

Fall 2021

Human Rights and Justice - CRIM 308 DL 2

Asynchronous online course

About the Instructor

Andrew Novak is term assistant professor of criminology, law and society at George Mason University. My research is primarily on the death penalty, human rights, and comparative law. I have an M.Sc. in African Politics (London), a J.D. (Boston), and a Ph.D. in law (Middlesex). I am licensed to practice law in New York and Washington, DC.

Email: anovak2@gmu.edu

Student hours: Online on Thursdays from 12:30 pm to 1:15 pm, or by appointment

Grading Scale

I will not use the grades “D+” or “D-.”

98-100 A+ / 93-97 A

90-92 A- / 88-89 B+

83-87 B / 80-82 B-

78-79 C+ / 73-77 C

70-72 C- / 60-69 D / <60 F

In addition, in the event that I must calculate grade fractions, I will always round up to the next highest point if you have a 0.45 or higher.

Grading Rubric

Your grade in this class is based on a cumulative point total.

12 Weekly Quizzes (15 points each): 180 points

12 Writing/Editing/Research Assignments (3 points each): 36 points

24 Weekly Workshops (1 point each): 24 points

Total: 240 points (20 points available each week for 12 weeks)

Late Policy

You must take 12 weekly quizzes, 12 assignments, and 24 workshops this semester. These are not timed and do not need to be completed in one sitting. If you are unable to complete a quiz by the deadline, you must notify me within 48 hours. You are allowed to do late work with permission.

At the end of the semester, I will provide a final deadline by which all late work must be turned in, including the weekly workshops. Typically, this will be right when I am about to calculate and upload grades. I cannot change a grade once it has been turned in, so it is essential all late work be turned in by the drop-dead deadline.

Since this class has no final paper or project other than the weekly assignments, it is not possible for me to give incompletes for late work.

Readings

The readings for this class consist of 6 book chapters, which are each divided over two weeks. They are:

Stephen Hopgood, "Human Rights on the Road to Nowhere," in *Human Rights Futures* (Hopgood, Snyder, Vinjamuri eds., Cambridge University Press, 2018), pages 283-310. (Weeks 1 and 2).

Kathryn Sikkink, "The Diverse Political Origins of Human Rights," in *Evidence for Hope: Making Human Rights Work in the 21st Century* (Princeton University Press, 2017), pages 55-93. (Weeks 3 and 4).

Eric Posner, "Why Do States Comply (Or Not Comply) with Human Rights Treaties?" in *The Twilight of Human Rights Law* (Oxford University Press, 2014), pages 79-122. (Weeks 5 and 6).

Kathryn Sikkink, "Introduction" in *The Justice Cascade: How Human Rights Prosecutions Are Changing World Politics* (WW Norton, 2011), pages 1-28. (Weeks 7 and 8).

Stephen Hopgood, "Human Rights Empire," in *The Endtimes of Human Rights* (Cornell University Press, 2013), pages 119-141. (Weeks 9 and 10).

Kathryn Sikkink, "Laying Out the Theoretical Groundwork," in *The Hidden Face of Rights: Toward a Politics of Responsibilities* (Yale University Press, 2020), pages 26-52. (Weeks 11 and 12).

Course Schedule

Lectures, readings, online assignments, quizzes, and workshops each week are available on Blackboard.

Monday, August 30: United Nations I (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, September 6: United Nations II (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, September 13: European Human Rights System (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, September 20: African and Inter-American Systems (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, September 27: Equality and Civil and Political Rights (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, October 4: Freedom of Expression (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, October 11: Staycation 🤗 (No work due)

Monday, October 18: Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, October 25: Human Rights Forensics (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, November 1: Business and Human Rights (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, November 8: Humanitarian Law/Laws of War (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, November 15: Sports and Human Rights (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Monday, November 22: Sustainability/Climate Change and Human Rights (Assignments due at 11:59 pm)

Honor Code

Sharing of instructor-created materials, particularly materials relevant to assignments or exams, to public online “study” sites is considered a violation of Mason’s Honor Code. For more information, see the Office of Academic Integrity’s summary of information about online study sites.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

For the full Honor Code, see academicintegrity.gmu.edu.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should (1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office for Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and (2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs. I want to be helpful.

Diversity and Inclusion

As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

This course seeks to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own.