Schedule: Monday Feb. 18, 2019- Wednesday Feb. 20, 2019

Course content/Course objectives:

On December 10, 1948, United Nations member states adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), undertaking to respect and protect human rights. The UDHR has spearheaded the creation of human rights mechanisms consisting of several legally binding multilateral instruments and human rights institutions at both the international and regional levels. Moreover, it has inspired nation states to put in place constitutional guarantees and legal and judicial mechanisms to protect human rights domestically.

Regional human rights systems have been instrumental in the protection and promotion of human rights. In addition to facilitating the creation of strong monitoring and enforcement mechanisms (e.g. commissions, special rapporteurs, courts), they have also provided a platform for addressing human rights concerns that are of particular concern to the region. Some examples of human rights concerns that are addressed by regional instruments include an expanded definition of refugees and female genital cutting in Africa, forced disappearances in the Americas, capital punishment in Europe.

The objective of this three-day workshop is to provide an overview of the origin and development of the law, theory, institutions, and practice of human rights law in Africa and to look at some contemporary challenges to the promotion and protection of human rights. Students will critically engage with literature exploring the relationship between human rights, democracy, religion, and local traditions by taking specific African countries as examples and they will discuss the continued relevance of human rights in light of recent developments, including moves by the African Union to neutralize Africa’s main human rights body- the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

Learning Outcomes

The aim of this workshop is to help participants:

1. have a basic knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the various laws and institutions of the African Human Rights System;
2. think critically about some of the contemporary human rights concerns of relevance to the African continent and;
3. have an informed and nuanced understanding of the challenges to promoting and protecting human rights in select African countries.

**Instructional Method**

The instruction will be conducted through a combination of lectures, class discussion and activities based on the mandatory readings and video clips. There will also be presentations of fieldwork-based research on reconciliation and transitional justice in the aftermath of conflict.

In accordance with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students may submit their written work in English or in French.

**Session 1: Introduction to the African Regional Human Rights System**

Feb. 18, 2019, 9:00 – 12:00

**Readings:**


**Regional Legal Instruments**

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
The Malabo Protocol

**Session 2: Challenges to the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Africa**

Feb. 18, 2019, 14:00 – 16:00

**Readings:**

Session 3: The Right to Development and some Contemporary Human Rights Concerns
Feb. 19, 2019, 9:00 – 12:00

Readings:

Women’s Human Rights

Ngambouk Vitalis Pemunta & Mathias Fubah Alubafi, The social context of widowhood rites and women’s human rights in Cameroon (29 Sep 2016).


Available at https://doi.org/10.1080/0305624042000262275


Business Investment and Human Rights


Rights of the Child

Session 5: “No Peace, No War”: The Human Rights Situation in Eritrea
Feb. 19, 2019, 14:00 – 16:00

Readings:


Session 6: Conclusion/ Presentations
Feb. 20, 2019, 10:00 – 12:00

Readings:
**Assignments & Evaluation:**

Evaluation will be on a pass-fail basis and it will be based both on class participation and a short reflection paper. Since this is a three-day workshop, students are expected to attend all sessions. They are required to do the readings ahead of class and participate in the class discussions.

The reflection paper has to be submitted electronically by 6PM, Eastern Time on February 25th, 2019. It should be between 4-6 pages, Times New Roman, font size 12 and, spacing 1.5.

**Access to the Instructor:**

The instructor may be contacted by email at hanna.haile@mail.mcgill.ca or hah59@cornell.edu.

**MCGILL POLICY STATEMENTS**

1. "McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

2. "In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)

3. Absences, extensions or any other academic accommodation must be directed to the SAO for approval.