Today 215 million people are estimated to be living outside their country of birth (3% of the world’s total population). In conjunction with this massive human migration, there is an increase in the number of people who as a result of their migratory status become vulnerable to various forms of violence, discrimination, and abuse. Human rights violations are often perceived as threats to peace, and aspirations of people to be treated with dignity are commonly framed in the capacious language of human rights. Moreover, just a couple of decades ago how a state treated people within its territory was its own business, however this is no longer the case, and as a result human rights concerns are a key feature and practically the ethical touchtone of contemporary international relations. Human rights protection has become a measure of good governance, as it embodies a set of ideals but also functioning as a political tool, subject to diverse interpretations. No single government stands out as the champion of human rights and the sheer scale of the human rights problem makes the challenge to build effective human rights protections especially daunting.

This course aims at providing students with an improved understanding of the human rights regime, both by analyzing its normative underpinnings, moral and political, as well as the regime’s institutional mechanisms in place. This course looks at how human rights’ norms change, and analyzes some of the challenges of contemporary human rights advocacy.

The first section of the course will introduce students to the basic concepts of human rights, their philosophical and theoretical foundations and historical evolution. Institutionalized mechanisms for human rights protection are also explored, including national institutions (the Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman’s Office), regional mechanisms (Inter-American Human Rights System), and the international system (that of the United Nations). The second part of the course while touching on some of the main populations in situations of vulnerability, it has as its main case study the migrant population. The specific human rights of this group will be reviewed as well as current efforts to provide them with special protection. Taking the plight and struggles of the immigrants population as a starting point, we will focus on how the various forms of migration and its effects, are challenging the conventional framework and understanding of human rights.
**Academic Standards and Expectations:**

**What I expect from you:**
1. Academic Honesty. 2. Follow the exam and paper guidelines. 3. Complete all assignments on time. 4. Attend class. 5. Keep up with the readings. 6. Attend office hours. 7. Do not come to class late. 8. Do not start packing your bags and backpacks until class has ended. 9. Turn your cell phone to “silent” before class begins, NOT on vibrating and don’t text-message during class.

**What to expect from me:**
1. While no one can claim to be completely impartial, I will do my best to be fair and to faithfully present different sides of policy debates. 2. My lectures will be well prepared and organized. 3. I will see that your papers and exam are graded promptly and accurately. 4. I will remain accessible and hold office hours just before class and by appointment. 5. During the second week of class I will ask for anonymous evaluations to make adjustments that improve the course.

**Plagiarism:** Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. Any work submitted by a student for academic credit must be the student's own work. Students will strictly abide by Sage College standards of academic conduct. If you are involved in academic misconduct the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs. **In this one regard there are no second chances.** If you are unsure if something violates standards please don’t hesitate to ask. Your papers must use footnotes or endnotes to document all direct quotations, paraphrases, statements of fact, and the work of other authors. If you do not know what footnotes or endnotes are or what types of material you should include in them, please ask me. The simplest format to use is MLA [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/), however any format is acceptable.

**Attendance Policy:**
Frequent unexplained absences count against you and will affect your grade. Your absence must be documented and a result of a legitimate reason, such as illness or bereavement. Please let me know if you have a problem. Late memoranda will automatically result in a lesser grade if not a result of a legitimate reason.

**Assignments and Grade Breakup**
1. There will be two exams, each worth 25% of your grade. The other 60% consists of regular attendance, regular reading, participation and two memoranda, for a break down as follows:

   - Attendance: 10%
   - Participation: 20% - See below for presentations required (5% of this grade)
   - Midterm Exam: 35% - March 8th
   - Final Exam: 35% - May 10th

2. The final exam will be based on your own exploration of a challenging theoretical
problem or political issue related to human rights and citizenship in a globalizing world increasingly shaped by international migration. Your analysis should build on the theories and concepts studied in class. As the class develops we will talk more about the format of the questions for the final.

3- I value participation since it is an important way to learn and reinforce your knowledge and understanding of concepts and events. Therefore, each week, two students will start the class with a 7-10 minute presentation on the readings. This presentation should not be a summary of the readings but instead offer focuses comments on the authors’ arguments and raise analytical questions that can promote class discussion.

Your success in this class depends to a great extent in your ability to contribute to class discussions so please keep up with the required readings be ready to discuss the questions outlined at the end of each of Goodhart’s chapters but especially the one identified for each class.

*I strongly encourage you to raise questions or make appropriate comments during lectures.* If there is something you did not understand, feel free to bring it up. Chances are that if you are confused on an issue, you are not alone and many of your classmates are also confused. I will not grade you on your opinion or perspective since I believe that we are all entitled to our own, but make sure that you are backing it up with the proper sources. Please keep in mind that attendance is not participation.

**Required Course Books**

1. Goodhart

**Suggested (available March 25th, 2013)**


To access additional materials and announcements for this class go to the class blackboard page —Spring2013-RPOS399-Slected Topics (9595) — by logging in at [http://blackboard.albany.edu](http://blackboard.albany.edu)

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Thursday January 24th** Introduction – Why Human Rights?
Human Rights as an object of enquiry

**Tuesday January 29th** Normative and Theoretical Frameworks
Chapter 1 –Goodhart
Read Foreword and listen to video at: http://thereport.amnesty.org
Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights available on line at http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html

QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU READ/FOR DISCUSSION IN CLASS: Why is the history of the human rights idea important today? And why are the cultural relativists and imperialists wrong to dismiss human rights?

