



**Center for International Programs and Sustainability Studies**

**Course name: Human Rights in Latin America**

**Course code: Pol 500**

**Total contact hours: 48**

**Pre-requisites: Presential modality**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide students with an introduction to the issues surrounding the development and abuse of human rights in Latin America. Students will explore the most recent advances in this field along with the most pertinent problems pertaining to their adoption and implementation. A particular emphasis will be given to the case of Costa Rica, giving the students an opportunity to explore the development of human rights in the following areas: women's rights, children's rights, HIV/AIDS, the CAFTA agreement and labor rights, indigenous groups and human rights, disability and age issues, and the prison environment. Specific attention will be given to testimonies of human rights abuses and the development of the Costa Rican legal framework in relation to these aforementioned areas. By analyzing these cases and the issues involved, students will gain an understanding of how human rights are being implemented through Costa Rica's laws, policy framework and its institutional commitment to human rights.

### **AUDIENCE**

This course is structured for international students attending the Study Abroad Program at an LCI Education university campus. However, courses are not exclusive to foreigners so local degree-seeking students may enroll in this course. Some of the courses are also taught

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



in Spanish as part of our Bachelor's in Sustainability Management or Business Administration programs.

This is a theoretical-practical course and explores/responds to the following inquiry according to the professional/disciplinary profile:

**What is the Global and Latin American framework for implementing human rights and how is the region advancing with its adoption? What can the human rights vulnerabilities and testimonies reveal about the quality of the global shift toward human rights as a key mechanism for welfare, equality, security, and anti-discriminatory processes and how can these be overcome?**

In order to respond this question, we will study the following **generative topics**:

- The central values and principles of human rights and responsibilities.
- Global, regional, and local entities and Institutions.
- Legal and policy frameworks for the implementation of human rights in Costa Rica.
- Definition, type, development, and implementation of public policy.
- Civil society, social movements, and human rights at a regional level.
- Study and evaluation of vulnerable groups and human rights' abuses.
- Individual responsibility and human rights.
- The Inter-American Court of Human Rights System: Cases and reparations.
- Proposals for solutions, creativity for reparations and the future.

Along the course, the following **skills** will be fostered:

- Capacity to use dialogue and collaboration skills.
- Capacity to collaborate actively in the group tasks, and develop confidence, solidarity, cordiality, and skills in communal task management.

- Contribute to the consolidation of a team and teamwork, promoting communication, equal distribution of tasks and a working environment encouraging calm and cohesion.
- Capacity to communicate professionally with NGOs, State entities and institutions.
- Specific Course Competency: teamwork development and leadership.
- To integrate knowledge, abilities, and the necessary attitudes to be able to learn the techniques of teamwork and leadership (considering the tutorials and evaluations).

Among the **values** and **attitudes** that will be promoted among students are the following:

- How to work and get on with others.
- How to responsibly communicate with others.
- Problem, challenge, and goal identification.
- Search for solutions through dialogue and deliberation.
- Management and resolution of conflicts.
- Negotiation to inspire confidence and empathy.
- Responsible communication and profound listening.
- Systemic thinking.

## COMPETENCIES, CRITERIA AND EVIDENCE

The competencies for the Veritas University are reflexive and integral actions that respond to the professional profile and to the problems of the context, with suitability and ethical commitment, integrating the know-how, and the knowledge to know in a perspective of improvement.

Below are both the disciplinary and general competencies, linked to their criteria and evidence of performance for this course.

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Competencies	Key Competency	Evidence of Learning
<p><b>Discipline</b></p> <p>Analyze human rights frameworks and mechanisms guaranteeing dignity, welfare, freedom, and security in the Latin American and Caribbean context and appreciate how these are advancing or lacking and need creative solutions for their consolidation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Apply the values, principles, and experiences of the human rights movement in order to propose solutions to the social and environmental problematic and the local and regional context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Case study analysis</li> <li>○ Interaction and firsthand research with different projects, site visits and fieldtrips.</li> <li>○ Observation and collection of data.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assess the urgent critical challenges that face the multisectoral response with the implementation of human rights.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Group work comparative research reports.</li> <li>○ Interviews.</li> <li>○ Essay.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Critically evaluate successes and failures in the application of human rights and other anti-discriminatory policy approaches through the lens of abuses, experiences, and testimonies within a variety of vulnerable sectors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Case study análisis.</li> <li>○ Research reports.</li> <li>○ Design and execute interviews.</li> <li>○ Essay.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General/Core</b></p>	<p><b>Performance criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence of performance</b></p>

