

Human Rights

Department Website: <http://humanrights.uchicago.edu>
 The Pozen Family Center for Human Rights

The Pozen Family Center for Human Rights, founded in 1997 as the Human Rights Program, supports innovative, interdisciplinary teaching and research projects that explore the theory and practice of human rights. The Pozen Center advances the global study of human rights through:

- A rigorous liberal arts curriculum that combines humanities and social sciences perspectives and analysis with practice-oriented teaching;
- Research initiatives that bring together faculty and students from across the University to address the challenges of human rights in a global world of diverse histories, politics, religions, and cultures;
- Programs to enhance the University community's engagement with local, national, and international human rights issues, practices, and organizations.

The Human Rights Internship Program (<http://humanrights.uchicago.edu/internships>) provides funded summer fellowships to College, graduate, and professional students to gain hands-on experience at host organizations around the world and in the United States. The Pozen Center also advances human rights research through grants to faculty and doctoral students that support innovative scholarship, as well as conferences and symposia. Multi-year faculty initiatives develop projects such as health and human rights, philosophical approaches to labor rights, and changing norms of refugee protection. The Pozen Center fosters a human rights culture at the University of Chicago and in the broader community with public events (<http://humanrights.uchicago.edu/page/events>) throughout the year. Conferences, lectures, workshops, performances, practices, and exhibitions bring scholars and practitioners from around the world to explore human rights in theory and practice.

Human Rights Curriculum

The Human Rights Curriculum (<https://humanrights.uchicago.edu/page/curriculum>) includes a College Human Rights civilization studies sequence, a College minor (<https://humanrights.uchicago.edu/collegeminor>), an introduction to contemporary concepts and issues in human rights, a Spring Human Rights Study Abroad Program in Vienna (<https://study-abroad.uchicago.edu/programs/vienna-human-rights>), and a variety of elective courses with distinct disciplinary, thematic, and/or regional perspectives.

HMRT 10100 Human Rights in World Civilizations I and HMRT 10200 Human Rights in World Civilizations II: This two-quarter sequence explores how human rights have been constructed across transnational, imperial, national, and local spaces in a variety of civilizational vernaculars while exposing students to their contested genealogies, limits, and silences. The sequence is primary source driven and discussion based, with readings drawn from a range of texts from the political and the legal to the literary, aural, and visual. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. These courses must be taken in sequence.

Undergraduate Minor in Human Rights

College students in any field of study may complete a minor in Human Rights. The minor is an interdisciplinary plan of study that provides students the opportunity to become familiar with the theoretical, historical, and comparative perspectives on human rights. The flexibility of this course of study complements majors in any of the disciplines. A minor in Human Rights will provide a background for graduate study in many disciplines or for careers that incorporate human rights analysis or advocacy, including medicine, law, film-making, social work, public policy, teaching, journalism, or government service.

The Human Rights minor requires a total of five courses, including:

1. One introductory course. Choose from one of the following:

HMRT 21001	Human Rights: Contemporary Issues	100
HMRT 21002	Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations	100
HMRT 20101	Human Rights in Vienna: Philosophical Fnds. of Human Rights	100
HMRT 20201	Human Rights in Vienna: History and Human Rights	100
HMRT 20301	Human Rights in Vienna: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights	100

2. Four approved Human Rights (HMRT) courses or cross-listed courses.

It is recommended but not required that students who minor in Human Rights take HMRT 10100-10200 Human Rights in World Civilizations I-II to fulfill their general education requirement in civilization studies.

Summary of Requirements for the Minor in Human Rights

One of the following:		100
HMRT 21001	Human Rights: Contemporary Issues	
HMRT 21002	Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations	

HMRT 20101	Human Rights in Vienna: Philosophical Fnds. of Human Rights	
HMRT 20201	Human Rights in Vienna: History and Human Rights	
HMRT 20301	Human Rights in Vienna: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights	
Four approved HMRT courses or cross-listed courses		400
Total Units		500

To apply for the minor, students must receive the Pozen Center Executive Director's approval on a form obtained from their College adviser. This form must then be returned to the College adviser by the end of Spring Quarter of their third year.

Courses in the minor program may not be (1) double counted with the student's major(s) or with other minors or (2) counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

Due to recent changes in the Human Rights minor, students in the Classes of 2017 and 2018 who have enrolled in the minor as of July 1, 2016, can seek approval of other combinations of Human Rights courses from the Pozen Center Executive Director.

