



University of Nicosia, Cyprus

Course Code IREL-625	Course Title Human Rights and Ethical Debates in International Relations	ECTS Credits 7.5
Department European Studies and International Relations	Semester Fall / Spring	Prerequisites None
Type of Course International Relations Major Elective	Field International Relations	Language of Instruction English
Level of Course 2 nd Cycle	Year of Study 2 nd	Lecturer(s) Dr Tim Potier
Mode of Delivery face-to-face	Work Placement N/A	Co-requisites None

Objectives of the Course:

Normative and moral questions have moved to the centre ground of contemporary international relations study. This course reflects this increasing emphasis. Beginning with the United Nations Charter and the Genocide Convention, the emergence of a human rights regime is charted. Historically this is put in the context of movement from the dominant Realist position which asserted the essential amorality of international politics; this change in the circumstances of the emergence of complex interdependence. Four further areas of ethical debate are discussed, the idea of the Just War, the theory of the Democratic Peace, arguments about the tension between sovereignty, human rights and intervention, and the theory of “settled norms”.

Learning Outcomes:

After completion of the course students are expected to be able to:

1. Illustrate a full understanding of the complexity of the field of study and its relation to other subjects, in this case the link between the academic study of human rights and the established social sciences.
2. Demonstrate considerable knowledge of key research debates within the field of study, such as the debates regarding the measurement of human rights and empirical findings of research on human rights.
3. Analyze and evaluate complex issues both orally and in writing as well as lead a discussion regarding issues of an international nature, as they pertain to human rights.
4. Critically analyze research within the field of human rights.
5. Communicate in the English language both orally and in written form at (near) native level.
6. Use IT skills (word processing, Internet and e-mail) as study and communication tools.
7. Illustrate the ability to partake in research of international phenomena related to human rights with a minimal amount of assistance.
8. Use of libraries, bibliographical material and academic research in an efficient manner.

Course Content:

During the course, the student will cover the following:

1. Human Rights dilemmas
2. Determining Genocide
3. International Criminal Court: a court only for losers?
4. Torture as an interrogation technique
5. "War on Terror" and detention without trial
6. Trafficking of persons: the new slave trade?
7. The right to life v. the death penalty
8. Cultural relativism and women's rights
9. Minorities and majorities
10. Economic development and the rights of indigenous peoples
11. Freedom of expression v. incitement to racial / religious hatred
12. War: children as victims

Learning Activities and Teaching Methods:

Interactive lectures

Assessment Methods:

One written assignment and final exam.

Required Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year
Henry J. Steiner, Philip Alston and Ryan Goodman	International Human Rights In Context: Law, Politics and Morals	Oxford University Press	2008

Recommended Textbooks/Reading:

Authors	Title	Publisher	Year
Jack Donnelly	Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice	Cornell University Press	2002
Richard Pierre Claude and Burns H. Weston	Human Rights in the World Community	University of Pennsylvania Press	2006
Richard Ashby Wilson	Human Rights in the 'War on Terror'	Cambridge University Press	2005