

INTA 3031 / 8803 Syllabus Fall 2026

Human Rights, 3 credits

Monday, Wednesday 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM Classroom TBA

Instructor Information

Instructor

Dr. Evgeny Tikhonravov

Email

evgeny@gatech.edu

Drop-in Hours & Location

Habersham 151 by appointment

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

Description

Students will study the principal global and regional institutions responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the Human Rights Committee, the Human Rights Council, and the European Court of Human Rights. The course examines how human rights operate both within states and beyond national borders, as well as how they should be applied in situations of armed conflict. It also explores the ways in which societies address past human rights violations following the collapse of authoritarian regimes.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will understand the key ideas, institutions, and controversies that shape the contemporary global human rights system.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings**
08.24 (M)	Course Introduction	
08.26 (W)	The Nature and Evolution of International Human Rights Law 1	
08.31 (M)	The Nature and Evolution of International Human Rights Law 2	
09.02 (W)	The Nature and Evolution of International Human Rights Law 3	
09.07 (M)	Official institute holiday. No Class.	
September		
01.09 (W)	The Human Rights Committee	
09.14 (M)	The Human Rights Council	
09.16 (W)	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	
09.21 (M)	The European Court of Human Rights	
09.23 (W)	International Human Rights Law in Times of War 1	
09.28 (M)	International Human Rights Law in Times of War 2	Dzehtsiarou, Moiseieva
09.30 (W)	Practice test*	
October		
10.05 (M)	Fall break. No Class.	
10.07 (W)	Test 1	
10.12 (M)	The Extraterritorial Application of Human Rights Treaties	Milanovic
10.14 (W)	Humanitarian Intervention and Responsibility to Protect	
10.19 (M)	The Responsibility of Non-State Actors for Human Rights Violations	Schramm
10.21 (W)	Guidance for Presentations and Final Exam*	
10.26 (M)	The Prohibition of Genocide and Transitional Justice	Filjanowski, Milasiute 1, Sadowski
10.28 (W)	Transitional Justice and Democratic Safeguards	Milasiute 2, ECHR 1&2
November		
11.02 (M)	The Right of Peoples to Self-Determination 1	
11.04 (W)	The Right of Peoples to Self-Determination 2	Kohen
11.09 (M)	Presentation 1	
11.11 (W)	Presentation 2	
11.16 (M)	Presentation 3	
11.18 (W)	Presentation 4	
11.23 (M)	Practice test*	
11.25 (W)	Student recess. No class.	
11.30 (M)	Test 2	
December		
12.02 (W)	Presentation 5	
12.07 (M)	Guest Lecture by Amb. Michele Taylor, Distinguished Professor of the Practice and former U.S. Representative to the UN Human Rights Council***	
TBA	Final Exam	

* Online class

** All readings will be available as PDF files in the Files tab on Canvas. Please note that, in some cases, pages not required for discussion have been removed from the uploaded files.

*** The lecture date is not final and may be changed.

Preliminary Notes

Before enrolling in this course, please read the syllabus in its entirety. I have made every effort to provide detailed information so that you can find answers to most questions regarding course requirements, assignments, grading, and policies. Before emailing me with a question, please ensure that the syllabus does not already address it.

I would like to set out two requests at the outset of the semester.

First, all course announcements will be communicated through Canvas. Please adjust your Canvas notification settings so that you receive not only notifications of announcements but also the full text of those announcements by email.

Second, please do not email me to notify or explain absences. The attendance policy is explained in detail in this syllabus and applies uniformly to all students.

Description of Graded Components

	Assignment	Date / Deadline	Weight
1.	Discussion of Assigned Readings 1	09.28, 10.12, 10.19	12%
2.	Test 1	10.07	17%
3.	Discussion of Assigned Readings 2	10.26, 10.28, 11.04	13%
4.	Test 2	11.30	18%
5.	Presentation	Groups must be formed, and selected dates and cases must be submitted by email to evgeny@gatech.edu no later than 9:15 PM on October 30. Your presentation must be uploaded to Canvas by 9:15 PM on November 6.	20%
6.	Final Exam	TBA	10%
7.	Attendance		10%

Discussion of assigned readings 1&2 (12% and 13% of the final grade)

This component of the course grade is based on the quality of students' contributions to in-class discussions of the assigned readings. All readings will be available as PDF files in the Files tab on Canvas.

