The human Rights in Islam course is series of 12 lectures (2 hours each) that combine a given lecture with discussions.

The course is based on Moderate Sunni Islam.

Appropriate documentation is supplied to BCA students and readings are highly recommended (if not compulsory) to allow them to built up their own opinion. We should specify what readings will be used for the course and for which lecture/discussion session.
Course description:

This course critically explores the different theoretical perspectives to the relationship between the concept of Human Rights in Islam and that of human rights in all the non Muslim laws (past and present).

We will start by giving our students an understanding of moderate Sunni Islam though studying the first unit that deals with a general introduction to Islam (beliefs, rituals, moral teachings and culture). We will devote some time to the history of the foundations and civilization of Islam, because, even if a religion is conceived in terms of universals and ideals, its actual manifestation is always tempered by historical, cultural and social context. We will explore the meaning of Islam as a worldview and moral system through examining its theological, doctrinal, ritual, philosophical, ethical and political dimensions.

In our second Unit, we will examine relevant theoretical and conceptual issues relating to the nature of both human rights and Islamic law respectively. This will include a critical analysis of the theoretical foundations of human rights, its sources, contents and enforcement methods in relation to the nature, sources and methods of Islamic law.

We will also examine whether or not there is a concept of human rights in Islamic law and explore the areas of common grounds and the areas of conceptual differences between the two systems.

Following this, we will undertake a critical study of some “Islamic” human rights instruments and, over the course, critically analyse, in relation to Islamic law, specific and topical issues such as:

- the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- right to freedom of opinion and expression;
- rights of minority groups;
- women’s rights;
- children’s rights;
- prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatments and punishments;
- right to fair trial and due process;
- human rights enforcement;
and case studies of the human rights practices of some selected Muslim States.

In order to achieve this two-part objective, we will read materials provided by Dar Loughat from various perspectives and of different genres.

This course is designed for all sorts of students, with or without, prior knowledge of Islam.

**Objectives and learning outcomes of the course**

By the end of this course, students should be familiar with the real notion of human rights in the Islamic law, have a clear understanding of the debates surrounding the relationship between human rights in Islamic law and in all other non-Islamic laws.

Consequently, students should be able to:

- Critically analyse the relationship between human rights in Islam and human rights policies and practices in modern secular states within that analysis;
- carry out independent research on the subject;
- Undertake meaningful written and oral analysis of that subject.

**Method of assessment**

The course is assessed with a paper that BCA students have to Email us, by the latest, a week after their departure. Students will have a choice of one set of three questions from a total of 6 different sets. Each question should be answered in no less than 500 words. Therefore, the paper should contain at least 1500 words.

All papers no matter what the student’s choice must have the same basic structure:

1. Introduction- A good introduction should not only grab the reader’s attention but should give an idea of the scope and limits of the essay. Here you need to reference the question directly, if nothing else it shows you have understood and its dimensions.
2. Middle- The middle carries the main burden of the essay. The students must supply the argument and evidence to back up the argument. This is where you need to make decisions about how you will answer the question and try to make an argument that continues throughout the paper. A good paper does not, of course, list all the things that support your argument and ignore all those inconvenient things that might suggest the answer is not so straightforward. You need to demonstrate you know about the awkward factors and have some sort of answer. All judgments are made by weighing the evidence. Some of it does not easily fit. Most judgments are made on the balance of evidence, not because absolutely everything points to an inescapable conclusion.

3. Conclusion- It is of necessity the shortest part of the paper, a paragraph or two. This is not the place to introduce new facts or arguments. All of that should be done in the middle section of the paper. The conclusion states your overall judgment of the paper based on the information that you have presented.

Do’s and Don’ts

1. Make sure that your work is well presented (word-processed, no coffee rings or crinkled paper).
2. Double space; use 1” margins and number your pages.
3. Use the spell checker on your computer! There is nothing worse to read than a paper loaded with fixable typing errors. That is why we tell you to proof read.
4. Always be specific and time period conscious. Show that you are in charge of the material. Never use vague words.
5. Write in formal English. It is not a conversation at Mac Hall. Being “chatty” and using slang is not going to help your grade.
6. Make sure that your writing is consistent: Make verbs agree with subject, ex. The Germans were not the Germans was.
7. Always write in the same verb tense.
Grading

Regular attendance will be expected.

You are not permitted unexcused absences without detriment to your grade; any absences beyond this may count against your attendance grade. Exceptions will be only made at my discretion and with documentation in the event of serious illness, death in the family, emergencies, and the like.

You are responsible for any announcements made in class or sent out via email. This includes announcements made during any portion of class for which you are absent, or 2 email messages that you fail to receive. It is your responsibility to provide me a valid email address and to check it regularly. I will assume all Registrar-held email addresses are valid unless you tell me otherwise.

Assessments will cover both readings and lectures.

**Grading Rubric**

A: 95-100
A-: 90-94
B+: 85-90
B: 80-84
C+: 75-79
C: 60-74
D: 50-59
Required Materials

Pens

A notebook

*Note: Laptop and cell phone use is prohibited in class*
Course Outline:

BCA- Human Rights in Islam Course

UNIT ONE - Introduction to Islam

- What Does Islam mean to you? Discussion to establish what the students know about Islam together with any misconceptions.
- Islam: its historical origins and development, spread, differentiations (beyond Sunni/Shia)
- Islam today: its extent, all colors, believers in all countries.
- Why pick moderate Sunni Islam as the lens for analysing this topic?

1- Islamic Theology

- ALLAH, the concept of God in Islam
- Prophet Muhammad
- The Holy Quran
- Hadiths, meaning and classifications

2- Some general principles of Islam:

a-The reward and the punishment: Al-jannah الجنة (paradise) and Jahannam(HELL)
b- The obligations (Al fard) الفرض

c- The supererogatory actions (annafilah) النافلة / asunnah السنة

d- Neither excess nor laxity, but rather moderation لا إفراط لا تفريط...

3- Islam the easy way

4- Moral system in Islam

5- Islam demands/commands the good/ righteousness and forbids evil deeds/wrongdoing

الأمر بالمعروف و النهي عن المنكر

6- Islam against individualism and selfishness

UNIT TWO - Human rights in Islam

• What do you understand by Human Rights?
• UN Declaration on Human Rights—of what does it consist?
• What is the historical record since the UN Declaration was passed?
• Human Rights in Islam…

Allah’s rights, your “nafs” النفس rights, people’s rights, other creatures’ rights (animals, insects…)

1- Women’s rights in Islam
2- The right to education men and women alike

3- Family rights in Islam

4- The husband’s rights

5- The wife’s rights

6- The children’s rights

7- The parents’ rights (Muslims and non Muslims alike)

8- The mother’s rights

9- The grandparents’ rights

10 - The non-Muslims rights in Islam

11- The rights of the dead

12 - The neighbours’ rights in Islam

13- The workers’ rights in Islam / Dignity of labour in Islam

14- The right to democracy in Islam

15- The right of clean and preserved environment in Islam

16- The right of animals in Islam

17- The Medina charter

The enforcement of these rights: some case studies in Muslim countries

C - General conclusion

- The application of human rights doctrines: why is it so difficult to pass and enforce laws which uphold human
rights even when people and their governments say they are committed to them?

- Debates surrounding the relationship between human rights in Islamic law and in other non-Islamic laws
- The importance of ideals and aspirations

Library and independent research for final assignment.