

**Georgia Institute of Technology**  
**Sam Nunn School of International Affairs**  
**Spring 2021**

**INTA 3031/8803MF: Human Rights**  
**Class Time: MW 9:30-10:45 AM**  
**Hybrid Format Classroom: College of Computing 52**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Mikulas Fabry

E-mail: mfabry@gatech.edu

Remote office hours: Tuesdays 12:00-2:00 PM (email me for a virtual appointment)

**Course Description:**

The central idea behind human rights in international affairs is that human beings have rights (1) simply by virtue of being human, and that (2) their realization is not merely a responsibility of the countries in which they reside, but also of the outside world. The purpose of this course is to understand the premises and implications of this idea. It will address questions such as: Where do human rights come from and what particular entitlements do they consist of? Who has obligations to realize human rights and what are they specifically? What role do, and should, human rights play in the formulation and leadership of a country's foreign policy? To what extent are international human rights treaties and organizations effective? What conditions or actions generally help prevent human rights violations? Does increased awareness and reporting of foreign human rights violations, made possible by great technological strides, also mean increased concern about them? How do we reconcile conflicts among rights, as well as conflicts between the pursuit of rights and other goals?

The course has three intended learning outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with different perspectives on the role of human rights in international relations
2. Students will show the ability to explain the role of different institutional actors dealing with human rights internationally
3. Students will be able to analyze some of the most important human rights issues in world politics

INTA 1110: Introduction to International Relations is **highly recommended** as a pre-requisite for undergraduate students.

INTA 3031 fulfills these attributes: International Relations (IP) and Social Science Requirement.

**Required Texts:**

David P. Forsythe, *Human Rights in International Relations*, 4th ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler (eds.), *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Both books are available for purchase in the GT Barnes & Noble. Their copies can also be loaned from the GT Library. Other readings will be available directly, or linked to particular online resources, on Canvas (canvas.gatech.edu) under Files. Resources that use Microsoft Office software will use the 2016 version. It is the responsibility of students to ensure access to resources posted on Canvas. Should you experience difficulties in opening files posted by the instructor, try accessing them from a different device or a computer in the Main Library. If this does not work or you encounter other technical difficulties, please contact the GT Office of Information Technology (<http://www.oit.gatech.edu>) for help.

### **Course Evaluation for Undergraduate Students:**

Undergraduate students will be evaluated according to the following format:

- Two closed-book exams, on February 22 and March 29 (worth 25% each)
- Final open-book take-home exam, handed out via e-mail on Friday, April 23 and due on Monday, May 3 at 2 PM via email to the instructor (40%)
- Class participation (10%) + extra credit up to 5%

You must take both exams, and hand in the final take-home exam, on their assigned dates and times. The two close-book exams can be appealed to the instructor within one week of their return. Students must email the instructor a detailed explanation of why their grade should increase. The instructor reserves the right to re-grade the entire assignment (i.e. not just the appealed part) and to increase, affirm or decrease the originally assigned grade.

You are **expected** to attend classes and have the assigned readings completed **before** each class. Doing the assigned reading prior to each class is important since class time will regularly feature discussion. You should also follow human-rights related events and developments by reading respectable news publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Economist* and by following online and in the social media the human rights work of intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations (ohchr.org) and the Council of Europe (coe.int) and non-governmental organizations such as the Human Rights Watch (hrw.org) and Amnesty International (amnesty.org).

As discussion is a vital part of the course, you **regular and informed** participation is essential. Students are going to be evaluated by the frequency as well as quality of their verbal and written contributions. Students can earn **up to 5% extra credit** for outstanding class participation.

### **Course Evaluation for Graduate Students:**

Graduate students will be evaluated according to the following format:

- Three analytical response papers on the assigned readings (30%; 10% each)
- Research paper outline, due by class on March 17 via email to the instructor (10%)
- Research paper, due on Monday, May 3 at 2 PM via email to the instructor (40%)
- Class participation and research paper presentation (20%)

Three analytical response papers:

Graduate students are required to write three response papers on the assigned readings. The dates of the following nine lectures correspond to the possible topics: 2/24, 3/3, 3/8, 3/15, 3/17, 3/31, 4/5, /4/7 and 4/12. You can turn in four papers – in that case I will count the three highest grades you receive. The papers, which are due via email to the instructor at the beginning of the class when the topic they deal with is discussed, should be no less than one-page and no more than two pages single-spaced (with 1” margin from each side and 12-size font). In the papers you should:

- (1) Identify and concisely summarize the main arguments in the readings as they relate to the assigned topic.
- (2) Compare and contrast the readings. Are there any points of convergence between them? In what ways do they differ?
- (3) Critically engage with the readings. Do you find one more convincing than the others? If you do, why? If you do not find any of the readings convincing, why not? What questions are left in your mind?