Thursday January 31st  Human Rights in International Relations

Chapter 4 – Goodhart

QUESTIONS: What are the contributions of IR to the understanding of human rights practices?

Tuesday February 5th  Human Rights in Comparative Politics

Chapter 5 - Goodhart

QUESTIONS: What are the contributions of CP to the understanding of human rights practices? Assess the interaction between domestic and international politics in the shaping of human rights outcomes (Question 7, Chptr 5); What are the strengths and the weaknesses of national human rights institutions (Question 4 in Chptr 5)

Thursday February 7th and Tuesday February 12th  Rights in International Law and International Institutions

Chapter 2 – Goodhart
Chapter 2 an 3 - Cabrera


QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU READ: What are the benefits of listing human rights in treaties? What is the role of the Human Rights Council? Should human rights be inspirational standards of achievement for states to strive for, or should they be clearly articulated and enforceable against each and every state under national and/or international law?
Thursday February 14th  The (Mis) Use of the Human Rights Claims – The Paradox of the Human Rights Discourse
Chapter 7

NOTE: If you can go see the Laramie Project tomorrow February 15th – Albany Civic Theatre, 235 Second Avenue, Albany at 7:30 pm – $25 fee

Tuesday February 19th  Political Democracy and State Repression (The US)
Chapter 8

Thursday February 21st  Humanitarian Intervention
Chapter 19

Tuesday February 26th  Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation
Chapter 12 - Goodhart

Thursday February 28th  Debate and Extra Credit Presentations*
The Question for Debate is: When if at all is humanitarian intervention necessary?
Materials – course readings
Extra Credit Presentations – Bring to class a relevant news clipping on some aspect of human rights and/or the United Nations. The clipping must be from a current daily newspaper of record: e.g. NY Times, La Times, Christian Science Monitor, Wall Street Journal, etc. It may NOT be a printout downloaded from an Internet new source, or copied from a magazine, a book, or other materials. The student will synthesize the newspaper article and contextualize it in terms of the semester’s studies in international human rights law.

START OF CASE STUDY – MIGRATION

Tuesday March 5th  The decline of the nation state and human rights
Available online at http://www.newschool.edu/tcds/wr09reader_cosmo/12_Arendt_Decline%20of%20the%20Nation-State.pdf
(not the best copy sorry)
*Read the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen – available online at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp
http://policydialogue.org/files/events/Levitt_Glick_Schiller_Conceptualizing_Simultaneity.pdf
*Jeff Vail (2009) Greece, Arizona, and the Decline of the Nation-State
https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B3n0s9Uy_80GN2Y1NjA5NWUtZDQ3ZS00MmMwLTliZmYtMDgyZmQzNGJhMTEx/edit?hl=en&pli=1

**Tuesday March 7th** - Towards a Postnational Order?


**Thursday March 12th** Midterm (will NOT include Migration issues)

**Thursday March 14th** and **Tuesday March 26th** Refugees
Goodhart Chapter 14
Start *Safe Haven* Book

**Ninth Week**
Classes suspended March 15th to March 23rd --- Have a safe and fun vacation

**Tuesday March 26th**
*Chapter 1 and Review’s 2 and 3 of Cabrera
http://portal.unesco.org/pv_obj_cache/pv_obj_id_83DA29433865BC49884C99381DE9961D66910100/filename/Borderlands_Article.pdf

**Thursday March 28th to April 4th**
Human Rights and Civil Society (for and against migration)
*Chapter 9 Goodhart
*Chapter 4 Cabrera
*My book (optional)


**April 9**<sup>th</sup> Sovereignty and Human Rights: Non –citizens and States of Exception

**April 11**<sup>th</sup> Ordinary States of Exception: Detention and Deportation


* William Walters, “Deportation, Expulsion and the International Police of Aliens,” *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 6, no. 3 (September 2002), 265-292


Available online on http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/03/03/080303fa_fact_talbot

**April 16**<sup>th</sup> Mobile Global Citizens/ Global Citizens

*Chapter 5 Cabrera
Citizenship as inherent Property

**April 18**<sup>th</sup> Global citizen Duties with less-affluent states

*Chapter 6 Cabrera
* Citizens as Inherit Property

**April 23**<sup>rd</sup> Beyond National Citizenship


Chapter 7 Cabrera

**April 25**<sup>th</sup> Advocacy Duties and Global Democracy

Chapter 8

**April 25**<sup>th</sup> Debate

Question for debate: “Is there such a thing as universal human rights?” in our multicultural world? (Materials: United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, three core human rights treaties and reading list of the entire semester)
April 30th Presentations by Field Credit Students and Extra Credit Presentations

May 2nd The Future of Human Rights
Conclusion in Goodhart
*Chapter 9 in Cabrera
*James Ingram “What is a Right to Have Rights’? Three Images of the Politics of Human Rights,” American Political Science Review 102, no. 4 (November 2008): 401-416

May 7th – Last day of Class – Review

May 9th - Reading Day

May 14th or May 16th – Final Exam

* A VISIT FROM IMMIGRATION SCHOLAR AGUSTIN ESCOBAR LATAPI MAY BE TAKING PLACE SOMETIME THIS WEEK... ONCE I KNOW HIS PLANS I MAY NEED TO MOVE THINGS AROUND. YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BE PRESENT DURING HIS LECTURE – HE WILL BE TRAVELING FROM MEXICO JUST TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT HIS RESEARCH SO YOUR PRESENCE IS VERY IMPORTANT.