POLI 4040: International Human Rights

Fall 2020 Monday & Wednesday, 3:00-4:20

Instructor:

Christopher Sullivan Office: Stubbs 219 Email: csullivanlsu@gmail.com

Office Hours: Mon 11am-2pm and by appointment. (Office hours held via Zoom.) A note on office hours – please email me ahead of time to let me know what you would like to discuss during office hours so that I can prepare to assist in the best way possible.

Email "office hours": 12:30-2, m-f I prefer to structure my engagement with email. If you need a prompt response, please reach me during these hours.

Teaching Assistant:

TBA Office Hours: as announced and by appointment

Course Description: This course focuses on government-sponsored violations of human rights, such as civil liberties restrictions, torture, political killing, and genocide. The course begins with an attempt to define human rights violations. From there, we will explore issues related to the development of international human rights standards. We will attend to why human rights violations continue in both newly emergent states and advanced democracies. The final section of the course will focus on different efforts to curb human rights abuses, examining domestic and international institutions as well as the efforts of human rights NGOs.

Required Books:

Risse, Thomas, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. *The persistent power of human rights: from commitment to compliance*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. 978-1107609365

- Hafner-Burton, Emilie. 2013. *Making Human Rights a Reality*. Princeton. Princeton University Press. 978-1400846283
- Philip Gourevitch. 1998 We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with our Families: Stories from Rwanda New York. Picador. 978-0312243357
- Angela Davis. 2018. Policing the Black Man. New York: Penguin.

Note: The library has licensed campus-wide e-access to The Persistent Power of Human Rights: From Commitment to Compliance:

http://libezp.lib.lsu.edu/login?url=https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/persistentpower -of-human-rights/D26A23B19102926B4E77B1EDEA3773F1

Recommended Books:

- Beth Simmons. *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law and Domestic Politics*. New York. Cambridge University Press. (available as ebook http://lib.lsu.edu/ebooks)
- David P. Forsythe, *Human Rights in International Relations*, New York: Cambridge, 2000 78-1316635186

Academic Articles:

Academic articles may be accessed through https://scholar-google-com.libezp.lib.lsu.edu/ or the library's website. If you have questions about how to use scholar.google please stop by office hours or speak with a reference librarian.

Course Requirements and Learning Outcomes:

This course is reading, writing, and speaking intensive; we will work to build your critical thinking as well as sharpen your analytical and presentational skills.

The structure of the class will be a mix of in-class discussion, group presentation, and lectures.

• To help facilitate the class discussion, it is imperative that students come prepared to each class having read that week's material and having familiarized themselves with current events. Students will be expected to complete a short response to each class' reading and come prepared to discuss them in class. For each class, a list of question prompts will be posted to *Moodle* page. Students should select one of these prompts

and answer it in 200-300 words. Please print these paragraphs and bring them to class.

- During class, students will be expected to engage in class discussion. Each student should be prepared to write down at least one contribution to our conversation at the end of each class period.
- In addition, students will be expected to prepare 2-3 group presentations over the course of the semester.
- Several longer written assignments will provide opportunity to assess student responses to the class readings, films, and other sources of material on human rights.

My intention is to develop a participatory environment that facilitates peer-to-peer education. Through in-depth discussion, we will debate critical issues relating to human rights. My goal as the instructor is to tether these discussions to broader political concepts (such as the state, citizens, advocacy, etc.) in order to make sense of complex relationships. As the semester progresses, we will work to move from practice to skill, and enrich student competency in the fundamental issue areas necessary for political participation—critical thinking, coherent writing, public presentation, and collective engagement.

Grading:

Students will be evaluated on the following -

- (1) Attendance, Participation, and Reading Responses (25%)
- (2) Group Presentations (20%)
- (3) Book Reflection Papers (2x 5%)
- (4) Film Analyses (3x 5%)
- (5) Group Policy Proposal Paper (30%).

