



POLS0039

Global Economic and Social Rights

Lecturer:	Dr M. Rodwan Abouharb
Office Hours:	Online Mondays 4-5, bookable through SPP Book
Teaching:	10 hours of lectures, 10 hours of seminars
Credits:	0.5 Course Units/ 4 US Credits/ 7.5 ECTS Credits
Assessment Method:	One 3000 word essay/research paper
Essay Deadlines:	TBC
Attendance:	Attendance is compulsory at all lectures and seminars for which students are timetabled. Attendance will be monitored and no student will be entered for assessment unless they have attended and pursued the module to the satisfaction of the department.

USEFUL LINKS

Lecture and Seminar Times:

Online Timetable at www.ucl.ac.uk/timetable

UG Student Intranet

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug>

Extenuating Circumstances

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug/pastoral/extenuating-circumstances>

Penalties for Late Submission and Overlength Essays

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug/essays/lateness-word-penalties>

Essay Submission Information

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug/essays/submission-return>

Essay Writing, Plagiarism and TurnItIn

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug/essays/writing-skills>

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/political-science/intranet/ug/policies/plagiarism>

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/Library/CitationPlagiarism.doc>

Global Economic and Social Rights POLS0039

Lecturer: Dr. M. Rodwan Abouharb

Office Hours: TBC, bookable through SPP Book

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Overview:

The module aims to provide students with an in depth introduction to: understand the topic of what are economical and social rights, the legal obligations that governments have to realise these rights, why governments vary in their efforts to realise these rights, and other international and domestic factors that affect the realisation of these rights.

Aims:

The module will introduce students to the idea of what are economic and social rights and different explanations about where these rights come from. We will then briefly examine the broadening of what constitutes economic, and social rights and the imbedding of these rights in international law since World War II. Next we will ask why governments vary in their efforts to realise the economic and social rights of their citizens. In particular we will try to understand the political advantage governments seek through the realisation or otherwise of these rights. We will then go on to examine what other international and domestic factors affect the realisation of economic and social rights. The international factors include the effects of trade and historical processes like the consequences of slavery on the realisation of economic, and social rights today. The domestic factors include variations in regime type, the independence of the judiciary, and the degree of domestic conflict on the realisation of economic and social rights. Throughout the class we will use examples from the world around us to test and illustrate the arguments made in the literature.

Intended learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this module, students will:

- Understand what are economic and social rights
- Why governments vary in their efforts to realize these rights through a critical understanding of both academic texts and real world examples of government policy choices.
- Understand the substantive topical questions, which have been asked concerning the realisation of economic and social rights.
- Have developed a conceptually and empirically informed understanding of the debates surrounding economic and social rights and their realisation.
- Be able to critically engage with the debates in the literature on economic and social rights and their realisation.
- Be qualified to proceed to further specialised study of economic and social rights and their realisation and/or employment in a related field.
- Have better developed the skills associated with: reading about, understanding and discussing conceptual issues and theoretical debates; applying concepts and theories to the study of economic and social rights; writing essays and participating in group discussions.

Assessment Criteria:

Grades for the course are based on a student's performance in the following areas:	
Research Project	100%
TOTAL	100%

Research Project:

A research paper of 3000 words is required of all students. The paper is a research design paper. It should pose a research question, and create a research design for how to test the student's research question. Students should begin work on this project soon after the semester is underway.

I will provide a list of possible paper topics. Students are allowed to pick from these or those who wish to ask a different question come and discuss a possible paper topic with me. The paper should discuss a limitation in the existing literature, propose a way to generate new knowledge about that particular topic. The more ambitious papers will improve our theoretical understanding in that particular area. The student will then create a research design to test their argument. Students should begin work on this project soon after the term is underway.

