

Human Rights, Certificate

Learning Outcomes

Students who earn the Certificate in Human Rights will be able to:

- critically analyze real-world global challenges from a human rights perspective;
- articulate creative and effective solutions to real-world global challenges from interdisciplinary perspectives by applying human rights principles, advocacy strategies, and tactics grounded in the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all people;
- identify and trace the impact of the major events that have led to the formation of contemporary human rights concepts, norms, and institutions;
- explain the historical underpinnings of international human rights advocacy and international institutions that emerged in response to doctrines of racial superiority, inequality, discrimination, imperialism, and conflict during the 20th century;
- identify the relevance of, difference between, and constructive potential for problem-solving using interdisciplinary academic methods and inquiries;
- explain differences between a human rights approach and general normative or ethical approaches to an issue (i.e., how is the question “what is unjust or unfair” different from “what is a violation of human rights?”);
- apply human rights frameworks to other fields of study, including the student’s primary major and professional work;
- integrate concepts from other fields of study into their human rights coursework;
- critically analyze the major scholarly debates about human rights, past and present;
- articulate justifications of human rights frameworks and regimes as well as critiques of discourses on, and approaches to, human rights;
- explain foundational international human rights legal concepts;
- develop skills to interpret and apply legal norms;
- create recommendations to improve the efficacy of violation mitigation and/or the international human rights system;
- identify the potential and the limits of the law in advancing human rights;
- identify human rights violations and analyze mitigation options based on existing international human rights legal frameworks;
- identify the basic operational functions of international and domestic legal regimes involved with the promulgation, promotion, and protection of modern human rights standards;
- analyze and evaluate the relationship of human rights to individuals, governments, corporations, and civil society organizations and analyze and evaluate the role of each in the promotion and protection of human rights and in relationship to other social priorities;
- identify specific target audience(s) with the capacity to raise awareness about and mitigate human rights abuses

and to effectively communicate desired actions and outcomes to these diverse audiences in both academic and/or non-academic settings;

- critically analyze when and how human rights frameworks can benefit organizational and business settings;
- develop collaborative skills, improve effective oral communication and presentation skills; and
- develop critical thinking, reading, listening, writing, research, and analytical skills.

Requirements

The undergraduate Certificate in Human Rights requires 18 s.h. of credit. Students must maintain a grade-point average of at least 2.00 in certificate coursework. They may count a maximum of 6 s.h. of transfer credit toward the certificate with approval from the certificate program's faculty advisory group.

The certificate may be earned by any student admitted to the University of Iowa who is not enrolled in a UI graduate or professional degree program. Undergraduate to Graduate (U2G) students may earn the certificate when the undergraduate classification is primary.

Individuals should declare their intent to earn the certificate in MyUI.

The Certificate in Human Rights requires the following coursework.

Foundations in Human Rights

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
HRTS:2115/IS:2115	Introduction to Human Rights	3
HIST:3108	History of Human Rights	3
PHIL:3430	Philosophy of Human Rights	3

Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights

HRTS:2909/IS:2909 Human Rights Lab is repeatable. Other contemporary global issues courses are repeatable if the topic differs.

Course #	Title	Hours
6 s.h. from these:		
HRTS:2902/IS:2902	The Arts and Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:2903/IS:2903	Technology and Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:2907/IS:2907	Literature and Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:2908/IS:2908	Governance and Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:2909/IS:2909	Human Rights Lab	1-3
HRTS:3904/IS:3904	Business, Labor, and Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:3905/IS:3905	Topics in Human Rights	1-3
HRTS:3906	Global Crises and Human Rights	3

Human Rights in Practice

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these:		
HRTS:3910/IS:3910	Approaches to Advocacy: From Theory to Practice	3
HRTS:3920	Advocacy in Action: From the Classroom to Congress (Washington, D.C.)	3

Career Advancement

The Certificate in Human Rights teaches students to explore topics from interdisciplinary perspectives, identify solutions to global challenges, translate foundational concepts into effective advocacy, and strengthen their ability to communicate with diverse audiences. The certificate not only bolsters the skillsets of students who transition directly to a career following graduation, but it also benefits students bound for law school or other professional or graduate studies. Students enroll in the certificate program from undergraduate departments and majors across the University of Iowa.

Certificate program graduates currently have careers:

- practicing law;
- advancing access to justice and legal reform;
- investigating human rights violations for metropolitan governmental commissions;
- creating legislative policy;
- working for human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Center for Civilians in Conflict;
- coordinating services for people who are homeless;
- advocating for domestic abuse survivors;
- designing K-12 curriculums;
- creating international development programs for governmental agencies, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID);
- producing print and broadcast news; and
- resettling refugees and asylum seekers.

The center circulates a student newsletter to alert students to relevant internship and employment opportunities. The Pomerantz Career Center also offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

Academic Plans

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

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Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
Courses for the Certificate in Human Rights may be taken in any order but taking HRTS:2115 Introduction to Human Rights in your first semester is recommended. Most other HRTS courses are offered only one semester each year.		
Hours		0
First Year		
Fall		
HRTS:2115	Introduction to Human Rights	3
Certificate: Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights course(s) ^a		3
Hours		6
Spring		
HIST:3108	History of Human Rights	3
Certificate: Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights course(s) (HRTS:2909 Human Rights Lab is recommended) ^a		1
Hours		4
Second Year		
Any Semester		
HRTS:3910 or HRTS:3920	Approaches to Advocacy: From Theory to Practice ^b or Advocacy in Action: From the Classroom to Congress (Washington, D.C.)	3
Hours		3
Fall		
PHIL:3430	Philosophy of Human Rights	3
Certificate: Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights course(s) ^a		1
Hours		4
Spring		
Certificate: Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights course(s) ^a		1
Hours		1
Total Hours		18

a Complete a total of 6 s.h. of Contemporary Global Issues in Human Rights courses (prefix HRTS) numbered 2902 through 2909 or 3904 through 3906. There are typically 1 s.h., off-cycle courses as well as a 3 s.h. course in Contemporary Global Issues offered in the fall and spring semesters.

b Complete the 3 s.h. of Human Rights in Practice requirement by taking HRTS:3910 (typically offered in the fall) or HRTS:3920 (typically offered in the spring).