Research paper outline and research paper:

There is no set list of questions for the research paper assignment. Graduate students should formulate their own research question based on their interests and mandatory consultation with the instructor prior to proceeding with their research. In general, students should seek to examine a significant human rights issue/debate and include empirical evidence in their analysis. By mid-March, you should have enough research to draw up an eight-page (double-spaced, except the annotated bibliography which should be single-spaced) outline which encompasses the paper’s title, description of the problem, preliminary argument and annotated bibliography of at least 15 academically reputable sources beyond the course material, including books and academic journal articles. The outline is due on March 17 and is worth 10% of your final course grade. Toward the end of the semester, your work should have progressed further, to the point where you can make an oral presentation of your findings and field questions from your classmates. Presentations of research paper findings will be done in class on April 21. That presentation will count towards your class participation grade. The final research paper (15 to 20 pages, double-spaced, with 1” margin from each side and 12-size font) is worth 40% of the final course grade. It is due on Monday, May 3 at 2 PM via email to the instructor. Papers will be graded on the basis of their originality and logic of argument, quantity and quality of supporting research, and readability and elegance of writing style.

Class participation and presentation:

Graduate students are **expected** to attend every class and to participate **actively** and **regularly** in class discussions. On occasion, they may be asked to meet with the instructor for discussion of class material as a separate group.

Academic Integrity:

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on an exam or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, which will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible so that I know of your learning needs.

### **Additional Student Resources:**

The Center for Academic Success ([success.gatech.edu](http://success.gatech.edu)) offers a variety of academic support services to help students succeed academically at Georgia Tech (e.g. tutoring, peer-led study groups, study skills, etc.). The Division of Student Life ([studentlife.gatech.edu](http://studentlife.gatech.edu)) in the Office of the Dean of Students offers resources and support for all students in the Tech community. The Counseling Center (<http://counseling.gatech.edu/>) offers free mental health services, as well as stress management and wellness workshops to all currently enrolled students. They are located in Smithgall, Suite 210 and are offering virtual and in-person resources.

### **Communications Policy:**

As your official GT email is the only means for the instructor to reach you outside the classroom, you are responsible for checking it **daily**. You are also asked to **turn on** to receive **all** the course-related notifications on Canvas.

### **Tips for Success:**

1. Come to class.
2. Come to class having read and reflected on the assigned readings and prepared to engage in discussion.
3. Participate in class by both asking and answering questions and sharing your perspectives. There is no such thing as a bad or stupid question.
4. Make sure you understand the material for each class before attending the next class.
5. Form study groups with your peers both to compare notes and to get feedback on your grasp of the course material. Where relevant, study material/concepts comparatively and with reference to empirical examples.
6. Make use of all available resources including, but not limited to, the library and the instructor's office hours. Reach out if you need additional assistance or support.

### **Outline of Classes and Readings:**

[N.B. The schedule is subject to revision, including the number of in-person classes; Should that

occur, I will provide ample notice.]

**January 18: M. L. King Jr. Day (NO CLASS)**

**January 20: Course Introduction**

Begin readings for next class.

**I. *The Foundations of Human Rights Standards***

**January 25: Human Rights in International Relations**

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 5.

Forsythe, ch. 1.

**January 27: What are Human Rights?**

Forsythe, ch. 2.

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 2.

**February 1: Human Rights Universalism vs. Cultural Relativism**

Dunne and Wheeler, chs. 3 and 4.

**II. *Implementing Human Rights Standards in a World of States***

**February 3: Global Institutions**

Forsythe, ch. 3.

Read also the following online: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (including its Optional Protocols), International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.

**February 8: Regional Institutions**

Forsythe, ch. 5.

Read also at least one of the following online: European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, American Convention on Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

**February 10: Foreign Policy Leadership**

Hans J. Morgenthau, "Human Rights and Foreign Policy," *First Distinguished Council on Religion and International Affairs Lecture* (1979), pp. 1-8.

Forsythe, ch. 6.

**February 15: Non-Governmental Institutions: The Role of NGOs and Transnational Corporations**

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 7.

Forsythe, chs. 7 and 8.

**February 17: Review Session – IN-PERSON CLASS**

**February 22: Undergraduate In-Class Exam 1**

**III. Contemporary Human Rights Issues**

**February 24: Humanitarian Intervention**

Michael Walzer, “The Argument about Humanitarian Intervention,” *Dissent* (Winter 2002), pp. 29-37.

