

PHIL 328: Human Rights

F '08. Sec. 01, HH 150, Wed. 7-10pm

Professor: Brian Orend, Dept. of Philosophy
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 Office Hours: TBA in class

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION: Human rights occupy a central place in our world. But what are human rights, exactly? Which do we have, and why? What are the practical implications of human rights, for both individuals and institutions? How can we analyze difficult moral and political situations from a human rights point of view? This course will feature a comprehensive discussion of theory and history, of law and morality, and of national and international applications. Essentially, we have *three lenses* with which to view human rights in this course: 1) conceptually or philosophically; 2) historically, especially in terms of legal developments; and 3) in terms of concrete contemporary case studies and problems.

2. METHOD: The method by which this course will proceed is through lectures and readings, giving emphasis in class to critical discussion and thoughtful debate about these complex and important topics. Some A/V material will be used.

3. TEXT: The one text required for this course is my own, B. Orend, *Human Rights: Concept and Context* (Broadview, 2002), available at the main UW bookstore.

4. REQUIREMENTS: There are three requirements for this course: 1) one mid-term exam, worth 30%; 2) one small final paper, due at term's end, worth 35%; and 3) one take-home final exam, worth 35%.

5. COURSE SCHEDULE: (subject to minor revisions regarding content)

Week One (09/10) - Introduction and Administration. **Reading:** *Chapter 1: Basic Vocabulary and Core Concepts* (pp. 15-36).

Week Two (09/17) - History, Part One. **Reading:** *Chapter 7: History I* (pp. 191-212). For Chapter 7, also read pp. 241-44 in Appendix A.

Week Three (09/24) - Case Studies (A/V presentation)

Week Four (10/01) - History, Part Two. **Reading:** *Chapter 8: History II* (pp. 213-240). For Chapter 8, also read pp. 244-58 in Appendix A.

Week Five (10/08) - *Chapter 2: Who Holds Human Rights?* (pp. 37-66).

Week Six (10/15) *Chapter 3: What Justifies Human Rights* (pp. 67-100).
 - Review for mid-term

Week Seven (10/22) - ** Mid-Term Test **

Week Eight (10/29) – - Case Studies (A/V)

Week Nine (11/05) - *Chapter 4: What are the objects of our human rights? (pp. 101-128).*

Week Ten (11/12) - *Chapter 5: Who Bears Which Duties? (pp. 129-154).*

Week Eleven (11/19) - *Chapter 6: Can Human Rights Withstand Criticism? (pp. 155-90).*

Week Twelve (11/26) - Last Day of Class, Case Studies, cont'd.

**** Small final paper is due **. The paper will be a 7-10 page, double-spaced (exc. Notes), argumentative paper on some human rights issue either referred to in the course, or in the text, or in the A/V materials. More as date draws closer.**

**** Hand Out of Take-Home Final Exam**, which will be due in my mailbox, in HH 365, by 12 noon on Mon., Dec. 15th. More as date draws closer.**

6. Required University Policy Declarations:

Note on avoidance of academic offences: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (section 1; on the Web at <http://www.ucalendar.uwaterloo.ca/UW/policies.html>). If you need help in learning what constitutes an academic offence; how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission; how to follow appropriate rules with respect to “group work” and collaboration; or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your TA and/or your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

Note for students with disabilities The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.