

Human Rights and Global Development

Fall 2022

Camilo Nieto-Matiz (camilo.nieto-matiz@utsa.edu)

Department of Political Science & Geography

Office: MS 4.03.32

Classroom: MS 2.01.06

Thursday 6:00PM - 8:45PM

Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2-3:30PM

1 Course Description

Why do governments use violence against their citizens and what can be done to deter grave human rights violations? This course introduces graduate students to the study of human rights. Its main goal is to facilitate a discussion on the causes and consequences of state-sanctioned violence, contentious politics, and the mechanisms and policy interventions, both domestic and global, through which societies have prevented abusive practices by the state.

In the first part of the course, we will begin by addressing the origins of human rights, the conceptual debate, and the different ways in which scholars have measured them. In the second part of the course, we will spend some time understanding the political logic of human rights violations: why some states, despite the human costs, may engage in extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, or torture against their own citizens. We will also try to understand the role of elections and/or democratization and how civil conflicts and criminal wars affect human rights violations both by the state and pro-government militias, insurgencies, and drug cartels.

In the last part, we will explore the different solutions, policy interventions, and mechanisms that might shape the severity and intensity of human rights violations. We will begin by asking under what conditions are states willing to ratify international human rights treaties and comply with them. In this third part, we will also devote some time to understanding the role of courts, both domestic and international, the importance of activism for human rights, non-government organizations, and the impact of trade agreements. Lastly, we will explore how societies that have been ravaged by war or governed by authoritarian regimes manage to strike a balance between peace and justice, and repair their victims through transitional justice mechanisms.

2 Three Course Objectives

1. **Learning about the different theoretical approaches** to understanding under what conditions states and other specialists of violence violate human rights and the different mechanisms and policy interventions through which societies have minimized and prevented abusive practices by them.
2. **Critically assessing arguments.** The course will help you develop your capacity to critically assess arguments, methods, and conclusions. This implies thinking about some key questions: What are the authors' argument? What type of evidence does the text provide in support for the claims? How compelling is it? Is there a better and more convincing method to answer the research question? What are the implications of the argument to understanding other time periods, regions of the world, and other phenomena?
3. **Writing and thinking more critically** I hope that the course will give the tools to discuss, debate, and write about complex phenomena –such as human rights– in a more clear and effective way. Whether you're interested in a career as an academic or practitioner, writing remains as one of the most fundamental forms of communication.

3 Course Requirements

- Participation: 25%
- Response papers: 35%
- Research paper: 40%

Participation (25%) This course will be taught in seminar format. Participation lies at the core of any seminar and is fundamental to its success. Unlike lectures, seminars can be best thought of as a *collective project*: their quality does not depend on the instructor or any one single participant, but on the process of deliberation, debate, and criticism by everyone in the room. This requires that you do the assigned readings for the week and come to class prepared to ask questions and actively engage in the *conversation*. This portion of the grade will be based on your participation in the weeks in which you did not write a response paper.

Response papers (35%) For at least 5 times during the semester, you are expected to email responses to the reading to both the instructors and your classmates. There are three things you should include in your responses: (1) a brief summary of the readings¹ (2) three criticisms (of the argument, method, etc.) or questions you may have about the reading; and (3) three things you learned or found particularly interesting. They need not be very long, but they should clearly demonstrate that you have reflected on the reading. They will be a key part of our class discussions, so make sure you bring them with you to class. Response

¹If the readings for that week seem well-integrated (which will be likely the case), I strongly encourage you to summarize them jointly, and not in a separate fashion.

papers should be around 500 words.

Important note: while all participants are expected to contribute to the seminar discussion, students writing response papers should be prepared to take a leading role.

Research paper (40%) You can write two different types of research paper depending on your interests and goals. One option is to write an *academic paper*, that is, a traditional scholarly paper that asks a research question, formulates a hypothesis, proposes a systematic way to test and assess the hypothesis with empirical evidence, and finishes with a set of logical conclusions. The paper should be about anything related to human rights (e.g. civil wars and human rights, the impact of regime type on human rights, treaty ratification, truth commissions, etc). A research paper will draw on the readings and knowledge acquired in the seminar, but it will also require independent research and engagement with additional bibliography not covered by this syllabus.