The assigned readings (identified by the authors' names, e.g., Milanovic) and the dates on which they will be discussed are listed in the right-hand column of the course schedule (see p. 2). Students are expected to begin reading the assigned material well before class. Discussion questions will not be provided in advance.

Class discussion will primarily take place through cold calling. I will invite volunteers to respond to questions that relate to the assigned readings but are not directly based on them.

At the beginning of each discussion class, students will complete a brief closed-notes quiz based on the reading assigned for that day. Quiz performance will count toward the discussion grade.

Students who arrive late to class will not be permitted to make up a quiz. Students who miss a discussion class because of approved Institute activities (such as field trips, professional conferences, and athletic events) will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absences.

Test 1 and Test 2 (17% and 18% of the final grade)

The tests are closed-book exams. No textbooks, notes, handouts, presentation slides, or other reference materials may be used. Both tests will include a combination of multiple choice, multiple answer, fill-in-the-blank, and matching questions. The first test will cover material from the first half of the course. The second test will cover material from the second half of the course and will not include questions based on student presentations.

Both tests will be available on Canvas on their respective dates from 8:00 AM to 9:15 PM. Students may take the tests from any location of their choice and will have 75 minutes to complete each test.

Both tests must be taken using Respondus LockDown Browser. Students are responsible for ensuring that Respondus LockDown Browser is installed on their device and functioning properly prior to the test. At the time of publication of this syllabus, Respondus LockDown Browser was available for download at the following link: https://gatech.service-now.com/home?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0027104

Students who are unwilling or unable to install Respondus LockDown Browser must notify the instructor by email at least one week prior to the test. In such cases, a paper-based version of the test will be provided, which must be taken in class on the scheduled test date.

Practice tests will be provided to help students prepare. Attendance on practice test days will be counted only if you complete the practice test using Respondus LockDown Browser by 12:50 PM. Students who are unwilling or unable to install Respondus LockDown Browser must notify the instructor by email at least one week prior to the practice test. In such cases, an alternative way for completing the practice test will be provided.

Presentation (20% of the final grade)

Undergraduate students must form groups of two or three using the People tab on Canvas. The presentation assignment for graduate students will be either individual or group-based, depending on the number of students enrolled in the course. There will be no more than ten

presentations in total, and each class designated for presentations will include two presentations. The number of presentation slots allocated to graduate and undergraduate students will be announced during the second week of the semester.

Each presentation must not exceed 15 minutes. After each presentation, I will ask a series of questions related to its topic.

The presentation must analyze a case decided by one of the following international courts or committees: the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee against Torture. Only cases involving an individual petition (communication) or inter-State disputes are eligible. Pending cases, advisory opinions, and cases discussed in class may not be selected. A non-exhaustive list of cases for the presentation assignment is provided on p. 7.

Groups must be formed, and selected dates and cases must be submitted by email to evgeny@gatech.edu no later than 9:15 PM on October 30. Notifications submitted after this deadline will result in a 20% penalty. Topics and dates will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Duplicate topics are not permitted. Do not proceed with your case until I confirm that it is suitable for the assignment.

The final version of your presentation must be uploaded to Canvas by 9:15 PM on November 6. The file should be in either PDF or PowerPoint format. Late submissions will incur a 20% penalty, and submission after November 8 will receive a grade of zero. Submissions sent via email will not be accepted.