Participate and collaborate actively in the team tasks, strengthening confidence, cordiality, shared goals, and teamwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Work and get on with others.</li> <li>○ Responsibly communicate with others.</li> <li>○ Problem, challenge, and goal identification.</li> <li>○ Systemic thinking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research reports.</li> <li>○ Site visits.</li> <li>○ Interviews.</li> </ul>
Contribute to the consolidation of groups, favoring communication, equal distribution of tasks, with internal cohesion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Search for solutions through dialogue and deliberation.</li> <li>○ Management and resolution of conflicts.</li> <li>○ Negotiation to inspire confidence and empathy</li> <li>○ Responsible communication and profound listening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Discussions, group work tasks and organization.</li> </ul>
Direct work groups, assuring the integration of all members and group assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Team work and leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research findings and presentation.</li> </ul>

## COURSE CONTENT

(One theme each week, plus conclusions, practical and finals)

### **Theme 1: The central values and principles of human rights and responsibilities.**

- The nature and definition of human rights.
- The history and development of human rights.
- Principle concepts and theoretical fundamentals.
- Principles characteristics in the application of human rights and harmonization of main approaches.
- Major general human rights and the related responsibilities.

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## Theme 2: Global, regional and local entities and Institutions

- Study and analysis of international treaties and conventions.
- Exploration of the work of international and regional NGOs, government institutions and international entities.
- Study and analysis of international conventions, treaties, CEDAW and more...

## Theme 3: Legal and policy frameworks for the implementation of human rights in Costa Rica and the justice system

- Human rights, laws, policy, and programs
- Application of the law, advances, and limits.
- Case study analysis: Prisons, the Death Penalty, Institutional Violence, and the Judicial System.

## Theme 4: Definition, type, development, and implementation of public policy.

- Local, regional, and global exploration and overview.
- Latin American Country Reports and Human Rights Record.
- Latin American Development Indicators.
- Case study focus.

## Theme 5: Civil society, social movements, and human rights at a regional level.

Agrarian movement.

- Environmental conflicts.
- Mining and human rights.
- Defense of water.
- The Garifuna Case Study.

## Theme 6: Study and evaluation of vulnerable groups and human rights' abuses.

- Human rights and Indigenous Peoples.
- Human Rights, Access to Land and a Healthy Environment.

- Children and Human Rights in Costa Rica.
- HIV /AIDS and Human Rights
- Diversity and Sexuality Issues or/and Age, Disability, and human rights. CAFTA and Labor Rights.
- Case study focus: Women, human rights, and access to a healthy environment

### **Theme 7: Individual responsibility and human rights**

- 7-SesALL framework – steps for everyday sustainability for All (Workshop and Debate).
- Transversalising tools and transversal themes: human rights, democracy, equity, good governance, sustainability.

### **Theme 8: The Inter-American Court of Human Rights System: Cases and reparations.**

- Country reports.
- Case study and court case analysis.
- The case of Costa Rica.

### **Theme 9: Environmental Rights and human rights**

- Agriculture – conventional, organic and GMOs
- Gender, equity, risk, and climate change
- Biodiversity, Environmental services and management of ecosystems, forests, and seascapes.

### **Theme 10: Conclusions and future outlooks**

- Proposals for solutions, creativity for reparations and the future.
- Innovations and Future Challenges.
- Latin American and Caribbean data and Indicators for the comparison of cases.

## METHODOLOGY

For this course the activities are planned at an intermediate level and stimulate learning through research and preparation of interviews, field trip research, case studies, essays, discussions and through consideration of the basic aspects of the fundamentals in strategic and systemic thinking.

The methodology encourages learning through student interaction with real life scenarios, problem identification, and problem solving with an aim to detect opportunities for learning and self-development. Finally, the method focuses on providing students with situations that they will go on to encounter in their professional lives and careers, thus enhancing competency and experience. An experiential and exploratory method will be applied – to encourage the student to thoroughly explore and evaluate related course issues in the present-day Costa Rican context – and make the most of the experiential opportunities provided by the course and the broader study setting. Theory will be considered and analyzed in relation to the Costa Rican context. Individual research on a chosen course relevant theme.