Another option is to write a *policy paper*. This type of paper provides a description and overview of a problem and formulates a set of actionable recommendations. Certainly, policy papers rely on existing research and use empirical evidence, but they are addressed at non-academic audiences, typically decision-makers, both domestic governments and international authorities. Therefore, when writing policy papers, it is important to avoid overly academic jargon and do a good job of laying out the problem/issue, the policy options, and the policy recommendation. More information on what policy papers are and how they are written can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Paper Proposal You will present your proposed paper idea to the rest of the class for discussion. This will be a good opportunity for you to receive feedback from your classmates and improve the project. Of course, the quality of the feedback will depend on how clear you describe your idea to the rest of the class, so take advantage of this opportunity. Make sure to describe to us your research question (or policy issue) you will be exploring; the set of hypotheses and potential arguments (or available policy options); and the evidence you will be working with. Think also about any problems you might encounter, and describe these research problems or dilemmas to the class. The other students are expected to offer constructive criticism, ask clarifying questions, and offer suggestions and creative solutions. This will take place in Week 8.

4 Policies

Office hours and communication

You are welcome to schedule a meeting with me during office hours every **Tuesday** and **Thursday** from **2 to 3:30pm** and by appointment. The best way to arrange a meeting is via email. The time I have listed is *for you*. It is a time I have dedicated to being available to you to provide assistance and for you to ask questions about the assignments and papers,

your performance in the semester, or talk about the department, graduate school, and career options.

Grading

This course will be grade according to the following scale:

A	≥ 93	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

F = 59 or below

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. In that sense, I expect your submitted work to be of your own and not a plagiarism of other people's ideas and works. Plagiarism, in any of its forms, will be reported in accordance with the procedure required by the Student Code of Conduct. It is important for you to familiarize with the proper methods of citation to avoid any possible misunderstanding. In all your work, you are free to choose your preferred citation style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago). The Student Code of Conduct is Section B of the Appendices in the Student Information Bulletin. Scholastic Dishonesty is listed in the **Student Code of Conduct** (Sec. B of the Appendices) under Sec. 203. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct, contact the **Student Conduct and Community Standards** team.

5 Class schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the course

- Syllabus, expectations
- Beitz, Charles R. 2001. "Human Rights as a Common Concern" *American Political Science Review*, 95(2):269-282

Week 2: Conceptual debate: what are human rights?

- Moore, Will H. 2015. "Tilting at windmill? The conceptual program in contemporary peace science", *Conflict Management and Peace Sciences* 32(4): 356-369.
- Dancy, Geoff and Christopher J. Fariss. 2018. "The Heavens are Always Fallen: A Neo-Constitutive Approach to Human Rights in Global Society" *Law & Contemporary Problems* 81(4):773-100.
- Ayton-Shaker, Diane. 1995. "The Challenges of Human Rights and Cultural Diversity". United Nations Department of Public Information.
- Mutua, Makau. 2002. *Human rights : a political and cultural critique*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Introduction and Chapter 1.

Recommended:

- Universal declaration of human rights

Week 3: How do we learn about human rights? From concepts to measurement

- Clark, Ann Marie and Kathryn Sikkink. 2013. "Information Effects and Human Rights Data: Is the Good News about Increased Human Rights Information Bad News for Human Rights Measures?" *Human Rights Quarterly* 35(3):539-568.
- Fariss, Christopher J. 2014. "Respect for Human Rights has Improved Over Time: Modeling the Changing Standard of Accountability" *American Political Science Review* 108(2):297-318.
- Cingranelli, David, and Mikhail Filippov. 2018. "Are Human Rights Practices Improving?" *American Political Science Review* 112(4):1083-1089.
- Fariss, Christopher J. 2019. "Yes, Human Rights Practices Are Improving Over Time" *American Political Science Review* 113(3): 868-881.