Presentation guidelines:

- Your entire presentation must not exceed 15 slides.
- Avoid large amounts of text, especially in small font. Slides should support your talk, not replace it.
- Include a bibliography slide at the end. You may use any citation format (APA, Chicago, MLA, etc.).
- Do not read the slides aloud word-for-word. Reading from notes is permitted, but you are expected to engage directly with the audience.
- Make sure you can define and explain any term or concept you use in your presentation.
- Anticipate questions. Think ahead about what your classmates or I may ask.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of grounds on which points may be deducted from a presentation grade: the presentation exceeds 15 slides; the bibliography slide is missing; the chosen citation format is used inaccurately or inconsistently; the presenters are unable to define or explain terms or concepts used in the presentation; the presenters are unable to answer questions related to the presentation posed by the instructor or by other students; the facts of the case, the reasoning of the court or committee, or the decision of the court or committee are misinterpreted or presented inaccurately.

The websites of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee against Torture provide comprehensive information on each case.

I will provide further advice on preparing a high-quality presentation during our class on October 21. For additional support, feel free to schedule an appointment with me or reach out via email.

Final exam (10% of the final grade)

The final exam is a 500-word synopsis of your presentation case. The synopsis is not individual; it is one submission per group. Graduate students who complete the presentation individually must submit an individual synopsis.

The synopsis should summarize the key legal issues, arguments, and the reasoning of the court or the committee, as well as highlight your own analysis or perspective developed in your presentation. While the structure may vary depending on your case, the synopsis should generally include a brief background of the case, the main legal questions, the decision of the court or committee. If I request it, the synopsis may also be used to clarify issues or questions that were left unanswered during the oral presentation. It is acceptable to submit fewer than 500 words, but do not exceed the 500-word limit.

The synopsis should be written in clear, formal academic English and must represent your own work. You are welcome to quote the court's (committee's) decision, but the synopsis should primarily be written in your own words. Please do not include a bibliography (you are supposed to do this in your presentation slides).

The text must be formatted with 1.5 line spacing, using Times New Roman, 14-point font; indicate your full name, the title of the case, and the year it was decided. The use of artificial intelligence tools to write the synopsis is prohibited.

The synopsis must be uploaded to Canvas in PDF format. Late submissions will receive a grade of zero.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of grounds on which points may be deducted from a synopsis grade: the text (excluding the students' names and the case title) exceeds 500 words; the text contains grammatical errors or has an unclear or poorly organized structure; the facts of the case, the reasoning of the court or committee, or the decision of the court or committee are misinterpreted or presented inaccurately; the formatting of the text or the file format does not comply with the requirements stated above.

The following cases are provided as examples for the presentation assignment. Students may select one of these cases or choose another case.

Inter-American Court of Human Rights

Velásquez-Rodríguez v. Honduras, 1988

Key Issue: State responsibility for enforced disappearances and the duty to investigate human rights violations.

González et al. (“Cotton Field”) v. Mexico, 2009

Key Issue: Systematic violence against women; state failure to prevent gender-based discrimination and murder.

European Court of Human Rights

Lawless v. Ireland, 1961

Key Issue: The legality of prolonged extrajudicial detention during a state of public emergency.

Ireland v. United Kingdom, 1978

Key Issue: Distinction between torture and inhuman or degrading treatment regarding interrogation techniques.

Von Hannover v. Germany, 2004

Key Issue: The right to privacy for public figures versus the freedom of the press.

Mikheyev v. Russia, 2006

Key Issue: Whether the applicant’s ill-treatment by police (including torture) and the authorities’ failure to conduct an effective investigation violated Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and whether these events also engaged the State’s obligations under Article 13 (right to an effective remedy).

Human Rights Committee

Lovelace v. Canada, 1981

Key Issue: The right of indigenous people to enjoy their own culture.

López Burgos v. Uruguay, 1981

Key Issue: Extraterritorial jurisdiction regarding the abduction and torture of individuals by state agents abroad.

Toonen v. Australia, 1994

Key Issue: Whether the criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults in private violates the right to privacy under Article 17 of the ICCPR, and whether such criminalization constitutes discrimination under Articles 2 and 26.

Teitiota v. New Zealand, 2020

Key Issue: Rejection of asylum claims based on environmental degradation and climate change.

