

First Year Seminar: Human Rights (IDPT 101-18)

Class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:50 in Kauke 204

Professor Matthew Krain
Department of Political Science
Office: Kauke 221 (x-2469)
mkrain@acs.wooster.edu

Neha Sahgal
Teaching Assistant
Office: Kauke 016 (x-6692)
sahgaln@acs.wooster.edu

Office Hours: To Be Announced

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar explores one of the most important issues of our time – human rights. We will examine issues of the rights of individuals and groups around the world, in the United States, and here in Wooster, Ohio. We will, of course, examine the legal, political, and social aspects of the topic. However, in order to gain a deeper understanding of why human rights are violated, and the effects of these violations on the victims, we will also examine literature, biographies, art and film. The main purpose of this course, however, is to develop necessary skills that will be required of you throughout your college career and beyond. As we examine human rights issues we will also sharpen our writing and speaking skills, develop our analytical abilities, and begin to engage in academic discourse.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to attend class and participate regularly in class discussions. Students are also required to complete all writing assignments. Finally, students are expected to conduct themselves in a thoroughly professional manner. The grades for course assignments will be assigned as follows:

Writing Assignments #2 – #5	40% (10% each)
Assignment #6 (Research Paper, Presentation)	25% (15% paper, 10% presentation)
Writing Portfolio (Rewrites, Assignment #1, etc)	10%
(*) Participation and Professionalism	25%

(*) NOTE: *Professionalism* refers to factors such as attendance, promptness, courtesy, overall improvement, and other intangibles, to be evaluated and assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

READINGS

We will be using seven books in this class. These books are all available for purchase at the college's Florence O. Wilson Bookstore, located in Lowry Center. Of course, you are free to purchase them elsewhere, but be sure to get the correct editions. They are:

- Mumia Abu-Jamal. *Live From Death Row*. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1995). ISBN: 0380727668
- Amnesty International. *Rights for All - Human Rights Violations in the USA*. (New York, NY: Amnesty International, 1998). ISBN: 1887204156
 - Also Available On-Line at: <http://www.rightsforall-usa.org/info/report/index.htm>
- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998). ISBN: 0813399696
- Diana Hacker. *Rules For Writers*. 4th Ed. (New York, NY: Bedford Books, 1999). ISBN: 0312241429
- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*. (San Diego, CA: Greenhaven Press, 1998). ISBN: 1565107969
- Rigoberta Menchu. *I, Rigoberta Menchu: An Indian Woman In Guatemala*. Edited by Elisabeth Burgos-Debray; Translated by Ann Wright (London, UK: Verso, 1983). ISBN: 0860917886
- Elie Weisel. *Night*. (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1960 [1982]). ISBN: 0553272535

You will also receive the following books/pamphlets as part of your orientation package:

- The College of Wooster. *Handbook of Selected College Policies*, 2000-2001.
- The College of Wooster. *The Scot's Key*, 2000-2001.

You will be required to read them thoroughly and to bring them with you for our first regular class session, August 29th.

Any supplementary readings will be placed on reserve in the main library, and/or will be available on the World-Wide-Web, on our class web page, at:

<http://www.wooster.edu/polisci/mkrain/fys.html>

Items on reserve include the following selections:

All readings MUST be completed by the class session for which they are assigned. They will be necessary background for our in-class discussions.

Finally, given the nature of the topic, it would not be a bad idea to keep up with news around the world. I suggest getting your news from two or more of the following sources:

- 1) a major national or international newspaper such as *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, or *The Wall Street Journal*
- 2) a major news website such as the above papers' sites, *MSNBC-Online*, or *CNN-Online*. I have put together a web site with a large number on on-line news sources, located at <http://www.wooster.edu/polisci/mkrain/news.html>
- 3) a major news magazine such as *The Economist*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, or *US News & World Report*
- 4) major public news outlets with comprehensive news coverage such as NPR's *National Public Radio News* (89.1 on the radio) or PBS's *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Throughout the seminar we will debate some of the most controversial human rights topics of the day, from whether the international community has the right to intervene in the affairs of another country, to whether the death penalty is a human rights abuse or a necessary evil. Students should expect vigorous discussion and debate!

As stated earlier, students are expected to attend class and participate regularly in class discussions. Your input and feedback is essential to the smooth and efficient running of the class. To enable interesting and effective discussion, be sure to have read the materials pertaining to that day's discussion BEFORE that class period! Quality and quantity of class participation will be monitored closely by the instructor and teaching assistant, and is worth 25% of the overall course grade.