Required Readings :

Full text available online through UCL Library catalogue

1. Donnelly, Jack. 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell: Cornell University Press. ISBN 9780801450952
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucl/detail.action?docID=3138459#>
2. Hertel, Shareen and Lanse Minkler (eds.). 2007. *Economic Rights: Conceptual, Measurement and Policy Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9780521087059
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511511257>
3. Minkler, Lanse (ed.). 2013. *The State of Economic and Social Human Rights: A Global Overview*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9781107609136
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139235600>
4. Nolan, Aoife (ed). 2014. *Economic and Social Rights after the Global Financial Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9781107337954
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107337954>
5. Gauri, Varun, and Daniel M. Brinks. 2008. *Courting Social Justice: Judicial Enforcement of Social and Economic Rights in the Developing World*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 9780521873765
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511511240>

Topics:

Conceptualising, Legalising, & Politicising and Economic and Social Rights

1. What are Economic and Social Rights?

Examining the content of economic and social rights and their sources.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

What are economic and social rights in the contexts of human rights? What are the different sources of human rights? Do these different sources affect the breadth of what are considered human rights? Does it matter if rights are conceived of as duties instead? Do these different sources affect whether these rights can be violated? What do you think of Donnelly's conception of human rights? Is his a weak conception? Could it be stronger or is that impossible?

Donnelly, Jack. 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell: Cornell University Press. Chapter 1 (if this is your first human rights class) Chapters 2-4

Hertel, Shareen and Lanse Minkler (eds.). 2007. *Economic Rights: Conceptual, Measurement and Policy Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1.

Landman, Todd. 2005. *Protecting Human Rights: A Comparative Study*. Georgetown University Press. Chapter 2.

Annan, Kofi. 1999. "Two Concepts of Sovereignty." *The Economist*.

Reading: The International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights. Identify one or two human rights mentioned in the UDHR. Are these rights mentioned in either of the Covenants? If so, how is the language different in the two documents? Why do you think the language is different in the Covenants? How does Annan's conception of sovereignty speak to Donnelly's discussion?

Find a good source of international human rights documents online. Print copies of the two covenants we will be reviewing during the next few classes.

A Summary of United Nations Agreements on Human Rights

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/undocs.html>

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Print This)

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/udhr.html>

Covenant of Economic and Social Rights (Print This)

<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/escr.html>

2. The International Historical Legal Framework of Economic and Social Rights

Examining the historical and legal basis of economic and social rights and the obligations placed upon national governments.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

Do industrialised and developing economies place the same emphasis on the realisation of economic and social rights? Did the Cold War matter for the legal obligations placed upon national governments? Were there regional, or cultural differences in the approach and willingness to progressively realise economic and social rights?

Donnelly, Jack. 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell: Cornell University Press. Chapter 1 (if this is your first human rights class) Chapters 5-7,

Minkler, Lanse (ed.). 2013. *The State of Economic and Social Human Rights: A Global Overview*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 10-13

3. The Politics of Economic and Social Rights

Why governments vary in their efforts to realise the economic and social rights of their citizens. What is the trade off that governments face between development and economic and social rights?

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

Why do governments vary in their efforts to realise the economic and social rights of their citizens? Is there a trade-off between development and economic and social rights? What is the trade-off that governments face between development and economic and social rights?

Donnelly, Jack. 2013. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell: Cornell University Press. Chapter 1 (if this is your first human rights class) Chapters 13, 14.

Hertel, Shareen and Lanse Minkler (eds.). 2007. *Economic Rights: Conceptual, Measurement and Policy Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 7-10.

Domestic Factors and Economic and Social Rights

4. Democracy and Autocracy

Examine how and why different domestic institutional configurations affects economic and social rights.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

Is there a difference between democratic and authoritarian regimes for the realisation of economic and social rights? If so why? Does accountability and retention of political power matter for the realisation of economic and social rights?

Required Reading

Zweifel, Thomas D. and Patricio Navia. 2000. "Democracy, Dictatorship, and Infant Mortality." *Journal of Democracy*. 11(2): 99-114.

Ross, Michael .2006. "Is Democracy Good for the Poor?" *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4): 860–874.

Blaydes, Lisa and Mark Andreas Kayser. 2011. "Counting Calories: Democracy and Distribution in the Developing World." *International Studies Quarterly*. 55(4): 887–908.

Miller, Michael K. 2015. "Electoral Authoritarianism and Human Development." *Comparative Political Studies*. 48(12): 1526–1562.

Recommended Reading

Baum, M. A. and Lake, D. A. 2003. "The *Political* Economy of Growth: Democracy and Human Capital." *American Journal of Political Science*. 47: 333–347.

Franco Álvaro, Álvarez-Dardet Carlos, Ruiz Maria Teresa. Effect of democracy on health: ecological study *BMJ* 2004; 329 :1421

5. Judiciary

Examine the role the judiciary plays in realising economic and social rights.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

What is the role the judiciary play in realising economic and social rights? Is there variation in the efforts made by the judiciary in realising economic and social rights? If so why? Does politics restrict or enable the judiciary in realise economic and social rights? How does the judiciary enforce its rulings? When is it more/less successful in realising economic and social rights, and why?

