This seminar will investigate the development of the idea of "human rights" from ancient times to the present. We will look at secular and religious visions of human rights, considering arguments about "natural rights," "universalism," and "cultural relativism." We will focus particular attention on the development of the modern idea of human rights—and will look in depth at the connections among war, retribution, and international human rights law.

**Format:** This is an advanced seminar that requires your regular attendance and full participation. **Weeks 2 through 13 we will conduct the class like a reading group.**
- Each week all students will come up with two discussion questions based on the readings. The questions must be sent to me and to the week's discussion facilitator(s) via e-mail by noon the day before the seminar meets.
- Each week students will write one-page "response papers." These papers are due no later than 10 p.m. the evening before the seminar meets. The response papers also should be sent to me via e-mail.
**Weeks 14 and 15 students will give short research presentations.**
- Please note: Students are expected to begin work on their research papers during the first weeks of the semester—and are encouraged to come to office hours throughout the semester to discuss paper topics. There are important deadlines weeks 7 and 10. Research papers are due by 5 p.m. on May 11. No extensions. No incompletes. No exceptions.

**Grades:** Course grades will be determined on the basis of participation, response papers, and a 15-page research paper.

**Readings:** Books with an * are available at the University Bookstore. All books are also on reserve at College Library. Readings marked (P) are in the Course Packet, which is being sold at Student Print in Memorial Union; these readings will also be available on electronic reserve. (You can purchase the packet or print out the readings yourself—but you must bring copies to class each week.) Readings marked (W) are available on-line. On-line resources include the Avalon Project, the United Nations website, and the Liberty Fund.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Week (1/25): "Human Rights"—Definitions, Ideals, and Politics**
PART I: THE SEARCH FOR HISTORICAL PRECURSORS

Week 2 (2/1): Is it Anachronistic to Talk about Rights in the Ancient World?


Week 3 (2/9): Religion, Tolerance, and the Meaning of "Human"

(P) Juan Gines de Sepulveda, *The Second Democrates* (1547) selection from *Digital History*.

Week 4 (2/16): "Rights Talk" in Early Modern Europe


**INTERLUDE 1: LIBRARY SESSION**

Week 5 (2/22): Meet at Memorial Library
PART II: HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Week 6 (3/1): Human Rights and International Laws of War

(W) The Hague Congresses (1899, 1907).
(W) The Fourteen Points Address (1918).
(W) The Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928).

Week 7 (3/8): Nuremberg and the "Rebirth" of International Law


DEADLINE 1: Research Paper Proposal

PART III: HUMAN RIGHTS AS "UNIVERSALIST PROJECT"?

Week 8 (3/15): The Universal Declaration and Beyond


Week 9 (3/22): Universalism Revisited

Week 10 (3/29): Human Rights, the USSR, and the Politics of the Cold War
(P) Andrei Sakharov, "How I Came to Dissent" (1974).
(W) Articles from Time Magazine (Feb. 25 and April 22, 1974).

DEADLINE 2: Research Paper Outline and Bibliography

INTERLUDE 2: SPRING BREAK

Week 11 (4/5): Break

PART IV: HUMAN RIGHTS AS A MEANS FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE?

Week 12 (4/12): Human Rights and the Problem of Genocide
* Samantha Power, A Problem from Hell (2003), selected chapters.

Week 13 (4/19): Courts, Truth Commissions, and Justice

Week 14 (4/26): Human Rights After 9/11
(W) "Human Rights in Islam" Institute of Islamic Information and Education Brochure Series; No. 7.

PART V: RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Week 14 (5/3)

Week 15 (5/10)