Miroslav Nincic and Donna Nincic, “Humanitarian Intervention and Paradoxes of Moral Authority: Lessons from the Balkans,” *International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 8 (2004), pp. 45-64.

Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (2001), pp. vii-18.

**March 1: Case Study: Rwanda (1994) – Documentary Discussion – IN-PERSON CLASS**

Documentary to be streamed at home prior to class: *The Ghosts of Rwanda* (PBS, 2004).

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 6 + Read online the UN Convention on the Prevention of Genocide (1948).

**March 3: Case Study: Libya (2011) – Guest Lecture: Robert Bell**

Thomas G. Weiss, “RtoP Alive and Well after Libya,” *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Fall 2011), pp. 287-292.

Alan J. Kuperman, “NATO’s Intervention in Libya: A Humanitarian Success?” in Aidan Hehir and Robert Murray (eds.), *Libya, the Responsibility to Protect and the Future of Humanitarian Intervention* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 191-221.

**March 8: The Role of the Media**

Forsythe, ch. 9.

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 8.

Clifford Orwin, “Distant Compassion: CNN and Borrioboola-Gha,” *The National Interest* (Spring 1996), pp. 42-49.

**March 10: Transitional Justice**

Forsythe, ch. 4.

Also read the Rome Statute online.

**March 15: Case Study: The US Rejection of The International Criminal Court**

Kenneth Roth, "The Court the US Doesn't Want," *The New York Review of Books* (November 19, 1998).

John R. Bolton, "The Risks and Weaknesses of the International Criminal Court from America's Perspective," *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Vol. 64 (Winter 2001), pp. 167-180.

**March 17: Justice vs. Peace: International Criminal Justice vs. National Reconciliation – GRADUATE RESEARCH PAPER OUTLINE DUE**

Juan E. Méndez, "National Reconciliation, Transnational Justice, and the International Criminal Court," *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2001), pp. 25-44.

Brad Roth, "Peaceful Transition and Retrospective Justice: Some Reservations - A Response to Juan E. Méndez," *Ethics and International Affairs* Vol. 15, No. 1 (2001), pp. 45-50.

**March 22: Review Session – IN-PERSON CLASS**

**March 24: "Spring Break Day" (NO CLASS)**

**March 29: Undergraduate In-Class Exam 2**

**March 31: Human Rights in Public Emergency: Torture**

Henry Shue, "Torture in Dreamland: Disposing of the Ticking Bomb," *Case Western Journal of International Law*, Vol. 37, Nos. 2-3 (2006), pp. 231-239.

Charles Krauthammer, "The Truth about Torture," *The Weekly Standard*, December 5, 2005.

**April 5: Case Study: The External Response to China's Human Rights Situation**

Jack Donnelly, "Responding to Human Rights Violations in China: Tiananmen and After," in *International Human Rights*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Westview Press, 2012), pp. 167-189.

Zhou Qi, "Conflicts over Human Rights between China and the US," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (2005), pp. 105-124.

**April 7: NGOs and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Kenneth Roth, "Defending Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Practical Issues Faced by an International Human Rights Organization," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2004), pp. 63-73.

Leonard S. Rubenstein, "How International Human Rights Organizations Can Advance Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Response to Kenneth Roth," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2004), pp. 845-865.

Kenneth Roth, "Response to Leonard S. Rubenstein," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2004), pp. 873-878.

Leonard S. Rubenstein, "Response by Leonard S. Rubenstein," *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2004), pp. 879-881.

**April 12: Children's Rights**

Kristina A. Bentley, "Can There Be Any Universal Children's Rights?," *International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2005), pp. 107–123.

Sonja Grover, "A Response to K.A. Bentley's 'Can There Be Any Universal Children's Rights?'," *International Journal of Human Rights*, Vol.11, No. 4 (2007), pp. 429-443.

**April 14: Critical Perspectives on International Human Rights Practice**

John Laughland, "Human Rights and the Rule of Law: Achieving Universal Justice?" in David Chandler (ed.), *Rethinking Human Rights: Critical Approaches to International Politics* (Palgrave, 2002).

Makau Mutua, "The Complexity of Universalism in Human Rights," in Andras Sajó (ed.), *Human Rights with Modesty: The Problem of Universalism* (Brill, 2004).

**April 19: Conclusion: The Politics of Human Rights in a World of States**

Forsythe, ch. 10.

Dunne and Wheeler, ch. 11.

**April 21: Graduate Students' Research Paper Presentations**

**April 26: Take-Home Exam/Graduate Research Paper Office Hours – IN-PERSON CLASS**