



INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN  
EN ESTUDIOS NORTEAMERICANOS  
"BENJAMIN FRANKLIN"

Course	Genocide, Mass crimes and atrocities against civilian populations
Program, semester, year	International Studies Program, Spring 2024
Credits ECTS	4,5 (3 USA)
Instructor´s full name and email	Charmaine Perkins ( <a href="mailto:perkinsc@douglascollege.ca">perkinsc@douglascollege.ca</a> )
Block dates (days and time)	Monday-Thursday, 9am-12pm
Classroom	TBA
Class hours	12-1
Office Hours	
Requirements	
Language of instruction	English
Type of teaching	In person

## INTRODUCTION

For students interested in human rights and contemporary conflicts where civilian populations, whether in conflict/war or relative peace, are targeted and often seen euphemistically as “collateral damage,” this course takes you through significant moments in the 20th century from wars, the emergence of an international community (the United Nations) and the creation of laws to prevent the “crime of crimes,” genocide and crimes against humanity. I invite students to reflect on the past to understand key legal frameworks, how they have developed and evolved, and how they shape our understandings of contemporary issues. What are our collective and individual responsibilities to advocate for the protection of others facing grave human rights violations and atrocities in our interconnected (global) community?.

## COMPETENCES

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### Content

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain key concepts related to international law and justice
- Apply key concepts regarding mass crimes and/or genocide to specific cases (past and present)
- Critique the limitations of a purely legalistic approach to mass atrocities (how nation states move forward toward peace and reconciliation)

#### Skills

By the end of this course, you should have developed skills and tools to:

- Work cooperatively in small groups/teams
- Present an academic article to the class that highlights how it relates to the overall course concepts and facilitate class discussion
- Produce independent written work: short reflective pieces and a research paper
- Contribute to class discussions

#### Values

By the end of this course, you should:

- Be aware of available frameworks to reflect upon and understand international legal instruments
- Have a deeper understanding of, and be able to articulate, the contexts in which mass crimes against civilians occur, while evaluating the promises and obligations of the international community
- Understand one's role and obligations as a global citizen (awareness, education, action/activism)

### Course Objectives

This course provides an introduction to mass crimes, atrocities, and “grave” human rights abuses. Several disciplines have contributed to the broader field of genocide studies, and there have been questions about what contributions Criminology can make. On a theoretical level, one of the aims of this course is to expand on how we conceptualize crime, harm, and the actions of offenders/perpetrators, including crimes perpetrated by state agents/actors and various groups against civilian populations. This requires shifting our focus from crimes in violation of criminal codes established by the state to crimes committed by the state and on behalf of the state.

Understanding what often seems incomprehensible-the complexity of mass crimes such as genocide and crimes against humanity-throughout this course, students are encouraged to adopt and apply structural (macro) and individual (micro) criminological approaches and prominent theories to evaluate their effectiveness as well as limitations in explaining these phenomena.

This course introduces students to international law, various conventions, and adopts a case study approach. Debates rightly question the efficacy of these instruments considering repeated failure(s) by the international community to intervene in and prevent contemporary atrocities and human rights abuses to protect civilians. Other issues for examination include state sovereignty, impunity, culpability and responsibility, intervention, and the limitations of purely legal/judicial approaches in seeking justice. Consideration is also given to what historical cases have shown us and our collective stake in upholding the ideals of human rights as global citizens and advocates. Incorporating diverse sources/media allows for the exploration of multiple perspectives and approaches to these issues.

Note:

This course deals with issues related to heinous crimes and extreme forms of violence and trauma. Do seek support.

## **METHODOLOGY**

## **PREPARATION FOR CLASS**

## **WRITTEN WORK & PLAGIARISM**

## **EVALUATION**

Seminar Presentation 10%

Seminar Participation 15%

Critical Paper 20%

Shorter responses to readings/current issues 15%

2 Exams 40% (20% each: a mid-term and final)

### Late Penalties:

Late papers will be penalized 5% for each day they are late including weekends.

Note: Guidelines and rubrics will be provided for all assignments in this course.