(1) Attendance, Participation, Reading Response Memos (30%)

Students are expected to actively participate in discussion each week. To encourage adequate preparation and evaluate reading comprehension, students will write a short response to the class readings. Several question prompts will be posted to the class *Moodle* page prior to the start of the week. Students should select one of the prompts and answer it in approximately 200-300 words. Update your response to *Moodle* by noon. You will not be asked to read it in class, but it might help to motivate discussion.

In addition, emphasis will be placed on quality of in-class participation, including discussion of the readings and responses to other students' comments. Attendance will be

taken alongside an assessment of how each student contributed to the class discussion. You are expected to make at least one substantive contribution to course discussion each class.

(2) Group Presentations (20%)

Each student will be responsible for developing two (or more) short group presentations (30 minutes) on one of the case studies and then leading a class discussion (45 minutes) connecting the case to the class materials.

Included along with the presentation topic for each week is a list of suggested readings. These readings are just that—suggested. Other readings may be incorporated at the discretion of the group. Read and discuss what interests you about the topic. (I am also open to a change in presentation topic, though this should be done in consultation with me.)

The presentations should begin with a summary, acknowledging that the other class members have not completed the additional assigned presentation readings. The group should provide a history of the case or issue, assuming that the class knows nothing in advance. The use of slides and course handouts is highly encouraged.

The presentation should not just be a summary of the materials. In addition, the presenters should describe how the case should be considered in relation to the readings assigned to the whole class, and then pose a few central questions for class discussion.

Students will be assigned to groups of for each presentation. If you have preferences for a specific week or topic, please let me know by email by January 15th.

(3) Book Reflection (2 x 5%) - We Wish to Inform You..., Policing the Black Man, Eviction

The class begins with an in-depth reflection on one of the most severe cases of human rights abuses in the past 25 years – the Rwandan Genocide. Each student will reflect upon Gourevich's book, which provides a narrative account, historical trajectory, and personal deliberation on what occurred in Rwanda. You will need to write a summary of *one* of the book's principal themes or arguments (no more than 300 words) and then respond to one or more of the following prompts: Using the book as a tool, identify the principal causes and effects of the genocide and reflect on strategies for prevention. Since the Rwandan people at one point were unified and considered the same kind of people, do you think this kind of conflict can happen anywhere? Who was bears the greatest responsibility for

the genocide, the Rwandan people, the Rwandan government, or some other actor? How much blame should be placed on other countries for the mass killing?

Towards the middle of the semester, we will consider issues of race and policing in America. Specifically, we will read, discuss, and respond to Davis' *Policing the Black Man.* Each student will reflect upon the book, which provides a narrative account of how inequality is perpetuated through cycles of housing deprivation. For this assignment, the response should engage critically with the text. First, the main points of the work should be summarized, alongside the evidence developed through the book. The students should then identify a particular piece of this argument which they believe to be either more important than the author acknowledges or to be inaccurately described throughout the text. Point out what the author gets right as well as what specific points you disagree with. Summarize with a conclusion that articulates your individual perspective on the text.

In total, these should be 400-600 words (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12point font). I will grade these for thoroughness of summary and response as well as clarity of writing.

(4) Film Analyses – (3 x 5%) – Films TBA

We will watch three films during the class. For each film, you need to write a brief summary (no more than 200 words) and provide your review/reflection on the movie. For the first film, you will need to reflect on the film and consider how it informs your understanding of another topic we have discussed in class. For the second film, you will need to analyze the film to consider how it relates to one of the class readings. For the third film, you will need to develop a coherent argument relating the film to a broader theme in our course and back that argument up with examples from the film.

All three responses should be 400-600 words (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font). I will grade these for thoroughness of summary and response as well as clarity of writing.

(5) Policy Proposal Paper (30%) -

A policy paper should be addressed to a specific governmental actor (e.g., president, secretary of state, members of the legislature), a specific international organization, or a human rights Non-Governmental Organization. It should propose policies for improving human rights that are feasible for that actor, and should appeal to that actor's motives and interests.

