



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Human Rights Policy and Practice, 120 credits

Erasmus Mundus masterprogram i mänskliga rättigheters politik och praktik, 120 högskolepoäng

Programme code: S2HRP

Second cycle / Avancerad nivå

1. Confirmation

This programme syllabus was confirmed by the Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 08-02-2018 (G 2017/702) and was last revised on 30-11-2020 (GU 2020/3192) to be valid from 30-11-2020, Autumn semester 2021.

Responsible Department/equivalent: School of Global Studies

Participating institutions are the University of Deusto, Spain; the University of Roehampton, United Kingdom and UiT The Arctic University of Norway.

2. Purpose

The programme aims at a professionalization of human rights work by providing the theoretical foundation needed to build academic skills in research and critical analysis as well as the subject knowledge needed to make an impact on the protection of human rights around the world. It also gives students real-life experience solving the complex problems they will be confronted with working in this field through networking and learning in interaction with practitioners in the field and internship. Through its interdisciplinary approach this programme gives students the opportunity to examine and build professional skills by applying legal, sociological, political and economic frameworks to the study of human rights, including, but not limited to, key issues such as globalization; migration; minority and indigenous rights; social movements and Human Rights Defenders; and conflict.

3. Entry requirements

A first degree equivalent to 180 credits or 180 ECTS from an internationally recognised university or college.

A minimum of two year's practitioner experience in the field of human rights. Practitioner experience may include regular employments, internships and voluntary work.

Students whose first language is not English, need to acquire a minimum English language qualification of English B/English 6 at upper secondary level or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test, for example TOEFL, IELTS or equivalent alternatives as stated in the call for applications each year by the University of Gothenburg.

4. Higher education qualification and main field of study

This programme leads to a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in Human Rights with specialization in Policy and Practice (Filosofie masterexamen med huvudområdet Mänskliga rättigheter med inriktning mot politik och praktik).

This programme leads to a Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) in Human Rights Policy and Practice. The degree is a joint degree involving the four participating institutions. The joint degree is awarded by the University of Gothenburg.

5. Outcomes

General outcomes for Degree of Master (120 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

6. Content and structure

The structure of the master's programme is constructed with the purpose of letting the students spend one semester at each partner university and being divided among the four partner universities for the fourth semester. The programme consists of the following mandatory courses:

First Year

Semester 1 (University of Gothenburg)

Human Rights as an Interdisciplinary Field, 15 credits

State, Market and Human Rights, 15 credits

Semester 2 (University of Deusto)

Researching Human Rights, 15 credits

Human Rights Defenders: Context, Policy and Practice, 15 credits

Second Year

Semester 3 (University of Roehampton)

Social Movements and NGOs: Understanding Social Change (Internship), 20 credits

Theorizing Human Rights, 10 credits

Semester 4 (UiT The Arctic University of Norway)

Dissertation, 30 credits

Description of Courses

Human Rights as an Interdisciplinary Field, 15 credits

This module serves as an introduction to the interdisciplinary nature of the human rights field and the interdisciplinary approach of the programme as a whole. Taking its point of departure in the core international human rights instruments, the students analyze and discuss the human

rights content as laid down in international human rights conventions and examine the processes behind the construction of these instruments as well as the contentious ethical, political and legal discussions that have followed since their establishment. Different thematic of the core human rights instruments will be explored from a variety of theories and perspectives from disciplines such as international relations, sociology and law. The purpose of the module is that students should acquire a multidimensional understanding of human rights as a common basis for the programme as a whole.

State, Market and Human Rights, 15 credits

The module focuses on the intersection of politics, economics and market economy, and human rights with the purpose of studying the structures, actors and processes that influence the realization of human rights in a globalizing world. Different theoretical approaches and methods will be reviewed as well as selected current issues-areas, such as (but not limited to) trade agreements, the role of transnational corporations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, new technologies, land grabbing, etc.