### **ATTENDANCE (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are not permitted to miss any classes of the program without proper justification (i.e. emergencies, health problems, in this case students have to show a medical note). The following types of excuses are not justified: family visits, illnesses without a medical note, personal trips, etc. Each unjustified absence will result in a grade deduction of 10 points in the final grade of the class (example: from A to B). Students will not be allowed, in the classroom or fieldtrips, to arrive 10 minutes late or more. If a student has continual delays, he/she will be penalized with an absence and the instructor may not allow them into class or the visit.

### **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)**

Students with special needs should contact Antonio Fernández: [antonio.fernandezm@uah.es](mailto:antonio.fernandezm@uah.es) Instituto Franklin-UAH can accommodate these students who show through a medical note or a note from their academic advisor that require help in order to fulfill the program.

### **USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS**

The use of technology is essential today in education, but if is used inappropriately it can be harmful for students. It is necessary that students ask for permission from the teacher in order to use any technological devices. Faculty should make clear to students in what instances technology can be used.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Week 1 topics:

- Criminology, its inattention to mass crimes, and its potential contributions to understanding mass crimes against civilians crimes without legal definition, historical cases of mass crimes against civilians
- The "crime of crimes": origins of the UN Genocide Convention and international human rights law and the UN Declaration of Human Rights international ambivalence and failures, prevention of genocide, and limitations of the UNGC
- The role of international NGOs as well as other grassroots organizations

Week 2 topics:

- The focus will be on case studies which may include the following: Cambodia, International tribunals of the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, Darfur mass deportations and violence gendered violence: genocidal rape, rape as weapon of war mass murders

Week 3 topics:

- The Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court
- Expanding the definition of genocide to include colonial genocide: the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples
- Contemporary cases and conflicts

### **BIBLIOGRAHY**

Rafter, N. (2002). The crime of all crimes: Toward a criminology of genocide. New York University Press.

Sample of past online academic articles: (these will be revised for this course).

Readings:

- Campbell, K. (2007). The gender of transitional justice: law, sexual violence and the ICTY. *The International journal of transitional justice*, 1(3), pp. 411-432.
- Cooke-Welling, A. (2012). Genocide is a neglected are of criminological inquiry. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 23(4), pp. 119-135.
- Hagan, J., Reymond-Richmond, W. & Parker, P. (2005). The criminology of genocide: the death and rape of Darfur. *Criminology*, 43(3), pp. 525-562.
- Jarvis, M. & Tieger, A. (2016). Applying the Genocide Convention at the ICTY. *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, 14(4), pp. 857-877.
- Kornblah, P. (2016). The declassified Pinochet file: delivering the verdict of history. *Radical history review*, 124, pp. 203-217.
- Menzel, J. (2007). Justice delayed or too late for justice? The Khmer Rouge Tribunal and the Cambodian "genocide," 1975-79. *Journal of Genocide research*, 9(2), pp. 215-233.
- Moon, C. (2011). The crime of crimes and the crime of Criminology: genocide, criminology, and Darfur. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 62(1), pp. 49-55
- Ozsu, U. (2020) Genocide as fact and form. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 22(1), 62-71.
- Rothe, D. (2010). Shedding the blanket of immunity: a commentary on the global principle of ending impunity, realpolitik, and legal precedent. *Crime, law, and social change*, 53(4), pp. 397-412.
- Schabas, W. (2013). The contribution of the Eichmann trial to International law. *Journal of International law*, 26(3), pp. 667-699.
- Tomuschat, C. (2006). The legacy of Nuremberg. *Journal of International criminal justice*, 4(4), pp. 830-844.
- Wakeham, P. (2021). The slow violence of settler colonialism, Genocide, attrition and the long emergency of invasion. *Journal of Genocide Research*, 1-20
- Williams, S. (2005). Genocide: the Cambodian experience. *International Criminal Law Review*, 5(3), pp. 447-462.
- Woolford, A., & Gacek, J. (2016). Genocidal carcerality and Indian Residential Schools in Canada. *Punishment and Society*, 18(4), pp. 400-419

**INSTRUCTOR**