

COURSE SYLLABUS
POLI 3505- HUMAN RIGHTS: FOUNDATIONS

Instructor:	Dr. Igor Shoikhedbrod	Term:	Winter 2022
Phone:	MS Teams	Days:	Mon & Wed
E-mail	igor.shoikhedbrod@dal.ca	Time:	<u>8:35-9:55a.m ADT</u>
Office Hours (MS Teams):	<u>Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:00-4:00p.m ADT.</u> Location: Collaborate Ultra		

Students are asked to kindly schedule an appointment in advance via email to ensure fairness and equal access. Please note that Dr. Shoikhedbrod has a combined total of nearly 300 students across three courses this term, so it is always good idea to schedule an appointment ahead of time. I look forward to meeting you during office hours to discuss course content and issues concerning the interplay between law and politics.

TA: Riley Nielson-Baker (they/them)
RNielson-Baker@dal.ca

*The instructor and course TA will normally be responding to logistical questions by email within 48 hours, Mondays through Fridays, between 10a.m and 5:00p.m ADT (i.e. not on weekends or during statutory holidays). For substantive course content-related questions, please make an appointment in advance with the course instructor during the instructor's scheduled MS Teams office hours.

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the foundations of human rights and their broader political, legal, and social implications in connection with a range of pressing international human rights issues: equality, housing, health, democracy, migration, and climate change.

FORMAT/DELIVERY: Online Synchronous Lectures via Collaborate Ultra

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- i. Explain leading philosophical and theoretical approaches for the foundation of international human rights
- ii. Differentiate between different justifications for human rights, including the various challenges involved in the implementation and protection of human rights globally
- iii. Analyze the historical transformation of human rights law and the consequences of this transformation
- iv. Consider the future trajectory of international human rights theory and practice
- v. Reflect on the relationship between politics, philosophy, and law

v. Effectively communicate your assessment of pressing issues in international human rights

C. REQUIRED TEXT

Cruft et al (eds), *Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, 2015).

Available for purchase at the University Bookstore and online via Brightspace. The instructor has also arranged for the university library to provide students with electronic access to the text free of charge. Please note that library staff have since informed the instructor that only three students can use the electronic version of the text at one time for a period of 48 hours. Please be mindful of this restriction in fairness to your colleagues.

N.B. All other readings will be posted on Brightspace (B).

D. EVALUATION COMPONENTS AND WEIGHTS

Components

The course will be delivered entirely online via Collaborate Ultra. Work will be evaluated on an individual basis. Except for formally volunteering as a note-taker for the course, which is strongly encouraged, students are discouraged from sharing their individual work on online platforms (i.e., do not share individual work on Facebook Groups, Google Drive, Discord, Dropbox, etc.). In the past, such sharing of individual work has resulted in incidents of plagiarism and academic misconduct.

The course assessment will be determined as follows:

List of Components	Percent of Total Grade
<u>Synchronous Test (During regularly scheduled lecture time on February 2)</u>	20%
<u>Book Review of 1000 Words on a scholarly book focusing on human rights foundations that was published within the last 10 years. Specific book titles will be provided by the instructor in advance (Due on February 28 at the start of lecture)</u>	20%
<u>Essay of 2000 Words (Due on March 30 at start of lecture).</u>	30%
<u>Cumulative Final Exam (TBA by Registrar's Office)</u>	30%
TOTAL OF ALL COMPONENTS	100%

***Essay topics will be announced by the instructor at least one month before the deadline.**

Grade Determination & Rubric Guide for All Assessments

Letter grade	Numerical equivalent	GPA	Definition	
A+	90-100	4.3	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85-89	4.0		
A-	80-84	3.7		
B+	77-79	3.3	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
B	73-76	3.0		
B-	70-72	2.7		
C+	65-69	2.3	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefiting from university experience.
C	60-64	2.0		
C-	55-59	1.7		
D	50-54	1.0	Marginal pass	Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter; critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of "C" or "C+" is required).
F	0-49	0	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature

E. COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES**The Use of Course Materials**

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are the instructor's intellectual property and are covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lectures or other course materials in any way (this includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Brightspace materials, etc.) are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to post, publish, or circulate the instructor's work on a website or to sell them in other forms without formal permission.