Human Rights Courses

HMRT 10100-10200. Human Rights in World Civilizations I-II.

This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. These courses must be taken in sequence.

HMRT 10100. Human Rights in World Civilizations I. 100 Units.

The first quarter begins with a set of conceptual problems and optics designed to introduce students to the critical study of human rights, opening up questions of the universal, human dignity, and the political along with the practices of witness and testimony. It is followed by two thematic clusters. "Anti-Slavery, Humanitarianism, and Rights" focuses on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to historicize notions of dignity, sympathy, and witness. "Declarations as a Human Rights Genre" examines revolutionary eighteenth-century rights declarations in France, the United States, and Haiti against the aspirations of the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Instructor(s): M. Bradley and S. Thakkar Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. These courses must be taken in sequence.

HMRT 10200. Human Rights in World Civilizations II. 100 Units.

Four thematic clusters structure the second quarter. "Migration, Minorities, and Refugees" examines minority rights, the evolution of legal norms around refugees, and human trafficking. "Late Twentieth Century Human Rights Talk" explores the contestations between rights claims in the political-civil and socio-economic spheres, calls for sexual rights, and cultural representations of human rights abuses. "Global Justice" considers forms of international criminal law, transitional justice, and distributive justice. "Indigenous Rights as Human Rights" takes up the relatively new domain of the rights of indigenous peoples and how they relate to contemporary human rights practice.

Instructor(s): B. Laurence and Staff Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): HMRT 10100

Note(s): This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. These courses must be taken in sequence; students must have taken HMRT 10100 to enroll in this course.

HMRT 20101-20201-20301. Human Rights in Vienna: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights; Human Rights in Vienna: History and Human Rights; Human Rights in Vienna: Philosophical Fnds. of Human Rights.

Human Rights in Vienna

HMRT 20101. Human Rights in Vienna: Philosophical Fnds. of Human Rights. 100 Units.

Human rights are claims of justice that hold merely in virtue of our shared humanity. In this course we will explore philosophical theories of this elementary and crucial form of justice. Among topics to be considered are the role that dignity and humanity play in grounding such rights, their relation to political and economic institutions, and the distinction between duties of justice and claims of charity or humanitarian aid. Finally we will consider the application of such theories to concrete, problematic, and pressing problems, such as global poverty, torture, and genocide. (V) (I)

Instructor(s): D. Brudney Terms Offered: Spring

HMRT 20201. Human Rights in Vienna: History and Human Rights. 100 Units.

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 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. Second, it inquires into rights as they affect groups (e.g., ethnicities and, potentially, transnational corporations) or states.

Instructor(s): T. Zahra Terms Offered: Spring

HMRT 20301. Human Rights in Vienna: Contemporary Issues in Human Rights. 100 Units.

This interdisciplinary course presents a practitioner's overview of human rights problems as a means to explore the utility of human rights norms and mechanisms, as well as the advocacy roles of civil society organizations, legal and medical professionals, traditional and new media, and social movements. The Vienna edition of the course will expose the students to issues in contemporary human rights relevant to Europe today. Topics will include the relationship between rights and citizenship in contemporary Europe, the balance between rights and security (including the prohibition against torture), and the recognition of children's rights as human rights.

Instructor(s): S. Gzesh Terms Offered: Spring

HMRT 20116. Global-Local Politics. 100 Units.

Globalizing and local forces are generating a new politics in the United States and around the world. This course explores this new politics by mapping its emerging elements: the rise of social issues, ethno-religious and regional attachments, environmentalism, gender and life-style identity issues, new social movements, transformed political parties and organized groups, and new efforts to mobilize individual citizens.

Instructor(s): T. Clark Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 30116,PBPL 27900,SOCI 30116,LLSO 20116,SOCI 20116

HMRT 20200. Human Rights: History and Theory. 100 Units.

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 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. Second, it inquires into rights as they affect groups (e.g., ethnicities and, potentially, transnational corporations) or states.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: TBD

Equivalent Course(s): CRES 29302,HIST 29302,HIST 39302,HMRT 30200,INRE 31700,LAWS 41301,LLSO 27100

HMRT 21001. Human Rights: Contemporary Issues. 100 Units.

