Stockholm University

Course description for Human Rights in a Global Perspective (15 hp/ECTS) AUTUMN 2025

General information about the course

Content and objectives

The overall objective of the course is to provide students with the opportunity to gain deeper insight into the area of international human rights law.

The course introduces the topic of human rights by placing it in a historical and philosophical perspective, following which an overview of the various systems of protection and available mechanisms to monitor and enforce human rights law is provided. The course then moves on to providing a closer inspection of the substance of the rights and obligations established under international human rights law.

Throughout, the course will seek to challenge common understandings and offer a critical exploration of the meaning of human rights by illustrating the complex interplay between law and extra-legal factors.

The examination for the course is divided into an individual essay (8-10 pages), a problem-based seminar session, and a written end exam (open-book) (see further section on Examination below).

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and an understanding of human rights, in particular in relation to existing mechanisms to protect human rights and substantive human rights;
- Demonstrate an in-depth ability to apply and interpret legal norms within the different subject areas of the course;
- Demonstrate an in-depth ability to systematically, critically and independently identify, formulate and analyse human rights issues;
- Demonstrate an in-depth ability to examine, clearly explain and discuss one's conclusions in English, orally and in writing;
- Demonstrate an in-depth ability to take into account scientific, extra judicial and social factors that contributed to the formation of norms regarding human rights.

Pedagogical approach

Teaching is carried out primarily in the form of lectures, reading and group discussions. In addition, students also write an individual essay, participate in group work and orally present their position in a problem-based seminar, and undertake a written exam.

Different instructions are included for each lecture with the aim of enhancing different skills. Students are expected to have read the relevant materials ahead of each lecture. Student activity is important for the success of the course and is an important part of all the course's sessions, including the lectures.

The lectures should assist students to understand basic concepts and principles that underpin international human rights law, and to problematise and critically reflect on the different topics. The problem-based seminar session will test the student's knowledge of the substance and procedure of international human rights law, their ability to analyse, apply and interpret legal norms, and explain and discuss their conclusions, both in the group preparations and during the seminar. The individual essay should develop the student's ability to connect knowledge of the substance and procedure of international human rights law with critical thinking. The written exam will test and develop the student's knowledge of the substantive and procedural rules involved, as well as the ability to identify and analyse legal problems, and apply the rules.

Slides used by the lecturer together with other relevant material (if any) for each lecture will be posted on Athena.

The written exam will be based on the lectures, as well as on the whole of the course textbook. As such, lecture attendance is highly recommended, although not mandatory. Participation in problem-based seminar and group work preparing for this seminar, and the essay discussion **is mandatory**, as are the written exercises.

More about the course structure

The different course elements

The course is divided into five parts. The introduction presents basic concepts and places human rights in a historical and philosophical perspective. The second part discusses the various mechanisms and systems for protection human rights. The third part provides an overview of several substantive rights. The fourth part presents a broader and more critical perspective that the student will return to in the individual essay

Written and oral exercises

See section on Examination below.

Mandatory course elements

Students must complete the written exam and submit an individual essay to be able to pass the course. In addition, **participation in the problem-based seminar, seminar session group work, and the essay discussion is mandatory**. Note that while attendance at lectures is not mandatory, attendance is highly recommended, given that the written end exam will be based on the lectures, as well as the whole of the course textbook.

The course coordinator may grant an exemption from the attendance requirement in accordance with rules decided by the Department of Law. In addition to this, exemptions may be granted in the event of legitimate absence. The student must then complete an educationally equivalent assignment to compensate for the absence.

International and comparative elements of the course

All of the elements of the course are international. There are also elements of comparative law regarding the various human rights mechanisms, and protections within national systems.

Interaction with the surrounding society

In addition to legal problems, ethical, political, social, cultural and economic questions related to human rights are dealt with throughout the course.