You will work on the policy proposal project together in groups. The policy proposal should draw heavily on research discussed in class and on empirical material documenting specific abuses committed in a particular country or region. It should connect patterns of abuse to specific proposals for improving human rights in the country or region. Bonus points will be awarded for proposing creative solutions to intractable problems. In total, this paper should be 8-10 pages (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font).

Extra Credit:

An exploratory paper, which takes a look at a topic of interest to you, based on published works and/or websites. I have in mind topics which are not adequately covered in the course reading, and on which you would like more information. I want to learn what information you have gathered, why you think the issue is important, what conclusions you have provisionally drawn from the information you have gathered and, as appropriate, what you think are the biases or inadequacies of the sources that you used. Extra credit papers are worth up to 5 percentage points and should be 4-5 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font). Please cite your sources in the paper.

Extra credit papers must be completed individually and turned in by midnight on December 2.

Late Papers/Assignments:

Late papers/assignments will not be accepted except in instances of medical necessity (with a doctor's note) or death of an immediate relative (with an obituary or other official notice).

Cell / Internet Policy:

- Please refrain from using phones and computers in class, except when presenting.
- Most of us are wired most of the time—and being wired has amazing advantages. However, being unwired also has major advantages.
- Your engagement in the course and opportunities for collective learning will be enhanced by maintaining focus on the classroom here and now.
- Put your cell phones on vibrate and refrain from using them during class. I do not want to see them on your desks.

Zoom Policy:

- Treat the virtual classroom with the same respect you treat a campus classroom. I have zero tolerance for intentionally disruptive or inappropriate behavior.
- Please refrain from multi-tasking. Course discussion requires your full attention.
- Do not watch videos, listen to music, or use other applications (other than note taking apps) while attending class. Doing so could not only distract the class, but lead to a degradation in computer performance that may affect the student viewer experience.
- I still want to see your dog if
- he's in the room
- he's a good boy, yes he is

Obvious Courtesies:

- Arrive on time
- Let me know in advance if you must leave early

A few notes on participation:

1. All students are expected to participate in class discussions. Students uncomfortable speaking in front of the class are encouraged to come to office hours to discuss the material.

2. Many of the issues and approaches utilized in the study of political violence are subject to debate. Students are therefore encouraged to question the material in a thoughtful and respectful manner. No student will be penalized for presenting an argument which questions the material presented; all perspectives are welcome, although they are also fair game for class discussion and debate.

3. In order to facilitate class discussion and preserve an environment in which all students are encouraged to participate, please keep your class contributions directed at the material and arguments presented and not at fellow class members. Comments of a personal nature directed against fellow students will not be tolerated.

A few notes on academic reading:

When you read an article or chapter, you should consider the following questions: What is the main claim or argument? Is it internally consistent? Is it convincing? What are the strengths and limitations of the evidence offered? Does the evidence support or refute the expectations of the argument?

A few notes on academic writing:

Written work will be graded for substance as well as for quality of writing. Students are highly encouraged to set appointments with the CxC writing center: https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/cxc/writing/

Course Outline:

Week 1 – Class Organization

August 24 Class Cancelled - Hurricane

August 26 Class Cancelled - Hurricane

Week 2

August 31

Introduction and Discussion Presentation Topic Requests Due by Midnight Friday (08/28)

09/01 Final date for dropping courses without receiving a grade of "W," 4:30 p.m., deadline

September 2

Freedom of Expression

- Teresa Watanabe, et al. 2015. "Colleges Confront Subtler forms of Bias." *LA Times*. http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-college-microaggression20151112-story.html
- Greg Lukanoff and Jonathan Haidt. 2015. "The Coddling of the American Mind." *The Atlantic* http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/09/the-coddlingof-the-american-mind/399356/
- Gannon, "UChicago's Anti-Safe Space Message," Vox http://www.vox.com/2016/8/26/12657684/chicago-safe-spaces-triggerwarningsletter
- Arthur Lupia and Anne Norton. "Inequality is Always in the Room: Language & Power in Deliberative Democracy." *Daedalus* (2017)