This interdisciplinary course presents an overview of several major contemporary human rights problems as a means to explore the use of human rights norms and mechanisms. The course addresses the roles of states, inter-governmental bodies, national courts, civil society actors including NGOs, victims, and their families, and other non-state actors. Topics are likely to include universalism, enforceability of human rights norms, the prohibition against torture, U.S. exceptionalism, and the rights of women, racial minorities, and non-citizens.

Instructor(s): S. Gzesh Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 21001,LACS 31001,HIST 29304,HIST 39304,LAWS 43245,LLSO 21001,HMRT 31001

HMRT 21002. Human Rights: Philosophical Foundations. 100 Units.

Human rights are claims of justice that hold merely in virtue of our shared humanity. In this course we will explore philosophical theories of this elementary and crucial form of justice. Among topics to be considered are the role that dignity and humanity play in grounding such rights, their relation to political and economic institutions, and the distinction between duties of justice and claims of charity or humanitarian aid. Finally we will consider the application of such theories to concrete, problematic and pressing problems, such as global poverty, torture and genocide. (A) (I)

Instructor(s): B. Laurence Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): Undergrads enroll in sections 01 through 06. Graduates enroll in section 07.

Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21002,PHIL 31002,HIST 29319,HIST 39319,LLSO 21002,MAPH 42002,LAWS 97119,HMRT 31002,INRE 31602

HMRT 21400. Health and Human Rights. 100 Units.

This course attempts to define health and health care in the context of human rights theory and practice. Does a "right to health" include a "right to health care"? We delineate health care financing in the United States and compare these systems with those of other nations. We explore specific issues of health and medical practice as they interface in areas of global conflict: torture, landmines, and poverty. Readings and discussions explore social determinants of health: housing, educational institutions, employment, and the fraying of social safety nets. We study vulnerable populations: foster children, refugees, and the mentally ill. Lastly, does a right to health include a right to pharmaceuticals? What does the big business of drug research and marketing mean for our own country and the world?

Instructor(s): R. Sherer, E. Lyon Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): MEDC 60405,LLSO 21400,CHDV 21400

HMRT 23301. History of Humanitarian Intervention. 100 Units.

The post–Cold War world has been seen a proliferation of so-called humanitarian interventions as well as of doctrines and agreements that guide them. R2P, the Responsibility to Protect, is the most prominent example for the latter. What do we make of these interventions for humanitarian ends? Should we denounce their backers as covert imperialists or their detractors as callous fellow-travelers for genocidaires? Should we give up humanitarian reasoning? There is no self-evident answer. However, there is quite a bit of material to work with. First of all, why this sudden rush toward humanitarian intervention? How do these interventions relate to the older (Cold War) history of (UN) peacekeeping? Second, forced humanitarian interventions have a surprisingly long history that makes a difference, if we want to understand the present. This is a history of interstate protection for (religious) minorities, a history of muscular, imperial meddling in other people's and, especially, in the Ottoman Empire's affairs, a history not least of securitizing relief operations, and only eventually a history of protecting against humanitarian and human rights abuses. In all of these instances it is a history of legitimating violence as the lesser evil in the face of grievous abuses and man-made disasters, which would suggest that the future of global politics is not with peacekeeping, but with internationally sanctioned warmaking.

Instructor(s): M. Geyer Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 32117, HMRT 33001, LLSO 23402, HIST 22117

HMRT 23302. Humanitarianism: History and Theory. 100 Units.

Humanitarianism in its most general form is an ethics of benevolence and sympathy extending universally and impartially to all human beings. Humanitarians understand the world as an affective community and insist that the world can be transformed and, if not transformed, suffering and ill-treatment can be alleviated by fearless vanguards of compassion. Lately, the entire concept has come under attack as deceptive, fraudulent, and useless. If anything, so it is argued, humanitarianism has failed, if it has not actively worsened humanitarian crises. Humanitarians promise relief and deliver a mess; they consort with the worst abusers of human rights; they have never changed anything. Well, one of the questions we will ask is what we make of this critique in light of the historical record. What do humanitarians do? What is their effect and when and where are they effective? Is it true that abolitionists have achieved the abolition of slavery? What about the struggle for social justice? About famine relief? About refugee aid? However, rather than chasing one case after another, we will focus on the humanitarian rationale for action and how it differs from other such rationales, say, Pacifist, Marxist, or liberal rights-based approaches.

Instructor(s): M. Geyer Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 33512, HMRT 33002, LLSO 23114, HIST 23512

HMRT 24701. Human Rights: Alien and Citizen. 100 Units.

