This graduate class will focus on the idea of human rights as it has been understood and propagated by and in the “non-Western” world. “Human rights” are at once posited as a universal category, and critiqued as a specifically Western discourse. But what are “human rights?” Where and when did the concept originate? In this seminar, we will explore the answers to these questions while further asking: what is the relationship of universalism to violence? Can there be a just, non-violent universalism? How are human rights defined in relation to, and in juxtaposition to, racism and imperialism? What role do they play in foreign policy and diplomatic history, if any? This seminar, in short, examines what kind of world is imagined, is brought into being, by human rights.

This is a discussion-oriented seminar in which the primary objective is for students to analyze critically and evaluate information in order to provide new and insightful interpretations and commentary of their own. Please note that attendance and participation are mandatory.

Each week, students will be required to submit a one-page critical response paper to the reading due. Please note that late papers will not be accepted without medical excuse. The papers should be one page in length, no more no less.

Students will also have to write a research paper of 25-30 pages in length on a topic of their choice, though the project must be approved by the instructor; a 30-minute presentation of this work (which will include questions and discussion from the class) will also be required. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point Times or Times New Roman font.

My office is on the fifth floor of the Graduate Center. Please feel free to come talk to me during my office hours or by appointment; alternatively, you can contact me by email. I shall be happy to discuss with you any questions, comments, or criticisms you might have.

**Course Learning Outcomes:** By the end of the course, students should have an intermediate understanding of how “human rights” have developed and have been practiced throughout the world. Students should understand the arguments for both Western and non-Western origins of human rights, and should be able to locate the idea of human rights in a wider understanding of rights discourse. Students should know the difference between positive and negative rights, both conceptually and in application.
Students should develop an elementary understanding of the role of law and ethics in the
development and application of human rights. Students should be able to analyze primary
and secondary sources, synthesize as necessary, and discuss historical significance.
Students should demonstrate the ability to construct solid arguments, both through debate
and through written work. Students should demonstrate reading comprehension and strong
writing skills as well.

Grading Policy: There is no grading curve in this class. The assignments will be
evaluated using a plus/minus letter grade system, where a B- is an 82, a B is an 85, and a
B+ is an 88. The distribution is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly papers</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of Research</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
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Rubric for grades on written assignments:
F: Papers that are poorly written, contain grammatical errors, and have little to no research.
D: Papers that are poorly organized, have an unclear thesis, are poorly written, contain grammatical errors, and/or have moderate to no research.
C: Papers must have fair organization, must be fairly well written, and must contain substantive research. Thesis must be clear. There should no more than a few to moderate number of grammatical errors.
B: A well-done paper. Should be well written, well organized, convincing, well researched, and should contain few to no grammatical errors. Papers that receive a B perhaps could use additional evidence or might need to think through certain arguments a bit more or might need to think about aspects of their topic from other angles.
A: An excellent to outstanding paper. Given to a paper that meets all requirements and expectations for the assignment. Presents a convincing argument, uses a wide array of sources (as appropriate), is well written, and contains no major grammatical errors.

Academic Honesty:
The following is an honor statement that you will be required to write and sign on every
assignment you hand in for this class (including papers and exams):

On my honor, I do attest that all material contained herein is my own work, and no part has knowingly been duplicated from another source without proper citation.

Signature

Academic dishonesty will automatically result in an “F” in this course. Failure to properly cite referenced material is considered plagiarism. Please consult the Chicago Manual of Style for guidance on correct citation methods; the recommended Rampolla text is also useful.
Texts:

Akira Iriye THE HUMAN RIGHTS REVOLUTION
Daniel Whelan INDIVISIBLE HUMAN RIGHTS
Lynn Hunt INVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS
Bonny Ibhawo IMPERIALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS
Normand and Zaidi HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE UN
Carol Anderson EYES OFF THE PRIZE
Jeffrey Wasserstrom HUMAN RIGHTS AND REVOLUTIONS
Samuel Moyn THE LAST UTOPIA
Kate Turabian A MANUAL FOR WRITERS, 8th EDITION
Roland Burke DECOLONIZATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Class schedule:
NB: Readings are due on the date listed
FEB 3 Meet the class; syllabus; what are human rights? What is the non-west?

FEB 10 Understanding the conceptualization of human rights as “Western”
   Read Lynn Hunt/Sam Moyn review

FEB 17 The interaction of “Western” and “non-Western” rights discourses
   Read Ibhawoh

FEB 24 Human rights and justice for the “non-West”
   Read Anderson

Mar 2 The creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
   Read Normand and Zaidi

MAR 9 Human Rights and Decolonization
   Read Burke

MAR 16 Human Rights, cosmopolitanism, universalism and “Asian values”
   Moyn, The UDHR and cosmopolitanism
   Sen Human Rights and Asian Values
   Romila Thapar, The Hindu and Buddhist Traditions
   Liu, Human Rights and universalism

MAR 23 Classes follow a Friday schedule, no meeting

MAR 30 Human Rights and indivisibility
   Read Whelan
Apr 6 Of rights and revolutions  
   Read Wasserstrom

APR 13 An International history  
   Read Iriye

APR 20 Towards an alternate history of human rights  
   Read Moyn (book)

APR 27 SPRING BREAK

MAY 4 Presentations from today on

MAY 11

MAY 18