



MS TCDC
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SYLLABUS

Course name: **Development and Human Rights in East Africa**
Instructor: **Ana Haule (PhD)**
Language of Instruction: **English**
Contact Hours: **40**
UO Credits: **4**

Arusha, Tanzania

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Development and Human Rights in East Africa: Tanzania has long been an epicenter of the international development efforts in East Africa and also serves as the home of the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights. This course will introduce students to the basic framework for the understanding of international human rights law in both its domestic and geopolitical perspectives, with an emphasis on how the human rights system informs—and is informed by—domestic and international development efforts in the region.

The purpose of the course is for students to understand the roles different domestic, regional, and international actors played towards the development of social, legal, and economic systems in the late 20th and early 21st century. The course will conclude with an overview of contemporary success and challenges regarding development and human rights in East Africa.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Instructional Goals. The course will:

- Establish a foundation for understanding the normative structure of the international human rights system, both historically and contemporarily.
- Establish a foundation for the understanding of the legal and political debates that inform the practice of international development in post-colonial East Africa.
- Provide a culturally-specific context through which to study the application of international human rights laws at the domestic and regional level.
- Prepare students to pursue advanced study of human rights and development at the graduate level.

Student Outcomes. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Draw connections between the relevant historical and theoretical perspectives that inform the international human rights movement.
- Analyze the moral, political, economic, and cultural tensions inherent in international human rights practices in East Africa.
- Evaluate, compare, and contrast the various political, legal and development organizations that work to promote and protect human rights and development in Tanzania.
- Begin assessing the relative success or failure of specific human rights mechanisms, e.g. the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course is divided between classroom instruction (2/3) and excursions or experiential learning (1/3). During class, regular lectures will be supplemented with small group discussion, videos, and guest speakers. At least half of each class period will consist of lectures covering core course material, though the structure will be informal enough to allow for group and class discussions at any point. The remaining in-class time will be divided between guided class discussions, small-group discussions, simulated debates and videos. Excursions (e.g. to museums, courthouses, NGOs, government agencies, etc.) will provide an opportunity for students to begin understanding the practical application of theoretical, philosophical, and legal material covered in class. Excursions will also provide students an opportunity to engage directly with local perspectives on the topics studied in class.

METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Attendance and participation:	30%
Midterm Exam:	30%
Final Essay or Group Project:	30%*
Excursion Reflection:	10%

*Due two weeks after end of program. Electronic submission required.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: History and Theory of Human Rights

Students will be introduced to the historical and theoretical foundations of the modern human rights system. This will provide the foundation for all future coursework.

Day 1: Introduction to course; Introduction to human rights: How do rights “function”?

Day 2: Early ethical foundations: Are human rights “modern”?

Day 3-4: WWII and the creation of the United Nations and UN bodies; Rights and enforcement (Are Human Rights Law really ‘law’?).

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are there so many divergent founding stories for human rights?
2. Are human rights universal or culturally relative?

Readings:

Alan S. Gutterman, “What are Human Rights?” Human Rights of Elder Persons (2022), Electronic copy available at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4320947>

Janne Mende, “Are human rights western—And why does it matter? A perspective from international political theory,” *Journal of International Political Theory* (2021), Vol. 17(1) 38–57.

Mykhailo Baimuratov, *et al*, “Evolution of Legal Frameworks for Human Rights Protection: From Early Foundations to Contemporary Norms,” *Salud, Ciencia y Tecnología – Serie de Conferencias*. 2024; 3:.1460

Week 2: History and Theory of International Development

Students will be introduced to the historical events and philosophical debates that shape international interventions in domestic, regional, and international development with an emphasis on post-colonial Africa.

Day 1: What is development? Assessing the goals, measurements, and mechanisms that drive the international development industry.

Days 2-3: The History of International Development in post-colonial Africa: Failures, successes, lessons learned.

Day 4: Measuring Development in the 21st Century: MDGs, SDGs, and Current Crises.

Discussion Questions:

1. Does dependency theory adequately account for issues of ‘under-development’?
2. What are the factors contributing to global inequities?
3. Does the success of the advanced industrial economies serve as a model for developing economies?