Gauri, Varun, and Daniel M. Brinks. 2008. Courting Social Justice: Judicial Enforcement of Social and Economic Rights in the Developing World. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1,3,4,7,8

6. The Global Financial Crisis & Economic and Social Rights

Examine the consequences of the global financial crisis, how neo-liberalism mediated the consequences, and the different government responses in the areas of housing, food, and health.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

How did the global financial crisis affect the realisation of economic and social rights? Were some areas of the world and some rights affected more than others? If so why? Were any of these consequences predictable? What have governments done to protect economic and social rights from any negative effects of future financial crises?

Nolan, Aoife (ed). 2014. Economic and Social Rights after the Global Financial Crisis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7

7. Judiciary II

Examine the role the judiciary plays in realising economic and social rights after the global financial crisis.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

How has the role of the judiciary changed or remained the same post financial crisis? Does it have a significant impact on the realization of economic and social rights post financial crisis? Has it sought to legalize protections for the realization of economic and social rights post financial crisis?

Nolan, Aoife (ed). 2014. Economic and Social Rights after the Global Financial Crisis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapters 8-11

8. Rights of Health, Education & Women

Examine the realisation of the rights to health, education, and women's rights.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

What factors contribute to the realisation of the rights to health, education and women? What factors make realisation of these rights more difficult? What is the impact of international factors like aid, and trade on the realisation of these rights? What is the impact of domestic factors like different types of political systems, political coalitions, and the role of the judiciary on the realisation of these rights?

Hertel, Shareen and Lanse Minkler (eds.). 2007. *Economic Rights: Conceptual, Measurement and Policy Issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 11.

Minkler, Lanse (ed.). 2013. *The State of Economic and Social Human Rights: A Global Overview*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 2, 3, 8

Gauri, Varun, and Daniel M. Brinks. 2008. *Courting Social Justice: Judicial Enforcement of Social and Economic Rights in the Developing World*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 2,5,6.

Richards, David L., Ronald D. Gelleny. 2007. Women's status and economic globalization. *International Studies Quarterly* 51:4 (December) 855-876.

Stasavage, David. 2005. "Democracy and Education Spending in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science*. 49(2): 343–358.

Ghobarah, H. A., Huth, P. and Russett, B. 2004. "Comparative Public Health: The Political Economy of Human Misery and Well-Being." *International Studies Quarterly*. 48: 73–94.

International Factors and Economic and Social Rights

9. International Financial Institutions

Examine the role that international financial institutions like the World Bank and IMF play in the realisation of economic and social rights.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

Can respect for human rights promote economic development? What are the competing theoretical expectations about the impact of structural adjustment on human rights? What was the actual impact of structural adjustment on human rights? Is the World Bank and IMF undermining their own missions with these programs? Does the application of the different theoretical perspectives have any explanatory value in explaining the types of agreements that were reached? Would different theoretical perspectives come to different conclusions?

Abouharb, M. Rodwan and David Cingranelli. 2007. *Human Rights and Structural Adjustment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1,2,3,6,8,11
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511551055>

Nolan, Aoife (ed). 2014. *Economic and Social Rights after the Global Financial Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Introduction, Chapter 5.

10. Historical Processes

Examine the role that international processes like slavery play in the realisation of economic and social rights today.

Questions to think about for the lecture and seminar:

What is the impact of historical legacies on development? What is the route or routes through which this impact occurs? Does the application of the different theoretical perspectives have any explanatory value in understanding the impact of historical legacies?

Required Reading

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation" *American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369-1401.

Banerjee, Abhijit, and Lakshmi Iyer. 2005. "History, Institutions and Economic Performance: the Legacy of Colonial Land Tenure Systems in India." *American Economic Review* 95(4) (September): 1190-1213.

Nunn, Nathan. 2008. "The Long Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123(1): 139-176.

Debate Did Colonialism Distort Contemporary African Development?

YES: Marcus Colchester, from "Slave and Enclave: Towards a Political Ecology of Equatorial Africa," *The Ecologist* (September/October 1993)

NO: Robin M. Grier, from "Colonial Legacies and Economic Growth," *Public Choice* (March 1999)