Week 4: Contentious politics and political repression

- Davenport, Christian. 1995. "Multi-Dimensional Threat Perception and State Repression: An Inquiry into Why States Apply Negative Sanctions", *American Journal of Political Science*, 39(3): 683-713.

- Ritter, Emily Hencken. 2014. "Policy Disputes, Political Survival, and the Onset and Severity of State Repression" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58(1):143-168
- Conrad, Courtenay R., and Emily Hencken Ritter. 2016. "Preventing and Responding to Dissent: The Observational Challenges of Explaining Strategic Repression" *American Political Science Review* 110(1):85-99.
- Gartner, Scott and Patrick Regan (1996). Threat and repression: The non-linear relationship between government and opposition violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 33(3), 273-287.

Week 5: Elections and democratization

- Davenport, Christian. 1999. "Human Rights and the Democratic Proposition", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 43, no. 1: 92-116
- Zakaria, Fareed. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy" *Foreign Affairs*. 76(6): 22-43.
- Hafner-Burton, Emilie M., Susan Hyde and Ryan Jablonski. 2014. "When do Governments Resort to Election Violence", *British Journal of Political Science*, 44(1): 149-179.
- Trejo G, Ley S. 2018. "Why Did Drug Cartels Go to War in Mexico? Subnational Party Alternation, the Breakdown of Criminal Protection, and the Onset of Large-Scale Violence", *Comparative Political Studies*. 51(7):900-937.

Week 6: Civil wars and human rights

- Eck, Kristine and Lisa Hultman. 2007. "One-Sided Violence Against Civilians in War: Insights from New Fatality Data" *Journal of Peace Research* 44(2):233-246.
- Carey SC, Colaresi MP, Mitchell NJ. 2015. "Governments, Informal Links to Militias, and Accountability", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(5):850-876.
- Mitchell, Neil, Sabine C. Carey & Christopher K. Butler. 2014. "The Impact of Pro-Government Militias on Human Rights Violations", *International Interactions*, 40(5): 812-836
- Murdie, Amanda, and David R. Davis. 2010. "Problematic Potential: The Human Rights Consequences of Peacekeeping Interventions in Civil Wars", *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2010, pp. 49-72.

Week 7: Crime, criminal wars, and human rights

- Bailey, John, and Matthew M. Taylor. "Evade, Corrupt, or Confront? Organized Crime and the State in Brazil and Mexico", *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 1, no. 2 (August 2009): 3-29.

- Lessing, Benjamin. “Logics of violence in criminal war”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 8 (2015): 1486-1516.
- Calderón, Gabriela, Gustavo Robles, Alberto Díaz-Cayeros, and Beatriz Magaloni. “The Beheading of Criminal Organizations and the Dynamics of Violence in Mexico”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 8 (December 2015): 1455–85.
- Visconti, Giancarlo. “Policy preferences after crime victimization: panel and survey evidence from Latin America”, *British Journal of Political Science* 50, no. 4 (2020): 1481-1495.

Week 8: Compliance, ratification, HR prosecutions I

Due: Paper proposal

- Chayes, Abram, and Antonia Handler Chayes. 1993. “On Compliance”, *International Organization* 47(2):175-205.
- Moravcsik, Andrew. 2000. “The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe” *International Organization* 54:217-252
- Dancy, Geoff and Kathryn Sikkink. 2012. “Ratification and Human Rights Prosecutions: Toward a Transnational Theory of Treaty Compliance” *NYU Journal of International Law and Politics* 44(3):751-790.
- Neumayer, Eric. 2005. “Do International Human Rights Treaties Improve Respect for Human Rights?” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(6):925-953.