Readings:

Bubaker F. Shareia, “Theories of Development”, *International Journal of Language and Linguistics* Vol. 2, No. 1; March 2015, 78

José Antonio Ocampo, “International development in a historical context”, in *Handbook on the Politics of International Development*, 15-30.

Uma Kothari & Martin Minogue, *Development theory and practice, critical perspectives*, Palgrave, Basingstoke

Week 3: Regional and International Human Rights Bodies

Students will be introduced to relevant international and regional human rights bodies.

Day 1: Legal and Philosophical Foundations.

Day 2: Key UN Bodies and Treaty Mechanisms.

Day 3-4: The African Human Rights Regime.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are UN human rights mechanisms effective in promoting education, spreading awareness, and engaging states in dialogue to advance human rights, yet much less successful when it comes to holding governments accountable for violations of these rights?
2. Do regional human rights institutions make a difference in the protection and promotion of human rights?
3. What makes the African human rights system a norm leader in the global human rights project?

Readings:

Shany, Yuval, The Interplay Between the Global and the Regional (September 17, 2023). Forthcoming, Oxford Handbook on Comparative Human Rights Law (Neha Jain and Mila Versteeg eds., 2024)

Pieterse M. The relevance of the African regional human rights system in the urban age. *Leiden Journal of International Law*. 2023;36(3):657-674. doi:10.1017/S0922156523000122

Engstrom, Par, Effectiveness of International and Regional Human Rights Regimes (February 14, 2010). THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ENCYCLOPEDIA, Robert A. Denemark, ed., Blackwell Publishing, 2010

Guide to the African human rights system - Celebrating 40 years since the adoption of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights 1981 – 2021, Pretoria University Law Press, 2021

Week 4: Development and Social Change in Tanzania

Students will explore the current state of development and human rights in Tanzania.

Day 1: Social and Cultural History of Tanzania.

Day 2: Tanzania as a hub for international development and human rights.

Day 3-4: Who is “doing development” right now? Site visits and feedback from local actors.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the importance of preserving cultural identity as a nation in a country such as Tanzania?
2. How has “Ujamaa” in Tanzania harmonised development and culture?

Readings:

M.H.Y. Kaniki (ed.), “Tanzania under Colonial Rule,” Longman Group Ltd., London 1980

Kumiko Sakamoto, Social Development, Culture, and Participation: Toward theorizing endogenous development in Tanzania, PhD thesis submitted to the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University (GSAPS)

Week 5: “Help” from abroad: the limitations of international development and human rights in the African context

Day 1: Top down or bottom up? Assessing the competing perspectives on local vs. global development initiatives.

Day 2-3: Looking ahead: best practices in the East African Context.

Day 4: Conclusions and Student Presentations.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is there one development approach that is more effective than another in the African context?
2. What impact will the recent development funding decisions by the US, Britain and the EU have on development and human rights in Africa?

Readings:

Kaiser, Md Shahidulla. (2020). Are Bottom-Up Approaches in Development More Effective than Top-Down Approaches? *Journal of Asian Social Science Research*. 2. 91-109.

First USAID closes, then UK cuts aid: what a Western retreat from foreign aid could mean, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2025/03/first-usaid-closes-then-uk-cuts-aid-what-western-retreat-foreign-aid-could-mean>

The Closure of USAID: Is America Surrendering Its Foreign Aid Soft Power? <https://modern diplomacy.eu/2025/02/10/the-closure-of-usaid-is-america-surrendering-its-foreign-aid-soft-power/>

USAID's freeze has thrust the entire global aid system into uncertainty, <https://theconversation.com/usaid-freeze-has-thrust-the-entire-global-aid-system-into-uncertainty-249642>

COURSE READINGS

Each week students may be provided with additional required news articles (online or as handouts) or related current-event pieces to supplement the required readings, below.

- A Packet of Supplemental Readings will be made available to students during orientation.

Required Readings will come from some or all of the following books:

- *Human Rights in Theory and Practice* by Jack Donnelly (2013)
- *International Human Rights Law* by Mark Gibney (2016)
- *Human Rights and International Relations* by David P Forsyth (2012)

Additional readings may be assigned or recommended, TBA.