Lecture Attendance and General Expectations

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Brightspace will be the main online space for the course. This is where lectures will be delivered, assignments will be posted and submitted, and where all course announcements will be posted. It is expected that students will log-on to Brightspace regularly and set their email accounts to receive course announcements.

We will also observe a 5-10 minute break midway through lectures. Following the break, the instructor will leave time for students to pose questions of clarification and elaboration.

Written skills are important in this course. Proficiency in English therefore is assumed. Writing support is available for students at Dalhousie University. Students are strongly encouraged to seek out this support ahead of time.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have accessibility-related needs that may require accommodations, please feel free to contact me and/or Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

Submission of Work and the Use of Urkund

All assignments will be administered entirely through Brightspace. All submissions will be verified on Urkund for textual similarity. The terms that apply to Dalhousie University's use of Urkund are specified online: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/urkund--plagiarism-detection.html

Missed Lectures, Tests, and Assignments

If you miss class/lecture, it is your responsibility to catch up on missed lecture and reading material, including asking your peers for missed lecture notes. While lectures will not be recorded in this course, the instructor will typically post password-protected (**password**: copyrightprotected) lecture slides on Brightspace by the end of each week. Although the lecture slides are not sufficient for excelling in this course, students may find them useful for navigation and preparation purposes.

Test dates are scheduled in advance and cannot be changed. No make-up tests or extensions will be granted for missed tests or essays unless students have formal supporting documentation explaining why they were unable to fulfill the requirements. Examples of formal supporting

documentation include medical notes issued by a certified physician/practitioner, as well as a completed absence declaration form.

If you are absent from class or unable to complete any other term work, you are responsible for contacting your instructor as soon as possible to request reasonable accommodation. Extensions and the writing of make-up tests will only be granted under *extraordinary* and *unforeseen* circumstances. Appropriate documentation must be submitted within 5 days of the missed course requirement. Please note that all course requirements must be fulfilled for the completion of the course.

Late Penalty

Late assignment submissions will be penalized 5% percent per day of lateness (weekends included).

Procedure for Appealing Assignment Grades

Should you have any legitimate concerns regarding assignment grades, you are welcome to submit a half-page typed appeal that explains the reasons why you are contesting the grade (to be submitted to the teaching assistant no later than 5 days, weekends included, past the date that you received your assignment grade). Please note that the re-evaluation of an assignment may result in a higher or lower grade, or the grade may remain the same. N.B. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal procedure (i.e., you have reasons to believe that the TA's response to your grade appeal remains arbitrary and/or unfair), please contact the course instructor promptly after receiving the TA's response to your grade appeal. Students should not feel deterred from appealing their assignment grades. This is your right.

F. University Policies, Statements, Guidelines, and Other Resources for Support

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate.

University Statements

Territorial Acknowledgment

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work

you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the University community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students do not follow this community expectation.

Students are required to comply with health and safety requirements on campus, and should be considerate of others' health concerns. Non-compliance may be reported under the Code of Student Conduct.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit their office at:

Room 107, Indigenous Student Centre
1321 Edward Street
Phone: (902) 494-6803

University Policies and Programs

- Important Dates in the Academic Year
http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html
- University Grading Practices: Statement of Principles and Procedures
https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practicespolicy.html
- Scent-Free Program
<https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

Learning and Support Resources

- General Academic Support - Academic Advising: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html
- Copyright and Fair Dealing: <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/fairdealing/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>