Researching Human Rights, 15 credits

Whether students are heading for a job in human rights in local organisations, the organisms of the international protection system, national public administration, academia or the private sector, taking action on human rights requires the production of evidence on which public agencies and private actors alike base their interventions. This module aims at providing both theoretical knowledge and practical skills concerning the methodologies and tools involved in human rights research and evidence production, as well as the forms of presenting such research and evidence to different audiences and through different means.

Human Rights Defenders: Context, Policy and Practice 15 credits

Human Rights Defenders (HRD) play an important role in the promotion and defense of human rights, and there is growing interest in their work as it takes place in a variety of contexts, pursuing different objectives and through diverse means. However, HRD's work is not always well understood and is also undertheorized. This module aims at providing in-depth knowledge of and a critical approach to the role of HRDs, the international, regional and national frameworks applicable for the defence of human rights, as well as the practice of HRDs, particularly in hostile contexts.

Social Movements and NGOs: Understanding Social Change (Internship), 20 credits

This module traces the journey from individual experiences of injustice to collective empowerment and mobilization for human rights protection in the form of social movements, grassroots organisations and professional NGOs. This evolution is fraught with challenges stemming from these organisations' potentially conflicting interests and world-views across a wide range of issues. This module critically examine these conflicting perspectives to understand what drives individuals and collectives to mobilize, challenge existing structures of power and succeed in creating their vision of a more just society. Students will acquire the theoretical knowledge and professional skills necessary to understand this evolution and analyse the actions

and motivations of social movements and NGOs with traditional and cutting-edge campaign strategies. This module will prepare students to act as catalysts for meaningful social change in their future professional activities. Additionally, the placements with NGOs will provide opportunities for professional experience in an organization working in human rights.

Theorizing Human Rights, 10 credits

This module builds on those which precede it to grow the theoretical foundation students require to properly understand and engage with human rights as an interdisciplinary object of study. It is logical to accept that before students can fully embark on any research into human rights, they must first ask, what is it that we actually even mean by “human rights”? This is not a straight-forward question as the term human rights can be used in different ways and for different purposes. The political outcome of this is that “human rights”, emptied of any specific agreed meaning, can become a target for attack by those on all sides in the political debate, just as it can be appropriated by all sides to give legitimacy to their policies. In the face of such confusion, it is critical that students of human rights are aware of these complexities and equipped with the skills required to navigate their way around the often ideological discussions and debates over rights they will encounter during their research. This module will not only examine the history of human rights as a philosophical idea and a legal reality, but also provide an overview of the competing theories of human rights, which contest the current discourse, and, crucially, an opportunity to show how a conceptual understanding of human rights is crucial to any practical or policy-based engagement.

Dissertation, 30 credits

The purpose of the module is that student after completing the course should be able to independently and creatively carry out advanced and scientifically based studies within a given time, as well as to give students an opportunity during a semester to immerse themselves in a chosen research question related to human rights. The main assignment consists of writing an extended, theoretically based, scientific paper in the field of human rights. In this paper, the students should demonstrate their in-depth ability to analyze social phenomena related to human rights, with the help of social science theories and analytical tools.

7. Guaranteed admission

Students who follow the required study pace of the program have a generally guaranteed place.

8. Transitional regulations

Students admitted to the program according to the previous syllabus who wish to complete their studies, will be given the opportunity for individual study plans within the program, if practicable and if the student can be assessed to achieve the objectives and local goals. Students who wish to resume their studies after approved leave, should contact the student administration at the Department of Global Studies at the University of Gothenburg.

9. Other information

The study programme will be followed up and evaluated in accordance with the applicable *Policy för kvalitetssäkring och kvalitetsutveckling av utbildning vid Göteborgs universitet* (Policy for the Quality assurance and Quality Development of Education at the University of Gothenburg).

Students need to provide proof of work experience, two letters of recommendation as well as a personal motivation statement.