How the course relates to other courses and to the law programme as a whole

This is one of the specialized and advanced courses offered to exchange students and Swedish students towards the end of the law programme. The course connects to previous courses in the law programme, such as constititutional/public law (*statsrätt*), EU law (*Europarätt*) and public international law (*folkrätt*).

The course may be part of the specialized study year (*studieår*) "Public International Law and the Individual" (*Folkrätten och individen*), which includes two specialized courses and a thesis (30 credits). The specialised courses consist of "Human Rights in a Global Perspective" (15 credits) and "International Criminal Law" (15 credits). Note: the specialized study year is only available for students registered and writing their final thesis within the law programme (4.5 years) at Stockholm University.

Requirements regarding participation in the course

Registration

A **Swedish student** who intends to participate in the course must be registered by the second day of the course at the latest.

Exchange students register on the course through their university account in Ladok at the beginning of their exchange, the week before the semester starts.

Re-registration

Re-registration on the course is done by the course administrator.

De-registration

If for some reason, a student does not intend to take the course, they must de-register within three weeks after the start of the course (known as "early withdrawal period"). This is done through the student's university account in Ladok. This is of great importance to guarantee a place in a group the next time the student applies for the course. The early withdrawal period is calculated from the Monday of the week the course starts and three weeks ahead. The last day is always a Sunday.

Please note that de-registrations may have consequences for the right to receive student grants, including Erasmus grants. Please, contact CSN for more information if you are a Swedish student, or the Office of International Affairs if you are an international master student or an exchange student.

Groups

In order to enroll in a group, students must be registered on the course. Students who have never taken the course previously are given priority when choosing a group. The day/time of registration is indicated on the course website. The possibility for re-registered students to participate in a group is subject to availability and done on a "first come, first served" basis.

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Study instructions

Textbooks

- Daniel Moeckli, Sangeeta Shah and Sandesh Sivakumaran (eds.), *International Human Rights Law* (4th ed., Oxford University Press, 2022)

- Alison Bisset (ed.), *Blackstone's International Human Rights Documents* (Oxford University Press), either the 12th or the 13th edition 2020/2023

Source materials

An updated library of online sources is included in the course website. The following is a non-exhaustive list of sources.

Instruction: Left-click + ctrl to use the links below

International organisations
Council of Europe (CoE)
United Nations (UN)
United Nations Treaty Collection
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
Organization of American States (OAS)
Council of Europe (COE)
African Union (AU)

International tribunals and courts
International Court of Justice (ICJ)
International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)
Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organisation

Regional human rights courts and monitoring bodies
Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ)
European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) Hudoc database
Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR)
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAtCHR)
African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)
African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights (ACtHPR)

International criminal tribunals and courts
Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal (IMT)
Database at the Library of Congress
Database Yale University
Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals Under Control Council Law No. 10 (NMT)
Database at the Library of Congress International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)
Cases
International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) Cases
Court records
Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT)
International Criminal Court (ICC)

Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)
Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL)
Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL)

Library
Stockholm University Library
Libris

Journals (access: Stockholm University, first log in through the University library website)
Hein-on-line
Westlaw
Cambridge core
Oxford academic journals

Online commentaries and database
Oxford Public International Law
Commentary on the Law of the International Criminal Court (CLICC)

Other materials

Additional readings will be indicated during the course and can be found on the course website.

Preparations for teaching

For the lectures, students are expected to have studied the relevant materials of the course ahead of each session. Any slides used by the lecturer will be posted on the course website after the lecture. For readings from the textbook, please see the above table under section 2.2. Further detailed references to the literature and source material for each session will be included on the course website.

In all the lectures, complex real-world problems will be used to promote students' critical understanding of the actual functioning of various concepts and principles within the field of international human rights law. This does not merely mean analysing cases that have already been adjudicated (whether in class or by writing the case study). In the problem-based seminar, students will work with an open-ended case that has specifically been created for them to deliberate, discuss and solve as a group.

