



# OLAC010 Introduction to Studying International Human Rights Law in English

ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS

OLive-Access 2020

Seminar Leader: Dr. Zoe Sutherland

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Course dates: 23<sup>rd</sup> of March – 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 (Module B)

Course Schedule: Monday 15:45-17:00 and Wednesday 10:45-12:15

Office Hours: Thursday 13:00 - 14:00

Credits: 4 ECTS, 2 U.S. credits

## Course Description

In this course you will be introduced to key themes and concepts in international human rights law in English. We'll begin by exploring the language of human rights and rights-based claims to justice. We will then discuss the culturally relative implications of universal human rights. Next we'll familiarise ourselves with the sources of human rights in international law. Towards the end of the course we will compare civil and political rights with social and economic rights. We will read and debate the case law. Along the way, we'll build up relevant English vocabulary, explore career and research options, and reflect on how to improve our self-study practice and seminar skills when it comes to human rights. Students will also have the chance to workshop human rights issues of particular interest to them. Our course book will be Andrew Clapham's *A Very Short Introduction to Human Rights* (OUP, 2015). Further reading will be recommended as appropriate.

## Learning Outcomes

Key learning outcomes include:

- Developing English vocabulary specific to international human rights law
- Becoming familiar with key issues, concepts and ideas of human rights
- Ability to summarize case law and discuss academic texts specific to human rights
- Becoming familiar with career or further education paths opened by studying international human rights law
- Developing study skills as independent and active learners

## Delivery

This course has been modified in accordance with BCB's directives about online teaching in light of Coronavirus. We will focus on reading and writing, and students will be assessed accordingly. The class will be delivered entirely online. Video calls will be the main format used. The instructor will contact you prior to the beginning of semester to establish the best medium. All written assignments should be submitted in digital format. Presentations will be delivered via video call.

## Requirements and Grade Breakdown

The course will be for letter grade, assessed through active participation in online group sessions (10%), a case summary (40%), and a mini-essay (50%). Under normal circumstances, active participation means demonstrating your presence in the seminar; engaging with fellow participants, grappling with the assigned tasks, raising relevant questions for us to consider together, making relevant insights, and thoroughly preparing the weekly reading in order to offer critical analysis of it. Allowances will be made for the online meeting format, however.

Extra emphasis will be placed on writing assignments in this online course. We will practise writing case summaries in English, before you submit your case summary for a grade. Students will be given the opportunity to submit drafts of their mini-essay for feedback before handing in the final version.

### **Deadlines**

Active participation (online) (10%): throughout the course

Case summary (40%): Monday, 27 April by 12 noon (by email)

Mini-essay (50%): Thursday, 6 May by 12 noon (by email)

### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. You are expected to follow the university's code of academic integrity at all times throughout the course. Any work you submit must be your own original work. Make sure that you properly reference all the sources you use (e.g. books, journals, newspaper articles, websites, etc.). Cases of academic misconduct (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) in which you fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

### **Policy on Late Submission of Papers**

As per Student Handbook guidelines, assignments that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Assignments that are more than 24 hours late may be rejected for grading, particularly if the explanation offered for the delay is not satisfactory. If a late assignment is accepted for grading, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade higher than C. Thereafter, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

### **Letter Grade calculation**

The total grade out of 100% is calculated according to the weighting described above. Letter grades are assigned as shown in the table below. Corresponding grade points are also shown. See the Bard student handbook for equivalencies to the German system. D is the minimum passing grade for any test or coursework. If a student receives a Failing F, an Incomplete I or a D grade in one or more courses, their record will be reviewed.

Letter Grade	Total %	Grade Point
A	93-100%	4.00
A-	90-92%	3.70
B+	87-89%	3.30
B	83-86%	3.00
B-	80-82%	2.70
C+	77-79%	2.30
C	73-76%	2.00
C-	70-72%	1.70
D	60-69%	1.00
F	Failure	0.00

## Schedule

Seminar	Date and Time	Topic	Reading to prepare for class
1	Monday, 23 March, 15:45-17:15	Introduction to the course	-
2	Thursday, 25 March, 10:45-12:15	The language of human rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 1-6.
3	Monday, 30 March, 15:45-17:15	The language of human rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 6-10.
4	Thursday, 1 April, 10:45-12:15	Rights: universal, but relative?	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i>

			(Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 50-53.
5	Monday, 13 April, 15:45-17:15	Rights: universal, but relative?	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 53-62.
6	Thursday, 15 April, 10:45-12:15	Where do rights come from?	Christine Chinkin, 'Sources', in Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran and David Harris (eds), <i>International Human Rights Law</i> , 2nd edition (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 75-83.
7	Monday, 20 April, 15:45-17:15	Where do rights come from?	Christine Chinkin, 'Sources', in Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah, Sandesh Sivakumaran and David Harris (eds), <i>International Human Rights Law</i> , 2nd edition (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 84-95.
8	Thursday, 22 April, 10:45-12:15	Civil and political rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 83-97.
9	Monday, 27 April, 15:45-17:15	Civil and political rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 98-109.  <b>*DEADLINE: Case summary due by 12 noon (by email)*</b>

10	Thursday, 29 April, 10:45-12:15	Social and economic rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 122-139.
11	Monday, 4 May, 15:45-17:15	Social and economic rights	Andrew Clapham, <i>Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction</i> (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 140-152.
12	Thursday, 6 May, 10:45-12:15	Course conclusion	TBD (to be determined)  <b>*DEADLINE: mini-essay due by 12 noon (by email)*</b>

### Attendance

You are expected to attend ALL classes. In cases of absence caused by illness, students must inform their instructor and the Program Director in advance of the scheduled class via email. You are expected to be proactive and make up for any work missed in arrangement with your instructor. Spring 2020 Module B courses at OLive-Access start on Monday, March 23 and run until Friday, May 10 with spring break planned from Monday, April 6 – Monday, April 13.

Scheduled class times will be available online under the relevant course heading:

[https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=berlin.bard.edu\\_9fjr6s9vhveromqck8fm243df0%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=Europe%2FBerlin](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=berlin.bard.edu_9fjr6s9vhveromqck8fm243df0%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=Europe%2FBerlin)

### **Library and Book Purchase Policies**

Effort has been taken to source materials freely available online. The Google Classroom will host these resources.