

# INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

Fall 2020

Philip Alston

**Class Schedule:** Mondays 3.00 – 4.50 and Thursdays 11.20 – 1.10

**Office hours** 3.00 – 5.00 Thursdays, sign-up with Brianne Cuffe (brianne.cuffe@nyu.edu)

## Course texts

The materials for the course will be provided on a weekly basis.

There is also a Documents Supplement which contains official documents which you will need to refer to during the course. This can be downloaded from NYU Classes.

## Syllabus

### INTRODUCTION AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

**1. Thurs., Aug 27**

Introduction to Human Rights Concepts

**2. Mon., Aug 31**

Human Rights Discourse: Capital Punishment

**3. Thurs., Sept. 3**

The Human Rights Regime: International law framework and origins  
The Law of Armed Conflict and Customary International Law

**4. Wed., Sept. 9 (Legislative Monday)**

The Human Rights Regime: International law framework and origins  
General Principles and Soft Law: State Responsibility

**5. Thurs., Sept. 10**

The Human Rights Regime: International law framework and origins  
Interwar Minorities Regime and the Role of Treaties

### NORMATIVE FOUNDATIONS: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

**6. Mon., Sept. 14**

Normative Foundations

Judgment at Nuremberg: Individual Criminal Responsibility

- 7. Thurs., Sept. 17**  
The UN Charter and the UDHR
- 8. Mon., Sept. 21**  
Women's Rights and CEDAW
- 9. Thurs., Sept. 24**  
Women's Rights and CEDAW: Public/private divide
- 10. Mon., Sept. 28**  
Women's Rights and CEDAW: Reproductive rights and reservations to treaties
- 11. Thurs., Oct. 1**  
Evolution of Human Rights: Sexual Orientation Discrimination
- 12. Mon., Oct. 5**  
Norm Regression: The Torture Prohibition
- 13. Thurs., Oct. 8**  
Human rights and counter-terrorism
- 14. Mon., Oct. 12**  
National Security, Terrorism and the Law of Armed Conflict
- 15. Thurs., Oct. 15**  
U.S. National Security Policies and Human Rights
- 16. Mon., Oct. 19**  
Countering Violent Extremism
- 17. Thurs., Oct 22**  
Universalism and Cultural Relativism: FGM
- 18. Mon., October 26**  
Universalism and Cultural Relativism: dress and symbols
- 19. Thurs., October 29**  
The United Nations Human Rights System
  - A. Overview of the UN Human Rights Machinery
  - B. The UN Human Rights Council
- 20. Mon., November 2**
  - B. The UN Human Rights Council (cont'd)
- 21. Thurs., November 5**
  - C. The Role of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

- 22. Mon., Nov 9**  
Human rights fact-finding: challenges and methodologies
- 23. Thurs, November 12**  
International commissions of inquiry
- 24. Mon, November 16**  
TBD
- 25. Thurs, November 19**  
Human rights in the digital age – privacy and surveillance
- 26. Monday, November 23**  
Human rights in the digital age – the digital welfare state and regulatory options
- 27. Monday, November 30**  
Critical perspectives on human rights
- 28. Thursday, December 3**  
Evaluating the international human rights regime