The table below indicates the corresponding chapters in the course textbook. **Note, the written examination is based on the whole book.**

Lectures	Chapter in the textbook
Introduction	4, 5, 6, 7
Historical and philosophical background	1, 2, 3
Systems of human rights protection: The United Nations	19
Regional enforcement: Europe	20, 22
Regional enforcement: Americas	21

Regional enforcement: Africa	23
Other systems of human rights protections	24, 25, 26, 27
Introduction to civil and political rights	8, 9
Civil and political rights: integrity of the person	9, 13, 29
Civil and political rights: The three freedoms	11
Economic, social and cultural rights	8, 10, 12, 14 The lecture also addresses elements relevant to chapters 30, 31, 32
Women's rights	16
Children as refugees	17, 27
Transitional justice	25, 26, 27
Non-State actors	28
Problem based seminar	6, 7, 8, 11, 15, 22

Examination

Examined moments

The course is examined through an individual essay (8-10 pages), group work and active participation in the problem-based seminar session, and an open-book written exam.

The individual essay will test the student's ability to connect knowledge of the substance and procedure of international human rights law with critical thinking. The problem-based seminar will test the student's knowledge of the substance and procedure of international human rights law, as well as the student's ability to presented their conclusions orally. The written exam will test the student's knowledge of the substantive and procedural rules involved, as well as the ability to identify and critically analyze legal problems and apply the relevant rules.

The **maximum score** for each examination component is as follows:

Individual essay	40 pts
Problem-based seminar session	Pass/Fail
Written exam	60 pts
TOTAL	100 pts

Swedish grade:	ECTS grade:
AB= 74-100	A= 80-100
	B= 74-79,5
Ba= 58-73,5	C= 67-73,5
	D= 58-66,5
B= 50-57,5	E= 50-57,5

FX=Fail; F= Fail

These limits may be revised, but only downwards.

Exam registration

Students must register for the exam no later than 10 calendar days before the date of the exam. Registration for the exam requires registration on the course. **Students who have not registered for the exam are not allowed to write the exam.**

Swedish students receive a grade on the learning outcome-based four-grade grading scale AB-U. International master students and exchange students receive a grade on the learning outcome-based seven-grade grading scale A-F(x).

All students have the right to receive grades according to the grading scale A-F(x). Swedish students who wish to do so must report this to the course coordinator/teaching assistant at least five working days before the written exam.

Students with a documented disability who have been issued a certificate of extra pedagogical support from Stockholm University must report this to the course administrator/teaching assistant as soon as possible (see below, "studying with a disability").

Documents allowed at the exam

All students are required to show a valid ID on the day of exam. Driving licenses, passports and ID cards that are still in date are approved as identification. In case of stolen or lost ID, students may also prove their identity by providing a police report of no more than three months. Foreign ID documents are also accepted, preferably passports and ID cards.

Permitted aids and other exam regulations

Students must be in the examination room at least 15 minutes before the exam is set to start.

At the exam, different examination options can be applied. Information about the different examination options and the rules that apply can be found on the Department of Law's website. The presence of unauthorized exam aids, notes and the like, as well as violations of exam regulations may lead to a notification to the university Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee, led by the university president, can decide on a warning or a suspension.

In the course Human Rights in a Global Perspective, the examination option 4 is applied.

Grading criteria

The individual essay will be evaluated mainly on the basis of the following criteria (which have been adopted from the assessment criteria of the course 'Law and Information Communication Technology'):

AB (A) *	An excellently structured reasoning with a clear focus on the central aspects and with a high relevance in light of the questions posed; extensive reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems, including critical reflection.
AB (B)*	A very well-structured reasoning with a clear focus on the central aspects and with a high relevance in the light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems, including critical reflection.
BA (C)*	A well-structured reasoning with a focus on the central aspects and with relevance in the light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make independent and balanced assessment of the problems.
BA (D)*	A structured and relevant reasoning which covers some of the central aspects in light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; signs of an ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems.
B (E)*	A transparent reasoning which observes some aspects that are central to the questions posed; some reference to legal sources and relevant facts; signs of an ability to make an independent assessment of the problems.
Fx	A reasoning which observes aspects that are central to the questions posed but insufficient reference to legal sources and the relevant facts and/or no signs of an ability to make an independent assessment of the problems.
F	A reproduction of disjointed facts with insufficient reasoning.