Please note that *Professionalism* is also a component of this part of your grade. My hope is that the classroom will contain an open and comfortable atmosphere in which all ideas and opinions will be welcomed and addressed.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND THE WRITING PORTFOLIO

One of the main goals of First Year Seminar is to provide students with the opportunity to improve their writing skills, presentation skills, and critical thinking abilities. To that end, over the course of this semester you will write and rewrite five short papers, focusing on writing style and abilities and on argumentation. These will serve as precursors to the larger final assignment, a research paper and in-class presentation. As each assignment approaches I will present the class with detailed instructions. In the meantime, here is a brief description of each paper (with due dates in parentheses):

- **Assignment #1 (due in class session following Universal Declaration Exercise) – Evaluation of Human Rights Group Exercise:** We will spend part of one class session participating in a group exercise in which we will try to develop a universal declaration of human rights. Following this exercise, you will be expected to compose a short (1-2 page) paper on one of the two following options: (1) Pick one "right": Why is this important to you personally? (2) Why was it so hard to come to a consensus regarding a Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

- **Assignment #2 (due September 12th) – Argument Paper: Universal vs. Relative Rights:** Each student will compose a well-crafted but brief (1-2 page) argument on the question of whether human rights are universal or culturally relative.
- **Assignment #3 (due September 26th) – Letter to the Editor:** Each student will compose a brief (250 words or less) letter to the editor. Students may write about topics covered in class in the weeks prior to the due date of the assignment, including any number of women-centric issues, the abortion debate, bringing human rights abusers to justice, the role of the United Nations International Criminal Court, the universalist-relativist debate, or the very nature of human rights. After a rewrite, students are expected to submit their letters to a previously approved periodical, on-line newsgroup, or other appropriate public forum.
- **Assignment #4 (due October 17th) – Reaction Paper / Journal:** Each student will compose four journal entries (total six paragraph minimum) about the service learning experience [see below]. Entry #1 should be composed before the first on-site visit, and should consist of the student's thoughts, concerns, and expectations about the endeavor. Entries #2 and #3 should be composed soon after each on-site visit, and should deal with the visit itself, any interactions that occurred, and how and why the student was or was not affected by the experience. A final entry (#4) should evaluate the overall experience. This is an exercise in free writing, but one that needs to show evidence of critical reflection.
- **Assignment #5 (due November 7th) – Argument Paper: The Death Penalty:** Each student will compose a well-crafted but brief (1-2 page) argument on some question concerning the death penalty. Students may write about the degree of necessity or utility of capital punishment, whether the death penalty is racially or otherwise biased, or whether the death penalty is in and of itself a human rights abuse.
- **Assignment #6 (due December 5th) – Research Paper & Presentation:** At some point early on in the semester each student will choose a pre-approved research topic not covered extensively in class. Topics may consist of key human rights issues, or human rights conditions of a particular group or country. Each student will then write a short (approximately 10 pages) research paper on that topic. Students will briefly present their research to the class during the final week of the semester (December 5th-7th). Presentations will be graded as a component of the research paper.

In addition, we will, from time to time engage in in-class writing exercises. These in-class writing exercises, along with Assignments 1 through 5 (originals and rewrites) should be archived carefully by the student as part of their semester's **WRITING PORTFOLIO**. On **November 21st** (the class just before Thanksgiving Break), you will submit your writing portfolio. It will be graded on three criteria:

1. amount of effort put into revision of Assignments 1-5
2. quality effort on Assignment 1 and in-class writing assignments
3. overall improvement of the student's writing throughout the semester

SERVICE LEARNING

This course will also include a service learning component. Along with another FYS (Anne Nurse's class that will be examining prisons and the criminal justice system) we will participate in a given number of hours of service to a relevant organization in the Wooster community. My hope is that we will apply the concepts and analytical tools discussed in class to that experience. We will dedicate two full class sessions to on-site work at the following location:

Wayne-Holmes Attention Center
6807 Non-Parrel Road, Route 4
Wooster, Ohio 44691

We will also dedicate one class session in that unit to some background reading and to a briefing on methods and on the facility, and one session immediately following the experience to debriefing and evaluating the experience. I will provide further details as the semester progresses.

THE WOOSTER FORUM

The Wooster Forum is a college-sponsored series of events designed to raise awareness of a variety of key issues. This year's series theme is "The Meaning of a Democratic Culture." The main Forum events are held in McGaw Chapel, and a new series of associated events will be held in a variety of venues across campus. You are, of course, encouraged to attend all events in the series, but are only required to attend those events in boldface type on the last page of this syllabus.

