# Table of Contents

## SYLLABUS

- Venue and Times
- Introductory Dinner and Orientation
- Course Aims and Scope
- Preparation, Participation and Evaluation
- Required Reading Material

## COURSE OUTLINE

- Week One (Profs. Josi and Rivera)
- Week Two (Profs. Josi and Rivera)
- Week Three (Guest Lecturers and Profs. Josi and Rivera)

## READING ASSIGNMENTS

### WEEK 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Introduction to International Human Rights Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>UN Human Rights Treaties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>UN Treaty-based Human Rights Mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>UN Charter-based Human Rights Mechanisms (UN Simulation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WEEK 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>The Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IAHRS Simulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3</td>
<td>Human Rights in U.S. Courts / Corporate Accountability / Human Rights and the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Field Trip – Water Contamination and Labor Rights Violations in the Pineapple Industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### WEEK 3 (Sessions held at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>Women’s Rights / Domestic Enforcement of IACtHR Judgments / Prohibition of Torture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>Physical liberty and detention / Reparations / Forced Disappearances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 10</td>
<td>Refugee Protection / Role of NGOs / Site visit to and guest lecture at the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>Transitional Justice / Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>Final Exam (9:00 – 12:00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SYLLABUS

Venue and Times

- Class meets every Monday through Thursday at the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. (The Institute is located here).
- We will have a field trip on Thursday, June 4, where we will visit Costa Rican labor union plantation workers in the Caribbean region, as well as a rural community whose water has been contaminated by chemicals used in nearby pineapple plantations. (The community is located here. Check out how close the plantations are to the river).
- Classes on June 8th, 9th, and 10th will be held at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (The Court is located here).
- Spanish language classes are in the afternoons, Monday to Thursday, at the Costa Rican Language Academy (CRLA). (CRLA is located here).
- The written examination will take place on Friday, June 12.

Introductory Dinner and Orientation

- Our first informal meeting will be over dinner on Sunday, May 24, at 7pm at an Italian restaurant called Il Pomodoro San Pedro (located here, in the corner between Ave. 2 and Calle 1 in San Pedro, close to the Outlet Mall). In addition to meeting everyone in an informal setting, we will also take this opportunity to discuss important information regarding the program.

Course Aims and Scope

- This course aims to provide participants with a good understanding of the nature, scope, and practical enforcement of international human rights law, with a focus on the Inter-American human rights system. The course is divided into 12 sessions over a period of three weeks.
- The first week will provide a general overview of international human rights law, including the U.N. human rights system. In week two, we will cover the Inter-American human rights system. On Thursday of week two, students will travel to the Caribbean to learn about U.S. banana and pineapple corporations, labor rights, and environmental law. Week three will cover more specialized topics in the Inter-American system and will be taught by attorneys from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, local NGOs, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Preparation, Participation and Evaluation

- Class attendance is mandatory.
- Every student is expected to do the required reading for every class. This is a small class, with a heavy emphasis on class discussion and class participation. If one student does not do the assigned reading, every student suffers as a result. We recommend you also look at the suggested readings, although these are not required.
The course is evaluated by way of a written examination (75%) and class attendance and participation (25%). The written examination will take place at the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights on Friday, June 12, from 9 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

**Required Reading Material**

There is no required textbook. All of the readings will be available online or will be sent via email.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that you purchase and bring to Costa Rica one of the following two books. Each of these books provides a helpful compilation of key international human rights treaties and other documents.


If you prefer not to purchase either of these two books, you can find all of the relevant treaties on the web. However, internet access in Costa Rica is pretty spotty, so we recommend that you bring one of these two books, or download the material beforehand.
COURSE OUTLINE

Week One (Profs. Josi and Rivera)

May 25:   Introduction to Public International Law and to International Human Rights Law
May 26:   UN Human Rights Treaties
May 27:   UN Treaty-based Human Rights Mechanisms
May 28:   UN Charter-based Human Rights Mechanisms (UN Simulation)

Week Two (Profs. Josi and Rivera)

June 1:   The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
June 2:   The Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IAHRS Simulation)
June 3:   Human Rights in U.S. Courts / Corporate Accountability / Human Rights and the Environment
June 4:   Field Trip to Plantations in the Caribbean with Local Attorney Emily Yozell (Corporate
           Accountability, Labor Rights, and the Environment)

Week Three (Guest Lecturers and Profs. Josi and Rivera)

June 8:   Guest lectures by attorneys of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights
           ● Women’s Rights
           ● Domestic Enforcement of IACtHR Judgments
           ● Torture and Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment

June 9:   Guest lectures by attorneys of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights
           ● Physical liberty and detention
           ● Reparations
           ● Enforced Disappearances