This course addresses how international human rights doctrines, conventions, and mechanisms can be used to understand the situation of the "alien" (or foreigner) who has left his or her country of origin to work, seek safe haven, or simply reside in another country. If human rights are universal, human rights are not lost merely by crossing a border. We use an interdisciplinary approach to study concepts of citizenship and statelessness, as well as the human rights of refugees and migratory workers.

Instructor(s): S. Gzesh Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 25303, LAWS 62401

HMRT 25210. Anthropology of Disability. 100 Units.

This seminar undertakes to explore "disability" from an anthropological perspective that recognizes it as a socially constructed concept with implications for our understanding of fundamental issues about culture, society, and individual differences. We explore a wide range of theoretical, legal, ethical, and policy issues as they relate to the experiences of persons with disabilities, their families, and advocates. The final project is a presentation on the fieldwork.

Instructor(s): M. Fred Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing

Note(s): CHDV Distribution: C, D; 4

Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 20405, ANTH 30405, CHDV 30405, HMRT 35210, SOSC 36900, CHDV 20505, MAPS 36900

HMRT 27061. United States Legal History. 100 Units.

This course focuses on the connections between law and society in modern America. It explores how legal doctrines and constitutional rules have defined individual rights and social relations in both the public and private spheres. It also examines political struggles that have transformed American law. Topics to be addressed include the meaning of rights; the regulation of property, work, race, and sexual relations; civil disobedience; and legal theory as cultural history. Readings include legal cases, judicial rulings, short stories, and legal and historical scholarship.

Instructor(s): A. Stanley Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): AMER 27605, CRES 27605, GNSE 27605, LLSO 28010, HIST 27605

HMRT 27306. US Women and Gender. 100 Units.

This course studies the history of women, gender relations, and ideas of sex difference from the emergence of the women's rights movement in the 1840s to the rise of women's liberation in the 1960s. Issues of work, rights, citizenship, race, and sexuality take center stage as we explore the social, political, and cultural forces that shaped women's lives and the aspirations and agency of women who sought to transform the rules and relations of gender in the United States. Readings include primary sources as well as classic and recent historical scholarship.

Instructor(s): A. Stanley

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 27306, CRES 23700, GNSE 27306, HIST 27306

HMRT 28310. Vulnerability and Human Rights. 100 Units.

The course discusses current theories of vulnerability and passivity in relation to human rights. It pays particular attention how human rights and social justice can be thought of in relation to people with severe disabilities, animals, and others who are not traditionally thought of as subjects of justice. We will discuss philosophical texts by Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, John Rawls, Martha Nussbaum, and others, and sociological texts by scholars like Bryan Turner and Tom Shakespeare.

Instructor(s): D. Kulick Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 38310,CHDV 26310

HMRT 28602. Health Care and the Limits of State Action. 100 Units.

In a time of great human mobility and weakening state frontiers, epidemic disease is able to travel fast and far, mutate in response to treatment, and defy the institutions invented to keep it under control: quarantine, the cordon sanitaire, immunization, and the management of populations. Public health services in many countries find themselves at a loss in dealing with these outbreaks of disease, a deficiency to which NGOs emerge as a response (an imperfect one to be sure). Through a series of readings in anthropology, sociology, ethics, medicine, and political science, we will attempt to reach an understanding of this crisis of both epidemiological technique and state legitimacy, and to sketch out options.

Instructor(s): E. Lyon, H. Saussy Terms Offered: Spring. May be offered in 2017-2018

Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing. This course does not meet requirements for the biological sciences major.

Equivalent Course(s): BPRO 28600,CMLT 28900,KNOW 27006,BIOS 29323

HMRT 29120. Poverty Law and Policy Reform. 100 Units.

This seminar seeks to give students a comprehensive understanding of the major anti-poverty programs in the United States with an emphasis on current challenges and reform proposals. We will spend the first half of the course exploring the implementation and evaluation of the programs that make up the traditional safety net for poor Americans: income supports, health insurance, and housing assistance. We will spend the rest of the quarter exploring topics that complicate the traditional social policy regime, including how the safety net is more robust for some groups, such as the elderly and veterans, than others. We will explore how the legal systems of immigration and incarceration hamper anti-poverty policy and how safety net programs address the needs of rural and Native Americans. Finally, we will investigate two recent developments in the field: social entrepreneurship and the critique of procedural rights.

Instructor(s): Hammond, A. Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): No first year students; attendance on the first day of class is required.

Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29120,PBPL 29120



Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.