For each of the three required sets of events, five students will be responsible for leading small group discussions at the beginning of class. Students will be given the opportunity to sign up to lead discussions on one of these three days early on in the semester. Discussions can focus on the content and/or method of argumentation of these presentations. Discussion leaders should also relate the required events to our class topic of human rights. Small group discussions about Forum events will occur on the following dates (with topics in parentheses):

- September 21st: Reproductive Rights / Responsibilities
- October 24th: Police Brutality / Societal Brutality
- November 9th: How Individuals Cope with Human Rights Abuses (Latin America)

NOTES

Note #1: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any missed assignment or unexcused exam absence is subject to an automatic failing grade for the course (in other words, you cannot pass the class unless you do all of the work!). Late written assignments will be graded down up to one full letter grade for each day late. A paper handed in after class is considered a full day late. If you anticipate missing an exam or a paper deadline, consult with the instructor as soon as possible.

Note #2: Students are encouraged to study together and assist one another in learning the material. It is assumed that you have done your own work. In short, don't cheat and don't plagiarize. Students are reminded that they are obliged to understand, to uphold, and to comply with the Code of Academic Integrity at the College of Wooster. If you have doubts about whether something violates academic integrity, check the Code of Academic Integrity, located in the *Scot's Key* (pp. 55-58). Students who do not understand the Code after having read it should make an appointment to see me to discuss it; indeed, I welcome this discussion and encourage students to see me in advance of any assignment about which they have doubts or questions. Please note that any violation of the Code of Academic Integrity means the student's immediate failure in the course, as well as possible subsequent academic disciplinary action.

Note #3: It is your responsibility to inform me ahead of time about factors that are likely to interfere with your performance in the class. Measures for students with disabilities, non-native writers of English and other special issues will be taken in compliance with the college's policies.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

1. *Introductions to College Life, to Wooster, and to the Course*

Aug. 29th – 31st: Introduction to The College of Wooster and to First Year Seminar

- The College of Wooster, *Handbook of Selected College Policies*, 2000-2001.
- The College of Wooster. *The Scot's Key*, 2000-2001 (5-14, 55-59, 65-67).
- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (18-26).

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1: Evaluation of Human Rights Group Exercise:**

*One of two options: 1) Pick one "right": Why is this important to you personally?
2) Why was it so hard to come to a consensus re: a UDHR?*

[Assignment #1 due in class session following Universal Declaration Exercise]

2. *Learning to Construct Arguments and Write Papers About Human Rights*

Sept. 5th: What are Human Rights?

- Elie Weisel. *Night*.
- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (1-17)

Sept. 7th: Assessing Arguments About Human Rights

- Diana Hacker. *Rules For Writers*. "Argument" (347-364)
- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (26-35)
- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - Pierre Sane', "Human Rights Are Universal" (17-20)
 - Bilahari Kausikan, "A Universal Definition of Human Rights Ignores Cultural Diversity" (21-24)
 - Robert Weil, "International Human Rights Standards Neglect Asian Values" (25-32)
 - Xiaorong Li, "International Human Rights Standards Are Relevant to Asian Societies" (33-43)

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2: Argument Paper: Universal vs. Relative Rights** *[Assignment #2 due September 12th]*

Sept. 12th: Bringing Human Rights Abusers to Justice

- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - Jimmy Carter, "A Permanent International Criminal Court Should Be Created" (165-168)
 - Bruce Fein, "A Permanent International Criminal Court Would Be Counterproductive" (169-172)
 - Fred E. Katz, "Investigating Human Cruelty May Prevent Future Atrocities" (173-180)
 - Michael Ignatieff, "Attempts to Amend Human Rights Violations Will Not Alleviate Suffering" (181-186)
- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (51-62, 136-148)

Sept. 14th: Prosecuting Human Rights Abuses: The Case of Bosnia vs. Yugoslavia

- WWW: *The International Court of Justice Considers Genocide*. Teaching Human Rights On-Line [THRO]
 - <http://oz.uc.edu/thro/genocide/index.html>

Sept. 19th: Writing About Human Rights

- Diana Hacker. *Rules For Writers*. "The Writing Process" (1-76).

