://canvas.fau.edu>Personal website: <http://angeladnichols.weebly.com/>**Professor: Angela D. Nichols**

Office: DW 414 &amp; SO 384D

Office Hours: W 2:00–4:00pm

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**The Politics of Human Rights****Course Description and Objectives**

Many of today's interesting and important political events involve the violation of human rights and the various attempts by the international community to protect those rights. This class provides an understanding of how and why these violations occur, and of why international attempts to protect human rights succeed or fail. With that in mind, this course is designed to introduce you to the historical foundations and current practice of protecting human rights.

Upon successfully completing this course, you will be familiar with many of the factors that seem to attenuate or aggravate the violation of individual human rights. More importantly, you will be able to apply these factors to real-world scenarios (e.g., studying historical cases of human rights abuse or assessing the prospects for future abuse around the world). I also hope that you will develop skills that will serve you regardless of what you do after leaving FAU. In particular, we will focus on thinking analytically and critically, and on presenting and supporting rigorous, well-developed arguments. You will also have the opportunity to collaborate with you peers to propose policy solutions for the problems we identify throughout the semester.

**Course Materials**

There is one required book for this class:

Carey, Sabine C., Mark Gibney & Steven C. Poe. 2010. *The Politics of Human Rights*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

I will refer to this as CGP for the remainder of this syllabus and the semester.

The remainder of the daily reading assignments typically come from academic and policy journals, and are available from three sources:

- my website
- google scholar
- directly from an online provider (typically JSTOR)

JSTOR is likely your best option to access the assigned material. JSTOR is an academic journal service that FAU provides for us. Access is free from any FAU computer (e.g., in computer labs or dorms, or via FAU wireless networks); you can search for individual articles by author or title, or browse by journal name and issue at [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org). Additionally, you can access the FAU electronic journal library via <http://www.fau.edu/library/ecollect/ejournals.php>.

## Student Assignments & Responsibilities

Exams: Fifty percent of your grade will be determined by two exams. Exams will be short answer and essay. See the schedule for the exam dates. Each exam is worth 25% of your final grade.

Make-up Exams: If you cannot attend one of the exams, you need to notify me as soon as possible by email and in person. Make-up exams will only be given to students who have been unable to sit for the examination as a consequence of illness requiring medical care, required university activities, or a personal emergency of a serious nature. To be excused without penalty, documentation and/or prior permission is required. Additionally, an alternative exam may be provided. I reserve the right to assign a short answer or essay make-up exam in place of the standard exam for this class.

Editorial Assignment: All students must write an original opinion column on a current event related to international politics. This opinion column should develop a thoughtful critical analysis of the event. The paper should thus be modeled as an opinion column in any major newspaper. It is thus advisable that students engage themselves with current international events and news. Excellent sources of news and examples of op-ed columns can be found through any reputable news outlet; BBC, NYT, WP, etc. This opinion column should be 1250 - 1500 words. Hard copies should be turned in during class, office hours, or slipped under my office door. Soft copies may be emailed to nicholsa@fau.edu. This assignment is not optional; you will receive a failing grade for the course if you fail to turn in an acceptable editorial paper. The editorial paper cannot be a paper utilized for another class, nor can it be one used by another student. It must be original, and your own. Failure to meet these requirements; either submitting a paper of your own which is unoriginal or used in a separate class (either in part or whole), or a paper not written by you alone, will result in a failing grade for the assignment (at a minimum), and being reported to university officials. It will be graded based upon how clearly and thoroughly you define the issue, the extent and clarity of your factual understanding of the issue and its context, and how well you state and defend (with evidence) your assessment of what policy should be pursued on this issue, not whether or not the instructor agrees with your position. *Do not simply summarize an event.* You must develop a thoughtful critical analysis and policy prescription (i.e., what should be done and how it should be approached). The editorial is due in class and will constitute 25% percent of your final grade.

In-Class Simulations: There are two simulations that will be completed in class. The simulations will be explained at the beginning of class on the day they are given. There will be no make-up for the simulations—if you miss class, you will receive a zero for the simulations completed on the day you missed. Each simulation is worth 5% of your final grade.

Attendance & Participation: Human rights consist of more than just a series of historical facts and concepts to be memorized; they encompass the study of violent human interactions, behaviors of nation-states and individuals, and broad social phenomena. These can be most clearly understood through discussion and the evaluation of alternative perspectives. In other words, participation increases active learning. While this course will have a substantial lecture component, there will also be opportunities for participation in classroom exercises and discussions. Thus, attending class and participating regularly are key to achieving the course objectives discussed above.

To this end, attendance and participation is worth 15% of your final grade. I will take attendance

daily throughout the semester. I will also take note of how regularly you participate in class, both in productive and distractive ways. To maximize this part of your grade, it is highly recommended that you come to class prepared (e.g., having done the assigned readings) and willing to participate. Merely showing up and occupying a seat will not constitute full participation. Other ways to lose participation points include but are not limited to: being a disruption to others (e.g., side conversations with friends, reading for other classes), repeatedly failing to answer a question if called upon, and not participating in classroom discussions and exercises in a productive manner. Further, you are entitled to 3 absences (for any reason) with no direct effect on your grade. You do not need to tell me why you miss class, but if you exceed 3 unexcused absences, I will not be interested in the reasons and your final grade will decline one letter grade with each subsequent absence. Excused absences are rarely given, but will be awarded for religious accommodations and university approved events.

