

Eastern Illinois University
Revised Course Proposal
EIU 4109G, The Politics of Human Rights

1. Catalog Description

- a. EIU 4109G
- b. The Politics of Human Rights
- c. 3-0-3
- d. On demand
- e. Pol Human Rights
- f. A discussion and analysis of selected human rights problems, with emphasis on the ways in which government action affects the protection and promotion of these rights. Majors in Political Science are excluded.
- g. Completion of at least 75 semester hours
- h. Writing intensive

2. Student Learning Objectives

Students will

- a. Demonstrate knowledge of how governments have attempted to handle human rights abuses, through both laws and international treaties (critical thinking, literacy, citizenship)
- b. Demonstrate knowledge of how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have attempted to combat human rights violations (critical thinking, literacy, citizenship)
- c. Demonstrate knowledge of major human rights abuses in the U.S. and in the world (critical thinking, literacy, citizenship)
- d. Read and discuss a variety of texts, journal articles, primary documents, and other materials concerning human rights (literacy, critical thinking)
- e. Write and present writing assignments and a research paper analyzing the politics of human rights (literacy, critical thinking)
- f. Understand their role, as both American and as global citizens, in fighting against human rights violations (citizenship, critical thinking)
- g. Understand how human rights problems influence their lives (citizenship, critical thinking)

3. Course Outline (Course will meet for 150 minutes per week, for 15 weeks)

- a. Week 1: Introduction
 - i. What are human rights?
 - ii. How do governments and politics influence human rights?
- b. Week 2: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Human Rights
 - i. Classical Greek and Roman views
 - ii. Social Contract Theory
 - iii. Liberalism
 - iv. Understanding the rights of individuals against government
 - v. European vs. American perspectives on human rights
- c. Week 3: International Law and Human Rights
 - i. United Nations
 - ii. International Bill of Rights
- d. Week 4: Obtaining Justice in the World System
 - i. European Court of Human Rights

- ii. U.N. committees and enforcement
 - iii. How should the U.S. get involved?
- e. Week 5: Genocide
 - i. Holocaust (film: "Schindler's List")
 - ii. Cambodia (film: "The Killing Fields")
 - iii. Bosnia
- f. Week 6: Human Rights and War
 - i. Bringing war criminals to court
 - ii. Refugees
 - iii. Land mines
 - iv. International criminal courts
- g. Week 7: Death Penalty
 - i. U.S. policy (film: "Dead Man Walking")
 - ii. Comparing the U.S. to other countries
- h. Week 8: Women's Rights
 - i. Pay equity
 - ii. Education
 - iii. Female genital mutilation
 - iv. Reproductive rights
 - v. Denial of civil rights
- i. Week 9: Children's Rights
 - i. Child labor
 - ii. Child slavery
- j. Week 10: Political Freedom
 - i. Freedom of press, speech, religion
 - ii. Academic freedom
 - iii. Voting rights
 - iv. Linguistic freedom
- k. Week 11: Human Rights in China
 - i. U.S. and free trade
 - ii. Tibet
 - iii. Religious persecution
 - iv. Violations of basic freedoms
- l. Week 12: Assessment activities
- m. Week 13: Human Rights Activists
 - i. Amnesty International
 - ii. Human Rights Watch
 - iii. OSCE
 - iv. Council of Europe
- n. Weeks 14 & 15
 - i. Course conclusions and presentations

4. Evaluation of Student Learning

- a. Writing skills will be evaluated through several writing assignments. Students will write essays or response papers based on course materials and class discussion. They will also write and present a research paper analyzing human rights violations in a particular country or region. A well-developed draft of the research paper must be submitted by students no later than the conclusion of Week 9 of the course. Following this, students will revise the research paper in response to instructor comments, with the final version of the paper due at the end of Week 13 of the semester. The writing assignments will require students to use primary and Internet

sources. Speaking skills will be evaluated through class discussions and paper presentations.

- b. Course grades will be based on the following
 - i. Research paper, with revisions 40%
 - ii. Written assignments 40%
 - iii. Class participation and presentations 20%

5. Rationale

- a. Senior Seminar
- b. Prerequisite: 75 semester hours completed
- c. This course is a revision of the current 2-hour senior seminar, EIU 4005G.
- d. This course will not be required in any majors or programs, other than general education.

6. Implementation

- a. Initial instructors: Dr. Carwell and Dr. Hendrickson
- b. Textbook and supplementary materials:
 - i. Brown, Seyom. 2000. Human Rights in World Politics. New York: Longman.
 - ii. Ishay, Micheline. 1997. The Human Rights Reader: Major Political Essays, Speeches, and Documents From the Bible to the Present. New York: Routledge
 - iii. Williams, Mary, ed. 1998. Human Rights: Opposing Viewpoints. San Diego, CA: Greenhaven.
- c. Additional costs: none
- d. Term first offered: Spring 2002

7. Community College Transfer: Not Applicable.

8. Date approved by the Department of Political Science: March 21, 2001

9. Date approved by the College of Sciences Curriculum Committee: April 6, 2001

10. Date approved by the Senior Seminar Advisory Committee: April 17, 2001

11. Date approved by CAA: June 21, 2001

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