Sept. 21st: Re-Examining Universalism vs. Cultural Relativism: Women's Issues

- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - Hillary Rodham Clinton, "A Human Rights Agenda Must Include Women's Rights" (44-50)
 - Anne Applebaum, "The Women's Rights Agenda Ignores Third World Concerns" (50-56)
 - Katha Pollitt / Geraldine Brooks, "Persecuted Women Should Be Given Political Asylum" (135-140)
 - Wayne Lutton, "Political Asylum Should Not Be Given to All Women Claiming Persecution" (141-148)
- WWW: Linda Burstyn, "Female Circumcision Comes to America" *Atlantic Monthly* (October 1995)
 - <http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/flashbks/fgm/fgm.htm>

- WWW: " Discussions of Female Circumcision" (3 Contributions)
 - <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~africa/sources/clitorodectomy.html>
- WWW: *Human Rights Watch World Report 2000*. Women's Human Rights
 - <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k/Wrd.htm>
- WWW: United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), "Reproductive Rights and Sexual Rights"
 - <gopher://gopher.undp.org:70/00/unifem/poli-eco/poli/whr/cedaw/cedawkit/rrsr>

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #3: Letter to the Editor**
 (Assignment #3 due September 26th)

Sept. 26th: Researching Human Rights Issues

- Diana Hacker. *Rules For Writers*. "Research Guide" (365-409; skim 410-448).

Sept. 28th: Human Rights in Africa: A Roundtable Discussion

[in a Joint Session with Jim Warner's FYS (IDPT 101-33) "Beyond the Safari: The Politics and Economics of Africa"]

- READINGS TO BE ANNOUNCED

Oct. 3rd: NO CLASS: FALL BREAK (Sept. 29th – Oct. 3rd)

3. Hands-On Learning About Human Rights - The Service Learning Experience
 [in four Joint Sessions with Anne Nurse's FYS (IDPT 101-23) "Behind Bars: Prison as Reality and Metaphor"]

Oct. 5th: Briefing and Expectations

- WWW: Amnesty International, "Betraying the Young: Children in the US Justice System" (Nov. 1998)
 - <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aipub/1998/AMR/25106098.htm>

Oct. 10th - 12th: Service Learning Activities

Wayne-Holmes Attention Center
 6807 Non-Pariel Road, Route 4

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #4: Reaction Paper / Journal**
(Assignment #4 due October 17th)

Oct. 17th: De-briefing and Evaluation

4. Looking in the Mirror: Human Rights and the United States

Oct. 19th: Is the United States "Beyond Reproach" on Human Rights Issues?

- Amnesty International. *Rights for All - Human Rights Violations in the USA*. (1-16, 123-134)
- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - John Shattuck, "The United States Faces Human Rights Challenges" (60-66)
 - Midge Decter, "The United States Deserves No Criticism on Human Rights" (66-73)
- WWW: Arch Puddington. "Does America Have a Human Rights Problem?" *Freedom in the World*. (New York, NY: Freedom House, 1999).
 - <http://www.freedomhouse.org/survey99/essays/pudd.html>

Oct. 24th: Police Brutality

- Amnesty International. *Rights for All - Human Rights Violations in the USA*. "Police Brutality: A Pattern of Abuse" Chapter 3 (17-54)
- Abu-Jamal, *Live from Death Row* (140-148, 195-215)
- WWW: Buzz Bissinger, "The Famous And The Dead" *Vanity Fair* [reprinted on the *Justice for Police Officer Daniel Faulkner* website] (August 1999)
 - <http://www.danielfaulkner.com/vanity.html>

Oct. 26th: Prison Conditions

- Amnesty International. *Rights for All - Human Rights Violations in the USA*. (55-86)

- Abu-Jamal, *Live from Death Row* (22-31, 44-66, 75-85, 89-91, 99-105)

Oct. 31st – Nov. 2nd: The Death Penalty

VIEW Dead Man Walking on 10/31/00, in class.

[in Joint Session with Anne Nurse's FYS (IDPT 101-23) "Behind Bars"]

- Amnesty International. *Rights for All - Human Rights Violations in the USA*. (99-122)
- Abu-Jamal, *Live from Death Row* (3-21, 32-43, 67-70, 92-94, 106-124)
- WWW: Dudley Sharp, "Death Penalty and Sentencing Information in The United States" (October 1, 1997).

- <http://www.prodeathpenalty.com/DP.html>

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #5: Argument Paper – The Death Penalty**
(Assignment #5 Due November 7th)

5. How Non-State Actors Cope in the Face of Human Rights Abuses

Nov. 7th - 9th: How Individuals Cope with Human Rights Abuses – Latin America

- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (36-50, 91-103)
- Rigoberta Menchu, I, Rigoberta Menchu

Nov. 14th: Economics and Human Rights: Tradeoffs for Businesses and Individuals?

- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - Bruce Weiner, "The Use of Child Labor Violates Human Rights" (74-80)
 - Shahidul Alam, "The Use of Child Labor Does Not Always Violate Human Rights" (81-87)
 - Abigail McCarthy, "Factories Should Be Required to Adhere to Minimum Standards" (pp. 127-130)
 - Medea Benjamin, "Minimum Factory Standards Will Not Prevent Human Rights Abuses" (pp. 131-134)

- WWW: *Human Rights Watch World Report 2000*. Corporations & Human Rights

- <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k/Issues-03.htm>

6. How Nation-States Deal With Human Rights Abuses

Nov. 16th, 21st: International Intervention: Right or Wrong?

- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (86-90)
- RESERVE: "Intervention or Isolation?" and "Military Intervention: Kosovo" in Gregory M. Scott, Randall J. Jones, Jr., Louis S. Furmanski, eds. *21 Debated Issues in World Politics*. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000]. (285-298; 299-308)

VIEW and DISCUSS *Frontline: The Triumph of Evil* on Nov. 21st

Nov. 23rd: NO CLASSES – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov. 28th: Economic Intervention: Sanctions

- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (64-68; 103-107).
- RESERVE: "Sanctions" in Gregory M. Scott, Randall J. Jones, Jr., Louis S. Furmanski, eds. *21 Debated Issues in World Politics*. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2000]. (315-337)
- WWW: United Nations, " Report of the second panel established pursuant to the note by the president of the Security Council of 30 January 1999 (S/1999/100), concerning the current humanitarian situation in Iraq"
 - <http://www.un.org/Depts/oip/panelrep.html>
- WWW: Denis Halliday, "Why I Resigned My UN Post in Protest of Sanctions"
 - <http://leb.net/iac/harvard.html>

Nov. 30th: Free Trade?!?: Human Rights and China

- Jack Donnelly. *International Human Rights*. (115-135).
- Mary E. Williams, ed. *Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints*.
 - James A. Dorn, "Free Trade Promotes Human Rights in China" (149-154)
 - Harry Wu, "Free Trade Does Not Promote Human Rights in China" (155-161)
 - Tenzin Gyatso, "The International Community Should Intervene on Behalf of Tibet" (187-193)
 - China Internet Information Center, "Chinese Rule Over Tibet Should Be Accepted" (194-200)
- WWW: *Human Rights Watch World Report 2000*. Country Report: China

- <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k/Asia-03.htm>

Dec. 5th – 7th: In-Class Presentations of Research Projects

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT #6: Research Papers**
(*Assignment #6 due December 5th, in class*)

**THE 2000 WOOSTER FORUM
THE MEANING OF A DEMOCRATIC CULTURE**

Thursday, September 7

Patricia J. Williams
Seeing a Color Blind Future

Professor of Law, Columbia University School of Law,
journalist, and author of *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*

Associated Event:

Monday, September 11, 7:30 p.m., Lowry Center Lounge
A College of Wooster "Town Meeting" on Race
Faculty-Student Panel and Discussion

Tuesday, September 19

Gloria Feldt
*Calling Ourselves Free: A Look at the Past and Future of
Reproductive Rights in America*

President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Associated Event:

Wednesday, September 20, 7:30 p.m., Lowry Center Lounge
Sexual Freedom/Sexual Responsibility
Community Panel and Discussion

Tuesday, September 26

Homi K. Bhabha
Literature and the Right to Narrate

Professor of English Language and Literature, University of Chicago,
and author of *The Location of Culture*

Associated Event:

Tuesday, September 26, 4:00 p.m.
A Faculty Conversation with Homi K. Bhabha

October 19-21
Freedlander Theatre
8:15 p.m.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992
Produced by the Department of Theatre
Directed by Shirley Huston-Findley
Written by Anna Deavere Smith
Tickets required

Associated Event:

Thursday, October 19, 7:00 p.m., Lean Lecture Room
Authority, Aggression, and Violence
Pre-Performance Panel and Discussion

Thursday, November 9

Claudia Bernardi
Probing the Membrane between Horror and Hope

Native of Argentina, artist, and human rights activist

Associated Event:

November 6 - December 15, 2000
Frescoes on Paper by Claudia Bernardi
Morgan Gallery, Ebert Art Center
Hours: Monday-Friday 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Sunday 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Except for *A Faculty Conversation with Homi K. Bhabha* on September 26, all events are free and open to the public. Forum events will be held in McGaw Chapel (University Street and College Avenue) at 7:30 p.m. except for performances of *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* at 8:15 p.m. (tickets required). Contact the Theatre Department Box Office at 330-263-2241 for ticket information. Note time and place above for Associated Events. For more information, contact Sheila Wilson at 330-263-2132 or swilson@wooster.edu.