 Anderson, Nick and Susan Svrluga. 2015. "Can Colleges Protect Free Speech While also Curbing Voices of Hate?" *Washington Post.* https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/can-colleges-protectfreespeech-while-curbing-voices-of-hate/2015/11/10/daac2b8c-87ca-11e5be390034bb576eee story.html No Group Presentation

09/02 |Final date for requesting group presentation assignments

Week 3

September 7 Class Cancelled Labor Day

September 9

Gourevitch, We Wish to Inform You... (1-180)

09/13 Book Response I Due by Midnight 09/13

Week 4

September 14

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Hafner-Burton, pp 41-86

Group Presentation – International Law

- Hathaway, Oona A., Philip Levitz, Elizabeth Nielsen, and Aileen Nowlan. "Human Rights Abroad: When Do Human Rights Treaty Obligations Apply Extraterritorially." *Ariz. St. LJ* 43 (2011): 389.
- Simmons Japan and CEDAW, pp 237-255. (provided)
- Simmons Israel, Chile, and ICAT, pp 284-306 (provided)

September 16 Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Risse et al. Ch 1-2

Group Presentation – International Transformation

• Risse et al. Ch 3, 9-10

Week 5

September 21 Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Hafner-Burton, 1-40

Group Presentation: Case study – Repressive Organizations

- David Cunningham, There's Something Happening Here (provided)
- Neil Mitchell, Agents of Atrocity (provided)
- William Stanley, *The Protection Racket State* (provided)

September 23

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Robert Goldstein. 1978. *Political Repression in Modern America*, Illinois University Press, pp. 547-574 (provided)

Group Presentation: Case study – The Dirty War in Argentina

Pion-Berlin, David. "The National Security Doctrine, Military Threat Perception, and the "Dirty War" in Argentina." *Comparative Political Studies* 21.3 (1988): 382-407.

- Pion-Berlin, David, and George A. Lopez. "Of victims and executioners: Argentine state terror, 1975–1979." *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1991): 63-86.
- Osiel, Mark J. "Constructing subversion in Argentina's dirty war." *Representations* 75.1 (2001): 119-158.

Week 6

September 28 Asynchronous Learning – Film I (TBA)

September 30 Film Discussion –

•

09/30 Film Response I Due By Class time 09/30

Week 7

October 5

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Christian Davenport. 2007b. *State repression and the domestic democratic peace*. Cambridge University Press. Ch 2 (provided)

Group Presentation – Civil Liberties and Surveillance

- Neil M Richards. "The dangers of surveillance." *Harvard Law Review* 126.7 (2013): 1934-1965.
- Starr, Amory, et al. "The impacts of state surveillance on political assembly and association: A socio-legal analysis." *Qualitative Sociology* 31.3 (2008): 251-270.
- Schwartz, "The Whole Haystack" *The New Yorker* (provided)

October 7

•

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Darius Rejali. 2007. *Torture and Democracy*, Princeton University Press, pp. 8-25 (provided)

Group Presentation: Torture and Democracy

David Cole "The Torture Memos: The Case Against Lawyers" New Nork Review of Books. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2009/10/08/the-torture-memos-thecase-against-the-lawyers/

- Risse et al. Ch 8
- Hersh, Seymour M. "Torture at Abu Ghraib: American Soldiers Brutalized Iraqis. How Far Up Does the Responsibility Go?" *The New Yorker*. 10 May 2004.

Week 8

October 12

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Risse ch 5

Group Presentation –

- Case Study: Drones & Global Counter-Insurgency
- Coll, Steve. 2014. "The Unblinking Stare" The New Yorker (provided)
- Mary Ellen O'Connell, "When Are Drone Killings Illegal?" CNN, Aug. 12, 2012.
- Byman, Daniel. "Why drones work: The case for washington's weapon of choice." *Foreign Affairs* 92.4 (2013): 32-43.