Week 9: Compliance, ratification, HR prosecutions II

- Grewal, Sharanbir and Erik Voeten. 2015. “Are New Democracies Better Human Rights Compliers?” *International Organization*, 69(2): 497-518.
- Hollyer, James R., and B. Peter Rosendorff. 2011. “Why Do Authoritarian Regimes Sign the Convention Against Torture? Signaling, Domestic Politics and Non-Compliance” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 6:275-327.
- Hill, Jr, Daniel W. “Avoiding Obligation: Reservations to Human Rights Treaties” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 60(6):1129-1158.
- Hafner-Burton, Emilie, Laurence R. Helfer, and Christopher J. Fariss. 2011. “Emergency and Escape: Explaining Why States Derogate from Human Rights Treaties during National Emergencies” *International Organization* 65(4):673-707.

Week 10: Domestic and international courts

- Hafner-Burton, Emilie M *Making Human Rights a Reality*, Princeton University Press, 2013. Chapter 10.

- Michel, Verónica. 2017. “The role of prosecutorial independence and prosecutorial accountability in domestic human rights trials”, *Journal of Human Rights*, 16(2): 193-219.
- Helfer, Laurence R. and Erik Voeten. 2014. “International Courts as Agents of Legal Change: Evidence from LGBT Rights in Europe” *International Organization* 68(1):77-110.

Week 11: NGOs and human rights activism

- Kathryn Sikkink & Margaret E. Keck, *Activists Beyond Borders- Advocacy Networks in International Politics*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 1995, Chapter 1.
- Michel, Verónica and Kathryn Sikkink. 2013. “Human Rights Prosecutions and the Participation Rights of Victims in Latin America” *Law & Society Review* 47(4):873-907.
- Dupuy, Kendra, James Ron, and Aseem Prakash. “Foreign Aid to Local NGOs: Good Intentions, Bad Policy” *Open Democracy*. 15 November 2012.
- Krebs, Ronald R. and James Ron. “Why Countries Should Welcome, Not Fear, Foreign Funding of NGOs”. *LawFare*. 13 May, 2018.

Week 12: Trade agreements

- Hafner-Burton, E. 2005. “Trading human rights: how preferential trade agreements influence government repression”, *International Organization* 59:593–629
- Peksen, Dursun. 2009. “Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights”, *Journal of Peace Research* 46(1): 59–77.
- Mikkel Sejersen, 2021. “Winning Hearts and Minds with Economic Sanctions? Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Venezuela”, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 17(1).

Week 13: Transitional justice I

- Arenhövel Mark. 2008. “Democratization and Transitional Justice.” *Democratization* 15 (3): 570–87.
- Bakiner Onur. 2014. “Truth Commission Impact: An Assessment of How Commissions Influence Politics and Society.” *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 8 (1): 6–30.
- Ndonga, Aagatha and Ruben Carranza. 2019. “**Can Building Bridges Break the Cycles of Corruption and Political Violence in Kenya?**”, ICTJ Briefing, International Center for Transitional Justice,

Week 14: Transitional justice II

- Trejo, Guillermo, Juan Albarracín, and Lucía Tiscornia. "Breaking State Impunity in Post-Authoritarian Regimes: Why Transitional Justice Processes Deter Criminal Violence in New Democracies." *Journal of Peace Research* 55, no. 6 (November 2018): 787–809.
- Kim Hunjoon, Sikkink Kathryn. 2010. "Explaining the Deterrence Effect of Human Rights Prosecutions for Transitional Countries." *International Studies Quarterly* 54 (4): 939–63.
- Dancy, Geoff, Bridget E. Marchesi, Tricia D. Olsen, Leigh A. Payne, Andrew G. Reiter, and Kathryn Sikkink. "Behind bars and bargains: New findings on transitional justice in emerging democracies." *International studies quarterly* 63, no. 1 (2019): 99-110.

6 Common Syllabus Content

Counseling Services

Counseling Services provides confidential, professional services by staff psychologists, social workers, counselors, and psychiatrists to help meet the personal and developmental needs of currently enrolled students. Services include individual brief therapy for personal and educational concerns, couples/relationship counseling, and group therapy on topics such as college adaptation, relationship concerns, sexual orientation, depression, and anxiety. Counseling Services also screens for possible learning disabilities and has limited psychiatric services. Visit the [Counseling and Mental Health Services](#) website or call (210) 458-4140 (Main Campus) or (210) 458-2930 (Downtown Campus).