*The symbols in parenthesis represent the equivalent of the stated grade on the A – F scale.

If a written assignment is submitted late, points will be deducted.

Students receive either a pass (G) or fail (U) grade for the problem-based seminar. This is graded based on active participation. Active participation means that students must have prepared the assignments and be ready to participate in discussions about them. Only participation in the group in which the student is registered counts as attendance, unless a change of group has been approved in advance.

Attendance at all compulsory parts of the course is also required in order to pass the course.

Request for grade review:

Requests for grade reviews are submitted on a special form to the course administrator/teaching assistant. The request must be carefully supported and a copy of the exam must be attached.

Citation

Legal texts normally use Oxford or OSCALA referencing, whereas social sciences use Harvard referencing. It is up to you to choose whether to use Oxford or OSCALA referencing style or Harvard referencing style. However, it is important that you are consistent and stick to the one referencing style throughout the entire text. Do not mix the two styles.

Oxford referencing: references are in footnotes. The first time a source is used, use the full reference. In subsequent references use ibid. if it is the immediately subsequent footnote, otherwise use short form. In addition to footnotes, you should also indicate the full reference in bibliography at the end of the text.

Harvard referencing: references are embedded in the text in short form and enclosed in parenthesis, either within or after a sentence, for example: (Sluiter, 2002, p. 35). In addition to references embedded in the text, you should also indicate the full reference in bibliography at the end of the text.

Plagiarism

You may never use any source or copy from the internet without referencing in the main text, footnotes and/or in endnotes. We check all writing, including the individual essays, with anti-plagiarism software, and any form of plagiarism immediately turns into a formal complaint with Stockholm University. If you are unsure about what is ok and not, check with the teacher.

To plagiarize is to present content from some others work as your own. It is to omit information on who is the author or where the material originates. Plagiarism includes to copy text in verbatim (in its entirety) as well as presenting results, ideas and conclusions as it is your own. Plagiarism can include text as well as other material such as a picture, figure or a diagram.

Scholarly work to a large extent builds on the work of others, and there is nothing wrong in that. Ways to thus avoid plagiarism include;

- Be careful to always indicate correct references to your sources. It is often time consuming to do that afterwards and there is also a risk that you will omit a source that you have used. Thus, write down your references continuously as you are drafting your text or making notes.

- It is allowed to build on the conclusions and analysis of others, in such cases you must indicate who have made these conclusions/analysis, either by a reference in a footnote or in the main text if it is a principal conclusion/analysis.

- If it is a longer and principal argument/sentences(s) of an author, it is suitable to quote the argument/sentence(s) with a reference in a footnote.

- It is approved to use conclusions/analysis from student essays, in such cases you must make references and work independently in relation to such sources in the same way as you do with other sources.

CHAT GPT and other AI tools

During this course we permit you to use CHAT GPT and similar AI tools provided that you are transparent and cite this use in accordance with the instructions below. In all circumstances, you must remain the main author of the work.

Be aware of the fact that AI tools are not search engines and may not return accurate search results. They can be useful to get started or move forward, but if you're just looking for information it may be better to use a search engine or other research method. However, you have to conduct your own research and add your own analysis. The grading will consider to what extent you have done that. Remember to verify generated information against sources. Anything you submit, be that written text or a prompt will be used in the training of the AI by the company, so do not submit anything confidential or private.