### **Grading & Evaluation**

Grades are assigned in accordance with the following scale:

93 - 100% = A	86 - 89% = B+	76 - 79% = C+	66 - 69% = D+	below 60% = F
90 - 92 % = A-	83 - 85% = B	73 - 75% = C	63 - 65% = D	
	80 - 82% = B-	70 - 72% = C-	60 - 62% = D-	

### **Other Policies**

- Lecture notes and slides will not be posted online or otherwise handed out to students under any circumstances.
- Materials handed out in class by the instructor (e.g., review sheets, simulation materials, etc.) will under no circumstances be distributed electronically or outside of class.
- Allow a reasonable amount of time for a response when you send me an email. Do not email me an hour before an exam and expect me to respond or receive the email before class. I will not answer questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus or accessing blackboard via email. I encourage students to utilize office hours to answer their questions whenever possible.
- Grades will not be released to any student via email, phone, or other electronic means. If you wish to discuss your grades, report to the appropriate office hours or make an appointment, and come prepared with your university identification.
- You can expect to be graded solely on your academic performance. This includes clarity of thought, knowledge of the material, composition, spelling, and grammar.

### **Academic Honor Code**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Incidents of plagiarism and/or cheating will result in a failing grade for the class and further penalties per the University's judicial process. Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards.

Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg\\_4.001\\_5-26-10\\_FINAL.pdf](http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg_4.001_5-26-10_FINAL.pdf)

### **Accommodations (SAS)**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 203 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8585) and follow all SAS procedures. For more information, see <http://osd.fau.edu/>

Additionally, if you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, please notify me by the second week of class.

### **University Attendance Statement**

Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence.

### **Classroom Conduct**

Classroom courtesy is an essential component of creating an effective learning environment. All students have the right to learn without unnecessary distractions. These distractions include: laptops, cell phones, and the like, talking during lectures (unless recognized by the instructor), reading newspapers, falling asleep, etc. If you use a laptop to take notes during class, turn off the sound and restrain yourself from unnecessary surfing. I reserve the right to suspend the use of laptops if this policy is abused. If you need a phone for *emergency purposes*, leave it on vibrate. Entering and leaving are also significant sources of distraction. It is your responsibility to be on time and to stay for the entire class. In circumstances where you need to leave early, tell the professor beforehand. Repeated disruptions of class will lead to a reduction in your final grade.

Class discussions of political issues can often stimulate strong feelings and heated debate. I ask all of you to respect the opinions of your fellow students, even if you do not agree with them. In simple terms, that means not interrupting other students while they are speaking and not verbally attacking them for their beliefs. While I believe that it is essential to connect theory to current events, I will cut short debates of current events that do not enhance the understanding of course concepts. I expect you to offer substantive comments and questions when appropriate in class. I also expect you not to dominate a discussion, but to allow free discussion and exchange of ideas.

## Course Content & Schedule

The following is an approximate calendar of class discussions. Every attempt will be made to adhere to this schedule. However, departures from the schedule may occasionally occur. Exam and activity dates should be considered firm, and you should arrange your personal schedule to be present at the appointed dates and times.

### (I) COURSE INTRODUCTION

#### *Week 1*

- Introduction, no required reading

#### *Week 2: What are Human Rights?*

- CGP Ch 1

#### *Week 3: State & Individual Responsibility*

- CGP Ch 2 & 3

#### *Week 4: Where & Why are rights violated*

- CGP Ch 4 & 5

#### *Week 5: Intervention & Aftermath*

- CGP Ch 6, 7, & 8

#### *Week 6: Review*

- Review

#### *Week 7: Exam*

- Midterm Exam

*Week 8*

- Simulation I

*Mar 8–NO CLASS–SPRING BREAK*

*Week 9*

- Taxi to the Darkside

*Week 10*

- Torture
- Simulation II
- Bravin, Jess. 2007. "The Conscience of the Colonel," *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 March, available online at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB117529704337355155.html?mod=Politics-and-Policy>.  
\*and\*
- Bowden, Mark. 2007. "The Point: In Defense of Waterboarding," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 December, was originally available online at: [http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20071223\\_The\\_Point\\_In\\_defense\\_of\\_waterboarding.html](http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20071223_The_Point_In_defense_of_waterboarding.html), but has been removed. Will H. Moore managed to piece together much (but not all) of it from various blogs that quoted it. You should read this pieced-together version (from the course BB site).

*Week 11*

- Harff, Barbara, and Ted Robert Gurr. 1988. "Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases since 1945" *International Studies Quarterly* 32(3): 359-371.  
\*and\*

- Valentino, Benjamin, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay. 2004. "Draining the Sea: Mass Killing and Guerilla Warfare" *International Organization* 58: 375-407.

*Week 12*

- Agbu, Osita. 2003. "Corruption and Human Trafficking: The Nigerian Case," *West Africa Review*, 4(1): 1-12.

- Feingold, David A. 2005. "Human Trafficking," *Foreign Policy*, 32: 26-30.

*Week 13*

- Breuning, M., Ishiyama, J. 2011. Orphans and Political Instability. *Social science quarterly*, 92(4), 1002-1020.
- Lasley, T., Thyne, C. 2015. Secession, legitimacy and the use of child soldiers. *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 32(3), 289-308.

*Week 14*

- *Review for Final Exam*

(II) *Final Exam: TBA*

This syllabus is a guideline and is subject to change at any time.