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

In order to guarantee good development of the course, therefore, to guarantee learning, the following resources are available: an updated bibliographic database, multimedia equipment that students can use for their individual presentations; whiteboards and other school equipment for weekly sessions, and readings provided by the educator. All of these complement the suggested projects and provide the students with higher possibilities of knowledge own ship. Most of the lessons will take place in the classroom. During independent work periods students will be able to attend the institution.

A campus library, study rooms, and computer labs are available for the students' independent work time. Free Wi-Fi connection for students, educators, and staff is provided

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on campus, which gives students the possibility to work not only in the library or computer labs, but also around campus.

## **LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

In order to make the course or program better competencies-based evaluation compiles and evaluates evidence by taking into account feedback providing pre-established criteria. The course evaluation must be aligned with the competencies and the teaching methodology. There is a rubric for each evaluation resource, and the details will be provided in **CANVAS LMS**. Even though the rubric grants a grade, it is also a quantitative and qualitative description of the students' performance. The rubrics include the core and discipline key competences.

<b>RUBRIC</b>	<b>WIEGHT/GRADE</b>
Participation and attendance	<b>10%</b>
Three Case Studies: (10% each) Possible choices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ International conventions, treaties, covenants and declarations</li> <li>○ Diversity and Sexuality Issues</li> <li>○ Age, Disability and human rights</li> <li>○ Human rights and labor rights</li> <li>○ HIV /AIDS and Human Rights</li> <li>○ Children and Human Rights in Costa Rica</li> <li>○ Human Rights, Access to Land and a Healthy Environment.</li> </ul>	<b>30%</b>
Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 7-SesALL framework – steps for everyday sustainability for All</li> <li>○ Transversalising tools and transversal themes: human rights, democracy, equity, good governance, sustainability.</li> </ul>	<b>20%</b>
Essay and presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Theme of choice in relation to human rights in Latin America or the Caribbean</li> </ul>	<b>20%</b>

Group Work:	<b>20%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Investigation and comparison of the court cases, country reports, case studies, Latin American Indicators</li> <li>○ Investigation and comparison of a selection of case studies, format, implementation and outcomes.</li> </ul>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## LEARNING STRATEGIES

The following learning strategies will be developed:

### **1. Case Studies and Interviews**

Learning through case studies educates students in three essential aspects: knowledge management, reflective practices, and the ability to adapt to change. Knowledge management seeks that the student acquires strategies and techniques that allow him/her to learn by him/herself; this implies the awareness of assimilation, reflection, and interiorization of knowledge so the student can finally value and deepen from a personal choice.

The case study method promotes the learning of three basic aspects: the management of knowledge, reflective practice and contemplation and design of solutions. Three case studies will be explored and evaluated. The cases will be summarized according to the main actors, events, issues, dates and outcomes (and according to answering the following pattern for case study analysis: who was involved, where, when, what happened, how and why?). The major issues will be highlighted and illustrated with clear examples from the case studies or similar cases. Major indicators and data will be extracted and discussed for its relevance and meaning. Solutions will be discussed and suggested. Students will choose the case studies according to their interests within the following areas:

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- International conventions, treaties, covenants and declarations
- Diversity and Sexuality Issues
- Age, disability, and human rights.
- Human rights and labor rights.
- HIV /AIDS and Human Rights.
- Children and Human Rights in Costa Rica.
- Human Rights, Access to Land and a Healthy Environment.

Students will identify the problematic and major contentious issues, evaluate, discuss, and report on the solvability of the case. Solutions will be provided based on observations, similar cases, and discussion outcomes.

## 2. Argumentative Essay

An argumentative essay as an academic writing tool allows each student to express opinions, interpret, and evaluate one or more topics by formally including adequate justification. The point is to show evidence of research and to demonstrate the ability to compose argument explanations clearly.

The written essay is a critical academic piece that permits the student to express opinions, interpret data and events, evaluate a selection of themes and issues. This is packaged in a formal written piece that demonstrates the capacity to research a theme, discuss and reflect upon the central issues. Critical thinking is encouraged with an clear organization of argument, perspectives, positions and the development of the student's understanding. The essay must be well written, well presented, both orally and on paper. The essay is strictly individual, and sole authored by the student. The work of others must be clearly referenced. APA referencing must be used. The essay theme will be on the quality of human rights in the Latin America and Caribbean space.