June 10:  Guest lectures by attorneys of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
           and site visit to and guest lecture at the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)

June 11:  Introduction to Transitional Justice
           Review

June 12:  Final Exam (9:00 – 12:00)
READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1

May 25:  Introduction to International Human Rights Law

**Required Readings**

1. *Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: What are Human Rights?*
4. *What is a Treaty?*

*Browse/skim the following web pages and human rights research guides:*

1. UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
2. Universal Human Rights Index and research guide.

May 26:  UN Human Rights Treaties

**Required Reading:**

2. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948)

*Browse/skim the following UN Human Rights Treaties:*

1. *International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination* (CERD)
2. *International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR)
3. *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW)
4. *Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* (CAT)
5. *Convention on the Rights of the Child*
7. *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families* (CMW)
8. **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED)**

**Suggested Reading on U.S. Failure to Ratify CEDAW and CRC:**

1. [Why Won’t the U.S. Ratify CEDAW?](#)
2. [CEDAW goes local in California – and beyond?](#)
3. [With South Sudan vote, US (again) will stand (virtually) alone on children’s rights](#)

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### May 27: UN Treaty-based Human Rights Mechanisms

**Required Reading**

2. [UNESCO, How to file complaints on Human Rights Violations, A manual for individuals and NGOs](#), (Look at charts on pp. 174-176)

**Browse/skim the following websites**

1. [UN Human Rights Bodies](#)
   a. Human Rights Committee
   b. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
   c. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
   d. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
2. Department of State - [U.S. Treaty Reports](#) (on enforcement of UN human rights treaties ratified by US)

### May 28: UN Charter-based Human Rights Mechanisms (UN Simulation)

**Required Reading**


**Browse/skim the following websites**

1. [UN Human Rights Council](#)
   a. **Special Procedures:**
      i. Thematic Mandates
      ii. Country Mandates
      iii. Working Groups
   b. **Complaint Procedures**
   c. **Universal Periodic Review**

**Suggested Reading**

2. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights “Fact Sheet No. 35 – The Right to Water”. (50 pages)
WEEK 2

June 1: The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Required Reading

Browse/skim the following:
1. American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man
2. American Convention on Human Rights
3. Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Mandate and Functions.

June 2: The Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IAHRS Simulation)

Required Reading
1. Atala Riffo and Daughters v. Chile case on LGBT rights
   a. Skim the admissibility report, merits report, and submission of the case to the Court.
   b. Read the following paragraphs of the Court’s final judgment: 77-94, 124, 133-140, 142, 146, 161-165, 174, 225, 267, 271, 272, 279-284, and the operative paragraphs in 314. (About 14 pages in total.)

Browse/skim the following:
1. Inter-American Court of Human Rights’ website
2. Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women “Convention of Belém do Pará”

June 3: Human Rights in U.S. Courts / Corporate Accountability / Human Rights and the Environment

Required Reading:
4. Watch this brief video introduction to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
5. The *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*, Part I, Chapter 4 (on Human Rights), pp. 31-34, as well as the remarks by then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on their adoption.


### June 4: Field Trip – Water Contamination and Labor Rights Violations in the Pineapple Industry

**Required Reading:**


### WEEK 3 (Sessions held at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights)

#### June 8: Women’s Rights / Domestic Enforcement of IACtHR Judgments / Prohibition of Torture

**Session 1: Women’s Rights** (*Julie Recinos*, Inter-American Court)

Suggested reading: TBD


**Session 2: Domestic Enforcement of IACtHR Judgments** (*Olger González*, Inter-American Court)

Suggested reading: TBD


**Session 3: Prohibition of Torture** (*Cecilia La Hoz*, Inter-American Court)

Suggested reading: TBD

June 9: Physical liberty and detention / Reparations / Forced Disappearances

**Session 1: Physical liberty and detention** (Patricia Tarre, Inter-American Court)
Suggested reading: TBD

**Session 2: Reparations** (Jorge Calderón, Inter-American Court)
Suggested reading: TBD

**Session 3: Forced Disappearances** (Mariana Clemente, Inter-American Court)
Suggested reading: TBD
- Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons

June 10: Refugee Protection / Role of NGOs / Site visit to and guest lecture at the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL)

**Session 1: Refugee Protection** (Luis Diego Obando, UN High Commissioner for Refugees)
Suggested reading: TBD
- The Refugee Law Reader, Sections I, II, and VI

**Session 2: Role of NGOs** (Paola Limón, Center for Justice and International Law)
Suggested reading: TBD
- CEJIL, What we do

June 11: Transitional Justice / Review

**Required readings:**

**Suggested readings:**
2. Fujimori on trial

June 12: Final Exam (9:00 – 12:00)