Student Code of Conduct and Scholastic Dishonesty

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Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Texas at San Antonio in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities. Only those students who have officially registered with Student Disability Services and requested accommodations for this course will be eligible for disability accommodations. Instructors at UTSA must be provided an official confidential notification of accommodation through Student Disability Services. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found on the [Student Disability Services](#) webpage or by calling their office at (210) 458-4157. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Tutoring Services

Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) may assist in building study skills and tutoring in course content. The TRC has several locations at the Main Campus and is also located at the Downtown Campus. For more information, visit the [Tutoring Services](#) website or call (210) 458-4694 on the Main Campus and (210) 458-2838 on the Downtown Campus.

Academic Success Coaching

The Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) Academic Success Coaching Program offers one-on-one study skills assistance through Academic Coaching. Students meet by appointment with a professional to develop more effective study strategies and techniques that can be used across courses. Group workshops are also offered each semester to help students defeat

common academic challenges. Find out more information on [Academic Success Coaching](#) website or call (210) 458-4694.

The Writing Center

The Judith G. Gardner Center for Writing Excellence helps the entire UTSA Community with various writing projects, questions, and challenges. Our experienced tutors provide assistance to current undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty/staff members with each step of the writing process. Services are located at the Main Campus in the JPL building (2.01.12D) and at the Downtown Campus in the Frio Street Building (FS 4.432). They also offer online tutoring seven days a week by appointment so that you can chat live with a tutor. Visit [The Writing Center's](#) website to learn more and to schedule an appointment.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

UTSA is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If a student has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that UTSA has resources to help.

UTSA faculty have the responsibility to create a learning environment that is safe and free from hostility. State and federal law as well as [UTSA's Handbook of Operating Procedures \(HOP 9.24\)](#) require that instructors must report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct they learn about to the Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. This means that if a student tells their instructor about a situation (including classroom discussions, written work and/or one-on-one meetings) involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, the instructor must report it to the [Equal Opportunity Services & Title IX Office](#). Although the faculty member must report the situation, the student will still have options about how their case will be handled, including whether or not the student wishes to pursue a formal complaint. The university's goal is to make sure students are aware of the range of options available to them and have access to the resources they need.

If a student wishes to speak to someone confidentially, they can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the EOS/Title IX Office: (1) [Counseling Services](#) at 210-458-4140; (2) [Student Health Services](#) at 210-458-4142; or (3) The [PEACE Center](#) at 210-458-4077.

Campus Safety & Emergency Preparedness

UTSA is committed to providing a safe campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As members of the community, we encourage you to take the following actions to be better prepared in case of an emergency:

- Alerts: Ensure you are signed up for UTSA Alerts through your [ASAP.utsa.edu](https://asap.utsa.edu) account.
- Emergency Procedures: Read through the information related to emergency preparedness on the [UTSA Alerts](#) page.
- Safety App: Download the [LiveSafe App](#) on your phone through the Apple store or Google Play; visit the LiveSafe App website for details.
- Important Numbers: UTSA Police - Emergency: (210) 458-4911; Non-Emergency: (210) 458-4242

Each one of us play a critical role in making sure ALL ROADRUNNERS are safe, know what to do, and how to stay informed during a campus crisis. Don't be scared, be prepared! #UTSAprepared

Inclusivity Statement

The University of Texas at San Antonio, a Hispanic Serving Institution situated in a global city that has been a crossroads of peoples and cultures for centuries, values diversity and inclusion in all aspects of university life. As an institution expressly founded to advance the education of Mexican Americans and other underserved communities, our university is committed to ending generations of discrimination and inequity. UTSA, a premier public research university, fosters academic excellence through a community of dialogue, discovery, and innovation that embraces the uniqueness of each voice.

The Roadrunner Creed

The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered.

As a Roadrunner, I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;
- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;
- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and
- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!