### 3. Group Work and Workshops

Workshops, involving role play, will promote shared spaces in which students, working as a team, will develop their oral and written communication skills, synthesis, leadership, listening and relating well with others when dealing with sustainability issues.

The group work will make up 20% of the final grade. Students are expected to start work on this simultaneous to other commitments, evaluations, and activities. This will be developed throughout the length of the course and students must organize into small groups on instruction from the teacher. Possible themes:

- Investigation and comparison of the projects and outcomes of the MDGs and/or the SDGs in relation to human rights.
- Investigation and comparison of a selection of case studies, format, implementation, and outcomes.

### 4. Presentations

Individual and group presentations will provide opportunities to communicate orally and iconically, share the results of research, and demonstrate the appropriation of topics of interest.

### 5. Reports and discussions

Students will exercise the capacity of critical thinking, and oral and written expression through the presentation of reports and discussions about videos or documentaries with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals.

## 6. Presentation of results

Individual and group presentations of the results of analysis and research of almost all activities will develop in students the ability to communicate orally and graphically to demonstrate knowledge assimilated through assignments. Students must also present their action proposal in order to demonstrate their convincing communication skills in English or Spanish (depending on their native language)

## 7. Rubric for site visits, organisations, and interviews

Students will arrange and execute 2 site visits or interviews which will make up 20% of the final grade. They will be expected to plan the interview or site visit objectives prior to the visit, work in pairs or small groups to fulfil the activity objectives and interest of the group members. A small report will be prepared on the major findings and observation gained from the visit.

Two Interviews and/or site visits to NGOs or Institutions (10% each) Choices:

- Human rights and Indigenous Peoples.
- Children and Human Rights in Costa Rica.
- Environmental and human rights NGOs.
- Water as a human right.
- HIV /AIDS and Human Rights.

## 8. Rubric for analysis of video, documentary or other audiovisual

Documentary analysis about sustainability topics will be assigned as out of class work. The report will demonstrate writing skills and the students' ability to understand the documentary's core theme.

## ATTENDANCE

### Regarding classes:

1. Students are only allowed a two (2) **non-consecutive (back-to-back) class absences**. A student shall fail the course if more than two absences are registered by the professor. Administration does not control attendance.
2. Three **late arrivals** to class (arrival after the first 15 minutes) are treated as one absence. Attending class 30 minutes late without an official justification will also count as an absence.
3. In the case of an **absence from any assignment evaluated in class** (presentations, evaluations, field trips, etc.) a student will be given a grade of zero unless an official document is presented within **one week** of the absence.
4. If a student presents an official document to excuse the absence, the missed assignment is to be presented on that same day.

### Regarding field trips:

5. An unjustified **absence on a field trip** will immediately result in the loss of all points assigned to that specific trip. However, if an official document justifying the absence is presented, 50% of the assignment points may be obtained upon presentation of a complementary research assignment, to be agreed upon with the professor, within one week of the field trip.
6. An absence on a field trip may be justified should two course field trips coincide. In such a case, and to avoid losing points, students shall be able to opt for carrying out a research assignment.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Professors have the right to expel a student from the classroom should he / she/ they:

1. Be disruptive in the classroom.
2. Behave in a disrespectful way.
3. Be under the influence of alcohol.
4. Be under the influence of any illegal drug.
5. Shows hygiene or odor problems that may disturb other students.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of cell phones, smartphones, or other mobile communication devices is disruptive and is therefore prohibited during class. **Please turn all devices OFF and put them away** when class begins. Devices may be used only when the professor assigns a specific activity and allows the use of devices for internet search or recording. Those who fail to comply with the rule must leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Using devices while the professor or other peers are lecturing, or presenting is perceived as a lack of interest and disrespectful.

## STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM POLICIES

The student must comply with the provisions of the Study Abroad Program Policies available on the Canvas/Omnivox platform.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography – This is subject to change and updating. The final and more recent version can be found on the student portal and will be shared at the beginning of term. You will not be expected to by any books for this course.