October 14

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Risse et al. Ch 5

Group Presentation - Case Study: America and the ICC

- Kenneth Roth "The Court the US Doesn't Want," *New York Review of Books*. November 19, 1998, pp. 45-47.
- David Rieff, "Court of Dreams," The New Republic. September 7, 1998, pp. 1617.
- Lawrence Wechsler, "Exceptional Cases in Rome: The United States and the Struggle for an ICC," in Sarah Sewell and Carl Kaysen, eds., *The United States and the International Criminal Court: National Security and International Law* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), pp. 85-111

October 19

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Taylor Seybolt. Humanitarian Intervention Ch 1, (Provided)

Group Presentation – Past Interventions & Myanmar

- Taylor Seybolt. *Humanitarian Intervention, pp* 61-86 (provided)
- John Feffer, "The Rohingya and the Responsibility to Ignore." *Huffington Post* https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-rohingya-and-the-responsibilitytoignore_us_59c52ca0e4b0b7022a6469f0 Amanda Taub, "Myanmar and Ethnic Cleansing." *New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/world/asia/myanmar-rohingyaethniccleansing.html*

October 21

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Lambourne, W. (2009). Transitional justice and peacebuilding after mass violence. *International journal of transitional justice*, *3*(1), 28-48.

Group Presentation – Transitional Justice

- Daly, Erin "Truth Skepticism: An Inquiry into the Value of Truth in Times of Transition," International Journal of Transitional Justice 2:1 (2008): 23-41.
- Mallinder, Louise. "Can Amnesties and International Justice be Reconciled?" International Journal of Transitional Justice 1,2 (2007): 208-230
- Waldorf, L. (2012). Anticipating the past: Transitional justice and socio-economic wrongs. *Social & Legal Studies*, *21*(2), 171-186.

Week 10

October 26 Asynchronous Learning Film II (TBA)

October 28 Film Discussion -

10/28 Film Response II Due By Class time 10/28

November 2 *Policing the Black Man* (pp 1-95)

November 4 *Policing the Black Man* (pp 95-end)

11/08 Book Response II Due By Midnight 11/08

Week 12 – International Involvement

November 9

•

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Peskin, Victor. "Beyond Victor's Justice? The Challenge of Prosecuting the Winners at the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda." Journal of Human Rights 4,2 (2005): 213-231

Group Presentation – Human Rights Prosecutions

- Owen Fiss, "Within Reach of the State: Prosecuting Atrocities in Africa," *Human Rights Quarterly*, (2009): 59 -69
- Sikkink, Kathryn, and Ellen Lutz. "The justice cascade: the evolution and impact of foreign human rights trials in Latin America." *International Law and Society*. Routledge, 2017. 319-351.
- Marc Weller, "On the Hazards of Foreign Travel for Dictators and other International Criminals" International Affairs, Vol. 75, No. 3 (July 1999), pp. 599-617.

November 11

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Hafner-Burton, pp 135-150, 176-198

Group Presentation – Efforts to Improve International Law

- Jack Snyder and Leslie Vinjamuri, "Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice," *International Security*, vol. 28, no.3 (Winter 2003/04) 5-44.
- Jacob Mchangama and Guglielmo Verdirame, 2013. "The Danger of Human Rights Proliferation: When Defending Liberty, Less Is More" *Foreign Affairs*
- Lyal Sunga. 2015. "Can International Law Meet the Challenges of Today's Conflicts?" *The Guardian*. http://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionalsnetwork/2015/nov/14/international-law-yemen-syria-isis-conflict

Week 13

November 16 Asynchronous Learning Film III (TBA)

November 18 Film Discussion –

11/18 Film Response III Due By Class Time 11/18

Week 14

November 23

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Hafner-Burton 151-176

Group Presentation –Human Rights Advocacy

- Brysk, Alison. "From above and below: Social movements, the international system, and human rights in Argentina." *Comparative Political Studies* 26.3 (1993): 259-285.
- Clifford Bob 2002 "Merchants of Morality" Foreign Affairs.