Committee against Torture

Y.G.H. et al v. Australia, 2013, Communication No. 434/2010

Key Issue: Risk of torture upon return to the country of origin; cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Z. v. Australia, 2014, Communication No. 511/2012

Key Issue: Right to compensation for acts of torture committed extraterritorially by officials of another State.

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

State of Palestine v. Israel, 2024

Key Issue: Practices and policies of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Attendance (10% of the final grade)

Attendance is taken at every class. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that their attendance is properly recorded by signing the attendance sheet with their initials.

Students may miss up to three classes without penalty. Missing more than three classes results in a loss of the entire attendance component of the final grade (10%). This policy applies to all absences, whether excused or unexcused, including religious holidays and medical appointments. Exceptions to this policy will be considered only in cases of serious, extended illness or severe personal crises and require submission of appropriate documentation, as well as a meeting with the instructor to discuss the situation.

Please do not email to notify me of or explain absences.

The first week of the course, presentation and test days are excluded from the attendance count. Attendance on practice test days will be counted only if you complete the practice test using Respondus LockDown Browser by 12:50 PM.

Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in the classroom until the conclusion of the lecture. Late arrivals and early departures will negatively affect the attendance grade. Students should not leave class early without prior discussion with the instructor.

Lecture Slides

Presentation files containing lecture slides will be posted on Canvas in the Files tab by the end of each week. These slides are for your educational use only and should not be shared in any form. Please be aware they may not fully reflect the content of the lectures. Therefore, regular attendance and note-taking are crucial for performing well on both tests. Slides used for discussions of assigned readings will not be included in the presentation files.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

- A — 90–100%
- B — 80–89.99%
- C — 70–79.99%
- D — 60–69.99%
- F — 0–59.99%

Course Website and Communications Policy

Canvas will provide essential course information, including the syllabus and assigned readings. Throughout the semester, all course announcements will be communicated through Canvas.

Please adjust your Canvas notification settings so that you receive not only notifications of Canvas announcements but also the full text of those announcements by email.

A note on email: I will respond to email within 48 hours except on weekends.

Academic Integrity

Cheating, plagiarism, and all forms of academic dishonesty are expressly forbidden in this class, and by the university's Honor Code (<https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-life/academic-honor-code>). Any form of cheating will immediately earn you a failing grade for the entire course, and I will pursue further disciplinary actions according to Georgia Tech's policies and procedures.

Accommodations for Learning Needs

If you have learning needs that require some adaptations for you to succeed in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services on campus (<http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>). I am happy to arrange to accommodate your learning needs based on their recommendations.

Make-up Exams

Please ensure you are familiar with the course schedule well in advance and plan accordingly, including any travel arrangements. Make-up exams (tests, presentations, and final exam) will be given only for documented reasons of illness, family emergency, or participation in approved Institute activities (see <http://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/12/> for more information).

Re-grading and Re-submission

Requests for regrading may be submitted in writing within two days of the day you received the grade. You must justify in writing the technical basis for the regrade. If the request is accepted, your assignment may be regarded.

Student-Faculty Expectations

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to continually strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. Simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek.

Use of Mobile Devices, Laptops, etc. During Class

You may use a laptop to take notes during class, but please ensure that all sounds are turned off to avoid disrupting other students' learning. In addition, if you are doing anything other than taking notes or looking at course materials on your laptop, please sit in the back row so that other students are not distracted by your screen.

Food and Drink

Please feel free to bring your food and drink with you to class. However, please be mindful of your setting: avoid strong smells, food that is likely to make a mess, and food that makes it difficult to engage with class discussion and/or taking notes. In addition, please be sure to clear your garbage when you leave, and wipe your desktop for the next student sitting in your seat.

Recording Classroom Activities

Recording of our classes is not allowed. This policy can be waived for students with accommodations upon explicit recommendation from the Office of Disability Services. You are welcome to take notes and photos of the board.

Office Hours

Please email me to schedule an appointment before coming to my office hours.

Statement on Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Final Caveat

This syllabus is to be considered a living document and therefore subject to change. Any major changes will be discussed with the class and posted to Canvas. If you have any questions about what you see on the syllabus, please email me to discuss.