## CHRONOGRAM

week	Competency	Content	Teaching strategies
1	Analyze the central concepts and theoretical frameworks in relation to human rights	<p><b>Theme 1: The central values and principles of human rights and responsibilities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The nature and definition of human rights.</li> <li>○ The history and development of human rights.</li> <li>○ Principle concepts and theoretical fundamentals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduction to the course, assignments, tools, methods, and expectations.</li> </ul>
2	Discuss the importance of the legal framework that responds to	<p>Continuation theme 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Principles characteristics in the application of human rights and harmonization of main approaches.</li> <li>○ Major general human rights and the related responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Group work and discussion / Defining core concepts.</li> </ul>



	<p>human rights through the study of the international declarations, conventions, and policies.</p>	<p><b>Theme 2: Global, regional and local entities and Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Study and analysis of international treaties and conventions.</li> <li>○ Exploration of the work of international and regional NGOs, government institutions and international entities.</li> <li>○ Study and analysis of international conventions, treaties.</li> </ul>	
3		<p><b>Theme 3: Legal and policy frameworks for the implementation of human rights in Costa Rica and the justice system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human rights, laws, policy and programs</li> <li>○ Application of the law, advances and limits.</li> <li>○ Case study analysis:</li> </ul> <p><b>Prisons, the Death Penalty, Institutional Violence and the Judicial System.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Essay proposal and development.</li> </ul>

4		<p><b>Theme 4: Definition, type, development and implementation of public policy.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local, regional and global exploration and overview</li> <li>○ Latin American Country Reports and Human Rights Record.</li> <li>○ Latin American Development Indicators</li> <li>○ Case study focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Group work and discussion: Theories and concepts and human rights policy types.</li> </ul>
5		<p><b>Theme 5: Civil society, social movements and human rights at a regional level.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agrarian movement</li> <li>○ Environmental conflicts</li> <li>○ Mining and human rights</li> <li>○ Defense of water</li> <li>○ The Garifuna Case Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Interviews</li> <li>○ Group work, teamwork: Orgs and NGOs (profile and present and discuss functions and roles)</li> </ul>
6		<p><b>Theme 6: Study and evaluation of vulnerable groups and human rights' abuses.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human rights and Indigenous Peoples.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Group work and discussion.</li> <li>○ Case study exploration,</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Human Rights, Access to Land and a Healthy Environment.</li> <li>○ Children and Human Rights in Costa Rica.</li> <li>○ HIV /AIDS and Human Rights</li> <li>○ Diversity and Sexuality Issues or/and Age, Disability and human rights. CAFTA and Labor Rights.</li> <li>○ Case study focus: Women, human rights and access to a healthy environment</li> </ul>	evaluation and preparation.
7		<p><b>Theme 7: Individual responsibility and human rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 7-SesALL framework – steps for everyday sustainability for All</li> <li>○ Transversalising tools and transversal themes: human rights, democracy, equity, good governance, sustainability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshop: Group work and discussion and action in transversalising major sustainability themes and steps.</li> </ul>
8		<p><b>Theme 8: The InterAmerican Court of Human Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> </ul>

	Explore and discuss the situation, experience and importance of the international, regional and national response in the search for equity and sustainability.	<p><b>System: Cases and reparations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Country reports</li> <li>○ Case study and court case analysis</li> <li>○ The case of Costa Rica</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Case Study development.</li> <li>○ Analyzing indicators and case study findings.</li> </ul>
<b>9</b>	Analyze case studies, vulnerabilities and advances.	<p><b>Theme 9: Environmental Rights and human rights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agriculture – conventional, organic and GMOs</li> <li>○ Gender, equity, risk and climate change</li> <li>○ Biodiversity, Environmental services and management of ecosystems, forests and seascapes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion</li> <li>○ Case Study development.</li> <li>○ Analyzing indicators and case study findings.</li> </ul>
<b>10</b>	Promote the permanent revision, understanding and monitoring of legal frameworks, agendas, policy formation and implementation.	<p><b>Theme 10: Conclusions and future outlooks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proposals for solutions, creativity for reparations and the future.</li> <li>○ Innovations and Future Challenges.</li> <li>○ Latin American and Caribbean data and Indicators for the comparison of cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lecture and discussion.</li> <li>○ Development of conclusions, solutions, and recommendations for policy development.</li> </ul>

11	Discuss, reflect upon and search for solutions.	FINAL WORKSHOPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Research work in groups: Identification of vulnerabilities, advances, policy gaps, key illustrative indicators.</li> <li>○ Workshop: compare cases, indicators, recommendations.</li> </ul>
12	Analyze case studies, vulnerabilities and advances. Discuss, reflect upon and search for solutions. Develop recommendations.	FINAL PRESENTATIONS and EVALUATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Present reports, interviews and final conclusions.</li> </ul>