1. You must provide an annex to your work with the question(s) you used and the full text provided by the AI tool. This should be copied into a word document and included as an annex to your work.

    a. You can either use the question that you have been given by us (the teachers) or the question as modified by you. This includes the possibility to add several subordinate questions in order to answer an overarching question. Our experience is that it is very important which question you use in AI tools, such as CHAT GPT, small differences may generate very different quality in the answers provided. Thus, you need to analyse the answer provided and adjust the question(s) if necessary. In other words, it is an iterative process.

    b. Highlight in yellow in the annex what parts you have used in your own document, regardless if the text is used verbatim or modified.

2. You have to provide an explanation on how you have used the AI tool.

    a. If you use an AI tool to check your grammar, to assist with the structure of the text or similar, you should reference this in your introductory chapter. Avoid using generative AI for generating or modifying academic text.

    b. List all AI-based tools you have used in your bibliography, and explain to what extent you used the listed tools.

        i. Which question(s) did you use? Was it the same question as provided by the teacher or did you create your own questions? You need to motivate your choice and course of action.

            - It is allowed to copy-paste parts of the text from CHAT GPT or similar into your text **if** you find and add sources into footnotes with the same standard as normally used. You should write in the footnote: “text generated by [INSERT NAME OF AI TOOL] by use of the question ….”.

            - It is also allowed to modify parts of the text from CHAT GPT or similar and paste into your text if you find and add sources into footnotes with the same standard as normally used. You should write in the footnote: “text generated by [INSERT NAME OF AI TOOL] by use of the question …., subsequently modified”

        ii. If you find that the answer from the AI tool is of poor quality and you have not used it at all, please state that and explain how you came to the conclusion. This could be, for example, that based on your research you found that the generated answer to be wrong and/or inaccurate.

3. Plagiarism and impact on grading

    a. The use of text from AI tools without mentioning it in your text or the explanation that you have used this tool is considered to be plagiarism and will immediately result into a formal complaint with Stockholm University.

    b. The use of text from AI tools where you mention in your text or the explanation that you have used this tool, but without adding other sources is considered to be bad quality which may lead to a lower grade, including a fail.

Studying with a disability

General

Stockholm University offers various forms of extra pedagogical support for people with permanent disabilities. The support offered depends on the individual's situation and is intended to facilitate studies. The goal is for all students to have an opportunity to study on equal terms.

To take advantage of the support offered, students must submit an application to the university's Disability Services (part of the Student Services). To do this, they must log into the system NAIS via a link found on Student Services's web page (Stockholm University > Education > Studying with a disability > how to apply for support) and fill in the online form. To complete the application, a certificate confirming the disability must be attached.

When the application is received, the student will be contacted by the Student Services to book a personal meeting.

Once the student is granted support, they will need to contact their department's contact person and submit the certificate issued by the Student Services. The contact person at the Department of law for Swedish students is Viktoria Pettersson, director of studies, Tel.: 08-16 13 04 or e-mail: viktoria.pettersson@juridicum.su.se. International master students must contact the Office of International Affairs at master@juridicum.su.se. Exchange students must also contact the OIA using the email exchange@juridicum.su.se.

Examination

Note that the course administrator/teaching assistant must be informed of a student's documented disability **no later than 3 weeks** before each examination in order for the extra pedagogical support to be in place in time. If the information is received later, the department cannot guarantee that the examination can be carried out as desired**. Please also note that registration for the exam must be done in the usual manner no later than 10 calendar days before the exam**. Also note that in order to receive extra pedagogical support during the entire course (e.g. note-taking assistance) or special extra measures (e.g. dividing up the exam), the course administrator/teaching assistant must be contacted at the latest **by at the start of the course**.

Student influence and course development

All students are asked to complete an anonymous electronic course evaluation at the end of the course. The course evaluation is of great importance for the quality assurance of the course content and its pedagogical structure. The course is constantly changing and evolving, and the views and ideas expressed in the course evaluation are always carefully considered.