



HUMAN RIGHTS STUDIES 4900F (570)
Capstone Seminar
Fall/Winter 2025 - 2026

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Bangarth
Email: sbangar@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course is the culminating core requirement of the Major in Human Rights Studies. It offers a structured framework to integrate and synthesize the cross-disciplinary course of study. The project entails co-disciplinary research, aimed at applying the knowledge and skills developed through the module to a specific human rights project.

Prerequisite(s): Human Rights 2800E; and 0.5 from Human Rights 2900F/G, [Human Rights Studies 2908F/G](#), [Human Rights Studies 2909F/G](#), [Human Rights Studies 3908F/G](#), [Human Rights Studies 3909F/G](#).

Antirequisite(s):

Extra Information: 3 hours, 0.5 course.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: HUMANRS

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.



**Human Rights Studies Capstone Seminar
HRS 4900F 2025**

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Bangarth (sbangar@uwo.ca)

Class Time: see OWL

Office hours: by appointment

Mode of Instruction: In-person

Course Description

From the UWO undergraduate calendar: This course is the culminating core requirement of the Major in Human Rights Studies. It offers a structured framework to integrate and synthesize the cross-disciplinary course of study. The project entails co-disciplinary research, aimed at applying the knowledge and skills developed through the module to a specific human rights project.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

The goals for this course will be co-constructed by class members through critical dialogue. Throughout this course and/or upon its completion, you should be able to:

1. Continue and expand your knowledge about Human Rights Studies by addressing previously discussed OR new topics/phenomena in ways that extend and/or expand your understanding.
2. Draw on intrapersonal (internal) and interpersonal (interactions with classmates) processing to critically reflect on your Human Rights Studies and university experiences in such a way that enables you to integrate your past learnings while preparing for work/professional/personal life and relationships after graduating.
3. Create something that represents your vision of the Human Rights Studies experience to be shared with future students, faculty, and staff in such a way that promotes Human Rights Studies across campus and in the community

Readings

When applicable, readings will be made freely available on a weekly basis via OWL Brightspace. There is no textbook to purchase.

Grade Distribution:

Capstone Project Proposal	30%
(October 6, 2025)	
Capstone Project	40%
(December 1, 2025)	
Seminar Participation/Presentation	30%
(ongoing!)	

I acknowledge that our campus at King's University College is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lenapeewak, and Chonnonton peoples, all of whom have longstanding relationships to the land of Southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The First Nations communities of our local area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. And in our region, there are eleven First Nations communities, as well as a growing indigenous urban population. King's University College values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations, and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island (also known as North America).

Evaluation

Capstone Project Proposal

To assist in the preparation of your Capstone Project, you are required to submit a brief essay proposal (1000 - 1250 words) on **Monday Oct. 6**. Your proposal should be a brief outline of your project and should include the following information: a working title; a proposed thesis/direction/plan; a tentative outline of proposed points/issues to be covered, including research/focus questions; and a preliminary bibliography of **not less than eight (8) titles including primary source materials** with at least a few sentences for each indicating the contents of the source and why it will be useful for your Capstone Project. Students will also indicate the parameters of the project, whether that be in page length or in terms of the deliverable project. This proposal will encourage students to get started on the research early and will allow the instructor to suggest other sources and themes that may strengthen the final Capstone Project. Students will present their paper outlines to their peers in class on the day the assignment is due to encourage peer support for the research and writing process. The presentation of the work accounts for 10% of the final grade for the assignment.

Capstone Project

The capstone project has become an integral part of the university degree curriculum. It can take many forms, but its purpose remains the same. The capstone project is a unique opportunity to carry out independent group research in order to devise an innovative solution for a real-world problem. While a project of this scope and scale can be challenging, it can also be very rewarding. The capstone project is usually the final assignment and plays a vital role in preparing students for the world of work thanks to its practical applications and ability to help hone students' professional knowledge and skills.

Your capstone project should be an analysis of any subject, theme, event, idea, or figure chosen in relation to the subject of human rights. Ideally this should be on a topic about which you are passionate. It should be meaningful to you. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of your topic, please consult the course instructor. You may choose to expand on one of the topics we explore in the course, or you may devise your own topic (please consult with me). Be as creative as you wish! This should involve 'original' research, with an interdisciplinary foundation in human rights. The capstone project is due on **Monday December 1**. Students will be required to present their Capstone Project to their colleagues on **Monday December 8**. **Academic consideration for this project requires submission of formal supporting documentation.**

Capstone projects may include, but are not limited to:

1. Community-Engaged Learning: Unlike primary and secondary research projects, a community engagement Capstone project entails a student connecting with a non-profit, charitable, advocacy, or community service organization to provide service, democratic engagement, and/or community

research. A faith-based organization (such as a church, synagogue, temple, or mosque) may also be considered in this fashion.