- Libraries: <http://libraries.dal.ca>
- Student Health Services: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/services-support/student-health-and-wellness.html
- Counselling and Psychological Services: <https://www.dal.ca/counselling>
- Black Student Advising: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/blackstudent-advising.html
- Indigenous Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html
- eLearning Website: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>
- Student Advocacy Services: <http://www.dsu.ca/dsas>
- Dalhousie Ombudsperson: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html
- Writing Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-andstudy-skills.html. Assistance with learning to write academic documents, reviewing papers for discipline -specific writing standards, organization, argument, transitions, writing styles and citations.
- Studying for Success program and tutoring: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html

G. READING SCHEDULE

IMPORTANT NOTE: All additional required readings will be uploaded onto Brightspace (B). Students who wish to get a head start on the (B) readings before they are posted on Brightspace are welcome to do so by searching for them through the online library catalogue and/or consulting with library staff.

- Jan 5 (Wed) **Introduction and syllabus overview**
- Jan 10 (Mon) **Human Rights: Theory and History**
 T.H Marshall, excerpts from “Citizenship and Social Class” (B)
 Samuel Moyn, “Humanity before Human Rights”, from *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (B)
- Jan 12 (Wed) **Introduction: Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights**
 Chaps 1 & 2 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Jan 17 (Mon) **How Foundational is the Human Right to Housing?**
 Watch: *Push* before lecture:
<https://www.tv.o.org/video/documentaries/push-feature-version>
- Read: Heffernan et al, “Fighting for the Right to Housing in Canada” (B)
- *We will be joined (via Collaborate) by distinguished guest, Leilani Farha, former U.N Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing and current director of *Shift* (tentative).

Students are strongly encouraged to come prepared with questions for Leilani Farha.

- Jan. 19 (Wed) **Back to Foundations: Security**
Chaps 23 & 24 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Jan 24 (Mon) **Back to Foundations: The “Good” Life and its Discontents**
Chaps 3 & 4 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Jan 26 (Wed) **Human Dignity as the Foundation for Human Rights?**
Ch. 5 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Jan 31 (Mon) Ch.6 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Feb 2 (Wed) **TEST (During regularly scheduled lecture)**
- Feb 7 (Mon) **From National to International Foundations**
Chaps 11& 12 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Feb 9 (Wed) **The International Scope of Human Rights**
Ch.13 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Jurgen Habermas, “Keywords on a Discourse Theory of Law and of the Democratic Constitutional State” (B)
- Feb 14 (Mon) **The Parameters of Subsistence**
Ch.29 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Feb 16 (Wed) Ch.30 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Feb 21-25 **STUDY WEEK- NO CLASSES**

- Feb 28 (Mon) **The Boundaries of Liberty**
Chaps.33 & 34 of *Philosophical Foundations*
BOOK REVIEW DUE
- Mar 2 (Wed) **The Boundaries of Equal Personhood**
Charles Mills, “The Political Economy of Personhood” (B)
Amartya Sen, “Equality of What?” (B)
- Mar 7 (Mon) Guest lecture by Riley Nielson-Baker (to be confirmed).
- Mar 9 (Wed) **Human Rights & Democracy**
Chaps 25 & 26 in *Philosophical Foundations*
- Mar 14 (Mon) **A Human Right to Health?**
Chaps 27 & 28 of *Philosophical Foundations*
- Mar 16(Wed) **Human Rights and Migration**
Joseph Carens, “The Case for Amnesty” (B)
Additional required reading TBA.
- Mar 21 (Mon) **Climate Justice & Human Rights**
Andrea Schapper, “Climate Justice and Human Rights” (B).
- Mar 23 (Wed) Olufemi Taiwo, “What’s Next: Why Reparations Require
Climate Justice” (B).
- Mar 28 (Mon) **Challenges to Human Rights Foundations**
Chaps 31 & 32 of *Philosophical Foundations*
- Mar 30(Wed) Samuel Moyn, “A Powerless Companion” (B)
Glen Coulthard, “Grounded Normativity/Place-Based
Solidarity” (B)
(B) **ESSAY DUE**
- Apr 4 (Mon) **Review & Conclusion**

CUMMULATIVE FINAL EXAM (Scheduled by Registrar’s Office)