November 25

Reading Response Memo Due Before Class

• Philips, Jos. "On setting priorities among human rights." *Human rights review* 15.3 (2014): 239-257.

Group Presentation: Negative and Positive Rights

- Bradley, Andrew. "Positive rights, negative rights and health care." *Journal of medical ethics* 36.12 (2010): 838-841.
- Dylan Matthews, "Basic Income: The World's Simplest Plan to End Poverty" Vox https://www.vox.com/2014/9/8/6003359/basic-income-negative-income-taxquestions-explain
- Oestreich, J. E. (1999). Liberal Theory and Minority Group Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 21(1), 108-132.
- Matthew Desmond *Evicted* (Provided)

Week 15

November 30 Final Project Presentation I

December 2 Final Project Presentation II

12/06 Group Policy Proposal Papers due by midnight on December 6.

Additional Information

Grading Policy:

Highest Lowest Letter

0			
100.00 %	697.00 %	A+	
96.99 %	93.00 %	А	
92.99 %	90.00 %	A-	B+
89.99 %	87.00 %	В	
86.99 %	83.00 %	B-	C+
82.99 %	80.00 %	С	
79.99 %	77.00 %	C-	D+
76.99 %	73.00 %	D	
72.99 %	70.00 %	D-	
69.99 %	67.00 %		
66.99 %	63.00 %		
62.99 %	60.00 %		
59.99 %	0.00 %	F	

- The letter grade A, including A+ and A-, denotes distinguished mastery of the course material.
- The letter grade B, including B+ and B-, denotes good mastery of the course material. The letter grade C, including C+ and C-, denotes acceptable mastery of the course material.
- The letter grade D, including D+ and D-, denotes minimally acceptable achievement.
- F denotes failure.

For the course grade, the calculated final percentage will be rounded up to the nearest integer. If you feel that an error has been made in the grading of your assignment, a written submission specifying the contested question(s) and/or issue(s) as well as the detailed reason why you feel an error has been made, including supporting documentation, should be given to the course instructor prior to scheduling a meeting to discuss the issue. Only grading issues pertaining to the substance or format of an argument or factual error on the part of the instructor will be considered eligible for review.

General Statement on Academic Integrity: Louisiana State University adopted the Commitment to Community in 1995 to set forth guidelines for student behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. The Commitment to Community charges students to maintain high standards of academic and personal integrity. All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at www.lsu.edu/saa. It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community.

Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first

academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

Plagiarism and Citation Method: As a student at LSU, it is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation method for all coursework. The most frequently used citation method in political science is internal citation (e.g., Sullivan 2015). I would encourage you to follow this format and include footnotes where relevant; leaving full citations for a 'Works Referenced' page that follows the main text.¹[1] Ignorance of the citation method is not an excuse for academic misconduct. Remember there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively. If you have questions regarding what is appropriate, please consult with the library's tutorials on avoiding plagiarism and proper citation formats.

Group work and unauthorized assistance: All work must be completed without assistance unless explicit permission for group or partner work is given by the faculty member. This is critical so that the professor can assess your performance on each assignment. If a group/partner project is assigned, the student may still have individual work to complete. Read the syllabus and assignment directions carefully. You might have a project with group work and a follow up report that is independently written. When in doubt, e-mail the faulty member or ask during a class session. Seeking clarification is your responsibility as a student. Assuming group/partner work is okay without permission constitutes a violation of the LSU Code of Student Conduct.

Students requiring special accommodation: Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with the Disability Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. This publication/material is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact the Disability Services, 115 Johnston Hall, (225) 578-5919.

¹[1] <u>http://www.lib.umd.edu/tl/guides/citing-chicago-ad</u>