2. Creative: This type of Capstone project is noted for its flexibility and creativity. It may include programming a new website, choreographing a new dance, writing a music instruction handbook, or creating a non-profit business plan are all examples of a Creative Capstone project. When doing such a project it is essential that the student's academic disciplines be represented.
3. Primary Research Capstone: Primary research begins with a question arising from an issue or problem. Primary research is typically new research investigating phenomena arising from the student's academic interests. In doing primary research, remember that most academic disciplines have preferred methodologies for this type of research and the student should be mindful that human rights studies are inherently interdisciplinary, although the student's home discipline will be foundational.
4. Secondary Research Capstone: Secondary Research generally reviews current research literature from noted professional journals. Unlike primary research, the aim of secondary research is to thoroughly describe (from a variety of academic viewpoints) an issue or problem that has been well-documented in professional literature. All academic disciplines lend themselves to secondary research. The greatest hurdle in secondary research is the vast amount of professional literature already written about the issue or problem. Not unlike the primary research capstone, the student should be mindful that human rights studies are inherently interdisciplinary, although the student's home discipline will be foundational.

Seminar Participation/Presentation

Discussions of course material and collaborative learning form an integral part of Human Rights 4900F. Seminar attendance and participation are therefore **expected**. While attendance is a prerequisite, students must also come prepared to discuss the readings in a meaningful and thoughtful manner. Quality of critical thinking counts for more than quantity. All students are encouraged to share their thoughts and to constructively challenge those of their colleagues in a congenial environment. Those who perform best in the seminar direct their ideas to the entire group and incorporate the comments of other students into their contributions. Come prepared with questions of your own to ask your colleagues in the class. Be sure to subject the course materials to your 'critical eye'; that is, subject the weekly materials to a thorough consideration. Was the article convincing? Why or why not? It may be helpful to prepare a short summary of each reading, identifying the problem addressed and the author's thesis/website purpose. Or you may wish to highlight the top three things that stuck with you while you read the material.

It is crucial to be prepared and to participate in this small, collegial academic setting. Attending and participating in your university class fosters a deeper understanding of complex material through direct interaction with professors and peers. Active engagement helps develop critical thinking and communication skills that are essential for professional growth. Moreover, participating in discussions and group activities allows students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, enhancing your learning experience.

Other Course Information

Note: a student who fails to submit all the required written assignments which together make up the "Essay" component of the course will not receive credit for the course. For HRS 4900G the essay components are the Capstone Project Proposal and the Capstone Project. The late penalty for the course is 5% the first day after the deadline, 1% per day thereafter to a maximum of 7 days including weekends. The assignment will not be accepted after the 7th day.

Policy on Attendance:

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.

POLICY REGARDING PLAGIARISM

Preamble: Any written text (and supporting materials), whether printed (e.g. a book, an article, a pamphlet) or "manuscript" (e.g. ms. for a scholarly paper or a dissertation), **is the property of its author[s]**. Therefore, any use of any part of such materials **must be acknowledged**. When the use is "indirect", as in a summary of information and/or ideas, the "borrowing" is acknowledged with a footnote. When the "borrowing" is "direct", that is when a portion of the text or of the supporting material is quoted *verbatim*, the "borrowing" is acknowledged in two ways: (1) quotation marks around the material quoted, and (2) a footnote. It is worth repeating that **both** forms of acknowledgement are **mandatory** when the material is copied directly. Use of on-line sources, **if permitted by your instructor**, must be acknowledged as to specific source, date of access, etc.

Definition: Plagiarism, simply defined, is a form of theft. Were the plagiarised material to be subsequently published it could well lead to legal action against the offender. Plagiarism generally takes one of two forms (with infinite variations). "*Flagrant plagiarism*" occurs when portions of one or more written texts are copied, but no quotation marks are used to indicate the borrowing ... although a footnote may appear, which, as indicated above, is not sufficient. "*Disguised plagiarism*" occurs when the original text is paraphrased in such a way as to "disguise" the theft ... changing a word here and there, etc., even if a footnote is provided. Example: The original text says "The Cabinet met three times in an effort to resolve the issue"; the "paraphrased" text says "The Cabinet met on three occasions in an effort to resolve the problem".

Plagiarism checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for checking. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. For further information see the section on Scholastic Offences at the following web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/universec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

Penalties:

- A. Inadvertent plagiarism results in a warning, followed by a discussion of the problem with the student.
- B. "Flagrant plagiarism" results in a "0" for the assignment.
- C. "Disguised plagiarism" results in a "0" for the assignment.
- D. Submission of an assignment which is also being submitted in another course (or has been submitted in another course in a previous year), results in a "0" for the assignment.

- E. Submission of an assignment prepared by someone other than the alleged author results in a "0" FOR THE COURSE.
- F. Instances of plagiarism may be reported to the Dean.

General Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as, footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Class Policy on Generative AI

Within this course, generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, etc., are permitted exclusively for: [e.g. information-gathering and preliminary research purposes; development of an essay outline]. If AI tools are used, students must acknowledge use and state how the tool was used. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2

exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College:

<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see [https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html](https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports - TurnItIn.html).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or

distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.