

INTA 3031 / 8803 Syllabus Fall 2026

Human Rights, 3 credits

Monday, Wednesday 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM Habersham 136

Instructor Information

Instructor

Dr. Evgeny Tikhonravov

Email

evgeny@gatech.edu

Drop-in Hours & Location

Habersham 144C 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**
August		
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	
September		
09.02 (W)	The Nature and Evolution of International Human Rights Law 3	
09.07 (M)	Official institute holiday. No class.	
09.09 (W)	The Human Rights Committee	
09.14 (M)	The Human Rights Council 1	
09.16 (W)	The Human Rights Council 2 and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	
09.21 (M)	The European Court of Human Rights	
09.23 (W)	The Extraterritorial Application of Human Rights Treaties	Milanovic; ECHR 1&2
09.28 (M)	Practice test 1*	
09.30 (W)	Test 1	
October		
10.05 (M)	Fall break. No class.	
10.07 (W)	International Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict	
10.12 (M)	International Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict 2	Dzehtsiarou; ECHR 3&4
10.14 (W)	Humanitarian Intervention and Responsibility to Protect	
10.19 (M)	The Responsibility of Non-State Actors for Human Rights Violations	Schramm; Genocide Convention
10.21 (W)	Transitional Justice	
10.26 (M)	The Prohibition of Genocide and Transitional Justice	Zilinskas; ECHR 5, 6, 7
10.28 (W)	Transitional Justice and Democratic Safeguards	Milasiute; ECHR 8&9
November		
11.02 (M)	Presentation 1	
11.04 (W)	Presentation 2	
11.09 (M)	Presentation 3	
11.11 (W)	Presentation 4	
11.16 (M)	Presentation 5	
11.18 (W)	Guest Lecture: Maija Danilova West, JD, peacemaker and retired attorney*** <i>The Original Law of the Land: Treaty Justice, Land Return, and the Practice of Peacemaking on Turtle Island (the United States and Canada)*</i>	
11.23 (M)	Practice test 2*	
11.25 (W)	Student recess. No class.	
11.30 (M)	Test 2	
December		
12.02 (W)	Presentation 6	
12.07 (M)	Final instructional class	
12.16 (W)	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.

*** Maija Danilova West is a Fulbright Specialist- Cultural Ambassador for Peacemaking, US State Department, and co-founder of the Healing and Reconciliation Institute.

Description of Graded Components

	Assignment	Date / Deadline	Weight
1.	Test 1	09.30	20%
2.	Test 2	11.30	20%
3.	Discussion of	09.23, 10.12, 10.19, 10.26, 10.28	20%
4.	Presentations	11.02, 11.04, 11.09, 11.11, 11.16, 12.02	20%
5.	Final exam	12.16	10%
6.	Attendance		10%

Tests 1&2

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. Each test will consist of a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 35 questions.

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. Practice tests will be provided to help students prepare.

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 (practice) test. In such cases, a paper-based version of the (practice) test will be provided, which must be taken in class on the scheduled (practice) test date.

Discussion of assigned readings

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. All readings will be available as PDF files in the Files tab on Canvas.

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. Students who arrive late to class will not be permitted to make up a quiz.

After the third discussion class, I will provide each student with individual feedback. This will allow you to keep track of your performance on the quizzes and in class discussions. You will receive a grade of 90% for the discussion assignment if you correctly answer at least two-thirds of the quiz questions and three questions during class discussion.

Presentation

Undergraduate students must form groups of 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 12 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.

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, and 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.

The presentation should cover the key legal issues, arguments, and the reasoning of the court or committee. While the structure may vary depending on your case, the presentation should generally include a brief background of the case, the main legal questions, and the decision of the court or committee.

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

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 26. Your email should include a link to the full text of the court's (committee's) decision that you have chosen for the presentation assignment. If the email is sent after this deadline, a 30% penalty will be applied to the entire assignment.

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.

Presentation guidelines:

- Your entire presentation must not exceed 15 slides. It should be emailed to evgeny@gatech.edu after you have given the presentation in class. The file should be in either PDF or PowerPoint format.
- Avoid large amounts of text, especially in small font. Slides should support your talk, not replace it.
- 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 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.

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 in time of public emergency.

Ireland v. United Kingdom, 1978

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

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: Police torture, failure to conduct an effective investigation, and the 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: Criminalization of consensual same-sex sexual conduct and the right to privacy.

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.

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.

Final exam

The final exam is a 500-word summary of your presentation case. Students may complete the final exam either individually or as a group assignment. In other words, if a group consists of three students, they may submit three individual summaries; one summary prepared jointly on behalf of the entire group; or two summaries, one prepared jointly by two students and the other prepared individually by the third student.

The summary should present the key legal issues, arguments, and the reasoning of the court or the committee. While the structure may vary depending on your case, the summary 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 summary 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 summary 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 summary should primarily be written in your own words. You may paraphrase the relevant material instead of citing it directly in order to avoid plagiarism. The final exam is not a research paper assignment and is intended to demonstrate your ability to summarize the case clearly and concisely.

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 summary must be uploaded to Canvas in PDF format by 2:10 PM on December 16. Late submissions will receive a grade of zero.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of grounds on which points may be deducted from the final exam grade: the text (excluding the students' names and the case title) exceeds 500 words; the text contains grammatical errors or is unclear or poorly organized; the facts of the case, or

the reasoning or findings of the court or committee, are misinterpreted or presented inaccurately; or the formatting of the text or the file format does not comply with the requirements stated above.

Attendance

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. This policy applies to all absences, whether excused or unexcused, and relieves me of the need to handle absence requests on an individual basis. 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. Missing more than three classes results in a loss of the entire attendance component of the final grade.

Students who are absent because of participation in a particular religious observance will be permitted to make up the work missed during their absence with no late penalty, provided the student informs the course instructor of the upcoming absence, in writing, within the first two weeks of class.

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

The first and last weeks 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. Presentation slides used for discussions of assigned readings will not be posted.

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. 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 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 regraded.

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

Office hours are by appointment only.

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.