



SYLLABUS

HUMAN RIGHTS

Instructor: Maria Elena Barbero

Contact hours: 40

Language of Instruction: English

ROSARIO, ARGENTINA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will address the evolution of human rights, with special emphasis on Argentina and the rest of Latin America. The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states: "Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". The aim of the seminar is to analyze the concept and the principal characteristics of the human rights declaration. Latin America has a unique history regarding human rights. In particular Argentina where during the last military dictatorship in 1976, basic guarantees were violated against every human person. This seminar we will also analyze the principal agreements and conventions of human rights that exist in the world on the rights of women, children, persons with disability, etc. In this course we will examine the national and international legal systems, and also analyze the importance of non-governmental organizations in the fight for the protection of human rights. Finally, we will also analyze violations of human rights in times of armed conflict, with the conviction that the human rights must also be respected in times of war.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After finishing the course students should be able:

- To understand the meaning of human rights and the importance of protecting human rights for the whole international community.
- To recognize the terrible human rights violations that took place during the last military dictatorship in Argentina.
- To identify the principal motives behind human rights violations around the world.
- To understand particular aspects of human rights in Latin America.
- To discuss different topics related to the human rights, for example, discrimination, right to the life, right to the dignity, etc.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

- Lectures with discussion.
- Visits to different places. Some places that will be visited are:
"Museum of memory": A special place in Rosario to remember the years of the last military dictatorship.

“El Pozo”: One of the more important covert centers of detention of the city. Many people were detained here during the last military dictatorship. The visit is accompanied for ex-prisoners who will report their experiences during these days.

- Movies and videos: Movies that will be seen and discussed:
 - “The Sea Inside”: Spanish film who won the 2004 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film.
Topic: The right to die with dignity
 - “The 100 Days That Didn’t Shake the World”. This is an Argentine documentary about the Rwandan Genocide. It is based on the testimony of Argentine judge, Mónica Weinberg, the only representative from Latin America in the International Criminal Tribunal from Rwanda, created by United Nations in 1994.
- Case studies: “Bulacio, Walter”. Interamerican Courts of Human Rights. 2003
“Bayarri”. Interamerican Court of Human Rights. 2008

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Students grades will be determined on the percentages of points earned on the activities listed below:

Class participation	10%
Homework	10%
Mid Term Exam	30%

A mid-term exam will be given during the third week. The exam will include all topics up to that point.

Final Exam	50%
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A final exam will be given on the last week. It will cover all material included in the course, with main focus on the second half.

Assignments:

Students will be active in class participation and critical with respect to the assigned readings. Classroom discussion will be encouraged by the instructor and/or guest lecturer.

Additional writing assignments: Students must write their personal opinion about a particular topic of the seminar.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1

- Introduction: Human rights. Concepts. Characteristics.
- The foundations of human rights
- Human rights in Argentina: State terrorism in the 1970s. Torture and extra judicial executions. Disappearances. Children kidnapping. Impunity Laws in Argentina.
- Film: “The official story”. (An Argentine film that won the Oscars for the best foreign language film in 1985. The film tells the story of a couple that adopted a child during the last military dictatorship).

Assigned readings:

History of “Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo”, Children Who Disappeared or Who Were Born in Captivity. Available at:
<http://www.abuelas.org.ar/english/history.htm>

Week 2

- The Universal protection of Human Rights. Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UN 1948. Political rights and economic rights. Cultural and social rights
- Inter-American Court Human Rights protection. The American Convention on Human Rights. Defense mechanisms in Latin America. Cases where Argentina was declared guilty for violations of Human Rights. Case study: “Bulacio” and “Bayarri”.
- Visit to the “Museum of Memory”. This museum is a place to preserve memories of protagonists, as well as male and female victims of the last military dictatorship in the Argentina

Assigned readings:

Cançado Trindade, Antonio Augusto (ex President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights); “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”; United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law; 2008. Available in: http://untreaty.un.org/cod/avl/pdf/ha/udhr/udhr_e.pdf

Brief History of the Inter-American Human Rights System. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Available in:
<http://www.cidh.oas.org/what.htm>

Case of Bulacio v. Argentina. Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of September 18, 2003. Series C No. 100. Available in:
<http://www.corteidh.or.cr/casos.cfm>

Week 3

- Right to life. Right to die with dignity.
- Film: “The Sea Inside” (A Spanish film that won the Oscar for best foreign film in 2005. Tells the story of a man that fights to finish his life with dignity).
- Abortion and death penalty
- Midterm exam

Assigned readings:

Protocol to the American convention on human rights to abolish the death penalty. Available in:
<http://www.cidh.oas.org/Basicos/English/Basic7.Death%20Penalty.htm>

After the film, students will write a short paper about their personal views on the issue: “The right to die with dignity”

Week 4

- Right to non discrimination
- Right to freedom of expression
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International protection of the women's rights

Assigned readings:

Opinion Judge Cançado-Trindade and Abreu-Burelli I/A Court H.R.,
Case of the “Street Children” (Villagrán-Morales v. Guatemala). Merits.
Judgment of November 19, 1999. Series C No. 63, Available in:
<http://www.corteidh.or.cr/casos.cfm>

The Rights of persons with disabilities.

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/disability/intro.htm#human>

Week 5

- International Humanitarian Law. War crimes. Genocide.
- Rwanda and Yugoslavia’s Tribunals.
- International Criminal Court.
- Final exam
- Closing of the seminar. Final commentaries

Assigned readings:

“Understanding the international Criminal Court”. Available in:

<http://www.icc-cpi.int/iccdocs/PIDS/femalecounsel/UICCGeneralENG.pdf>

COURSE READINGS/TEXTS

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

American Convention on Human Rights

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Jackman, Oliver; “Living Memory of the Inter-American System of Human Rights”.

C. Trindade, Augusto; “The emancipation of the individual from his own state: The historical recovery of the human person as subject of the law of nations”

Available at: <http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/libros/cuarto%20de%20siglo.pdf>