



Fróðskaparsetur Føroya  
University of the Faroe Islands

Søgu- og samfelagsdeildin  
Department of History and Social Sciences

Skeiðslýsing  
Course description

<b>Course number</b>	6129.24
<b>Title</b>	Limits of Human Rights and Liberal Democracy
<b>ECTS</b>	10
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Bachelor degree or equivalent with adequate competence in law.
<b>Level</b>	Master.
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>The principal purpose of this course, which consists of an intensive seminar, weighted as 1/2 of the course (see description of course number 6127.24), plus a directed essay, also weighted as 1/2, is to introduce the students to a selection of the criticisms that have been directed at the structures and practices of human rights institutions such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) and at current conceptions and the implementation of liberal democracy in polities that purport to be based upon its principles and also to have them compose an analytical essay pertaining to a book-length work relating to criticism of this kind. Students will thus be introduced to a selection of the literature that advances these criticisms including at least one book-length work. There is a large critical literature in both of these areas that has been buried under a mountain of literature of a more enthusiastic kind. There is no implication that the seminar should favor the criticisms, only that the selected criticisms, and the reasoning behind them, should be explored rather than ignored.</p>
<b>Content</b>	<p>This course will explore—through readings, lectures, interactive discussion, and composition of an analytical essay on a book-length work—a selection of the criticisms that have been directed at the structures and practices of human rights institutions such as the ECHR and at current conceptions and implementations of liberal democracy in polities that purport to be based upon its principles. The reasoning behind these criticisms will be examined and discussed in the seminar that provides background for the analytical essay. Required readings will consist of a selection of the literature that advances and presents arguments for these criticisms including a book-length work that will be subjected to critical analysis in the directed essay.</p>
<b>Learning and teaching approaches</b>	<p>The first part of this course is taught as an interactive seminar involving the co-presence of all teachers and students in all sessions. Teachers and students will be from the University of the Faroe Islands and at least two non-Faroese universities. The seminar will be divided into five teaching days (19-23 August 2024) each of which will be the special responsibility of one of the five teachers and will explore a selection of the criticisms that have been directed at structure and practices of human rights institutions such as the ECHR and/or at current conceptions of liberal democracy and the institutions and practices in place in those polities that profess themselves to be liberal democracies. A three-hour long morning session will be devoted to lecture-discussion presented by the lead teacher, and a three-hour long afternoon session will be devoted to interactive debate and discussion that includes the students and teachers, with the lead teacher of the day stimulating discussion and keeping the discussion on track. The lead teacher for each session will specify and describe advance the focal topic for the session and will specify approximately 60 pages of required readings that will be used as points of reference for the lectures</p>



	<p>and the subsequent discussion period. These are meant to be read prior to the beginning of the seminar. The seminar will conclude with a two-hour examination consisting of 25 short-answer questions, five of which will be contributed from each teacher. The questions will be related to what has been taught and discussed in the seminar and are to be answered in English.</p> <p>This course thus consists of 30 contact-hours of teaching and discussion plus a two-hour examination and submission of an analytical essay of approximately 12 pages. Successful completion of the course will yield 10 ECTS credits.</p>
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<p>On completion of the course, the student shall be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• engage critically with a selection of the criticisms that have been made of some of the present forms of liberal democracy and of human rights institutions, and with the literature pertaining thereto.</li><li>• participate interactively in debates and discussions of these critical issues and improved their ability to participate actively in such debate and discussion.</li><li>• analyse critically and explain the reasoning behind the various critical points of view examined in the course.</li><li>• compose an analytical essay on a substantive work belonging to the literature critical of the structure and practices of human rights institutions or of current conceptions and instantiations of liberal democracy.</li><li>• autonomously organise and present research outcomes pertaining to critiques of the structure and practices of human rights institutions and current conceptions and instantiations of liberal democracy.</li></ul>
<b>Assessment method</b>	<p>The seminar will conclude with a two-hour examination consisting of 25 short-answer questions, five of which will be contributed from each teacher. The questions will be related to what has been taught and discussed in the seminar and are to be answered in English.</p> <p>The second part of the course consists in the composition of a directed essay of approximately 12 pages on a pre-approved topic pertaining to a book-length work chosen from a list of such works provided by the five teachers of the seminar, one of whom will serve as the director for each student and will approve of the topic of the essay. This essay may be written in English, Faroese, or a Scandinavian language with the approval of the director. The submission date for the essay will be announced later but will not be earlier than 15 September 2024.</p> <p>Attendance and active participation in all sessions is a precondition for each student's right to take both the examination and the essay.</p> <p>The course can not be considered passed unless both components, seminar and essay, are passed.</p>
<b>Examination</b>	Internal examination.
<b>Marking scale</b>	7-point grading scale.
<b>Bibliography</b>	Reading materials will be available prior to teaching on the Moodle network.
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