

Human Rights

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The Human Rights Program provides College students with the opportunity to express their interest in human rights issues in courses that link academic knowledge and practice-oriented work. The connection between rigorous academic study and a commitment to human rights work, either as intern or extern, is at the core of the program. To a large extent, this combination of academic and practice-oriented work reflects the reality of student life and experience. Moreover, the combination of rigorous study and commitment to practical work also serves as a national and international model. Most human rights programs have a distinctly (pre-) professional orientation and are typically associated with law schools. The innovative integration of theory and practice is a unique feature of the University of Chicago's Human Rights Program, which has been widely recognized by peer institutions throughout the country. The Human Rights Program in the College is rooted in the general education mission of the University of Chicago.

Students wishing to pursue a systematic introduction to the study of human rights are encouraged to take the core sequence in Human Rights (Human Rights I: Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights; Human Rights II: Historical Underpinnings of Human Rights; and Human Rights III: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights). This sequence serves as a general introduction to the field. Students may then take additional human rights related courses cross listed with other disciplines. These courses provide an in-depth study of various human rights issues from a number of different theoretical perspectives.

Participation in an internship in human rights or, alternatively, in volunteer work on human rights related issues is also recommended. The program itself awards fellowships each year to support such endeavors. The program coordinator, in consultation with the director of the human rights program, is responsible for assisting students interested in finding internship and voluntary work. Applications are due in Autumn Quarter.

Students interested in human rights are also encouraged to attend the human rights workshop series where both academic and practice-oriented aspects of human rights work will be discussed. Directed by the post-doctoral fellow for human rights, workshops are offered every quarter and present the work of University graduate students and practitioners. College students may wish to participate in the Ignacio Martin-Baro Human Rights Essay Prize Contest conducted every Spring Quarter. Finally, students are invited to attend the annual human rights spring conference to learn more about theoretical and practice-oriented topics in human rights.

Faculty

C. Breckenridge, D. Brudney, A. Chase, M. Carneiro da Cunha, A. Gewirth, M. E. Geyer, M. Green, S. Gzesh, R. Khalidi, R. H. Kirschner, M. Ngai, W. Novak, M. Nussbaum, E. Povinelli, A. Stanley, T. Steck, G. Stone, C. Vogler, I. Young

Courses

The Human Rights Program prepares both annual and quarterly lists of qualifying courses that are available in P 122 and on the following Web site: humanrights.uchicago.edu.

Human Rights Core Sequence

20100/30100. Human Rights I: Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights. (=GSHU 28700/38700, HIST 29301/39301, INRE 31600, LAWS 41200, LLSO 25100, MAPH 40000, PHIL 21600/31600) This course deals with the philosophical foundations of human rights. The foundations bear on basic conceptual and normative issues. We examine the various meanings and components of human rights and the subjects, objects, and respondents of human rights. We ask questions such as: Who has the rights? What they are rights to? Who has the correlative duties? Can we legitimately hold the members of other societies to the standards of our culture? What methods of argument and implementation are available in this area? The practical implications of these theoretical issues are also explored. *M. Green. Autumn.*

20200/30200. Human Rights II: Historical Underpinnings of Human Rights. (=GSHU 28800/38800, HIST 29302/39302, INRE 39400, LAWS 41300, LLSO 27100) This course is concerned with the theory and the historical evolution of the modern human rights regime. It discusses the emergence of a modern "human rights" culture as a product of the formation and expansion of the system of nation states and the concurrent rise of value-driven social mobilizations. It juxtaposes these western origins with competing non-Western systems of thought and practices on rights. It approaches in this tense context the "universality" of modern human rights norms. The course proceeds to discuss human rights in two prevailing modalities. First, it explores rights as protection of the body and personhood and the modern, Western notion of individualism entailed therein. Second, it inquires into rights as they affect groups (i.e., ethnicities and, potentially, transnational corporations) or states and limit their actions through international agreement (e.g., the genocide convention). *M. Geyer, W. Novak. Winter.*

20300/30300. Human Rights III: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights. (=GSHU 28900/38900, HIST 29303/39303, INRE 57900, LAWS 57900, LLSO 27200, PATH 46500) This course examines the main features of the contemporary human rights system. It covers the major international treaties, and the mechanism, international, regional and national, established to implement them. We also discuss the uses and limitations of the international treaty system, and the relationship between international obligations and domestic implementation. Problems of rights implementation are related to issues of evidence, professional ethics and political feasibility. Legal and medical concepts are applied to topics such as torture, political repression, war crimes and genocide, refugees, women's rights, children's rights, violations of human rights within the United States, and medical ethics. *R. Kirschner, R. Quinn. Spring.*