

## Course description

**Name of the course:** Introduction to Human Rights, Social Inclusion, Diversity

**Instructor:** Ágnes Sarolta Fazekas-Vinkovits Dr.

### Aims:

In the current climate where intolerance, preconceptions, ignorance, and fear of differences sometimes are common denominators, shaping awareness, exchanging knowledge, equipping individuals with practical tools promoting and protecting human rights and having intersectionally inclusive intercultural competencies and understanding are essential to prepare an open a mindset of individuals and organisations to work in an interconnected, inclusive world. In this foundation course, participants broadly address Social Inclusion, Diversity, Human Rights promotion, and protection globally, explicitly focusing on European and Hungarian contexts. Participants will be able to apply and connect acquired competencies within other areas of their professional study fields. Immersion experiences will help participants critically reflect on various concepts and share dilemmas and concerns about human rights, inclusion, and diversity. Participants will broaden their horizons/perspectives, explore and exchange different viewpoints, strengthen inclusive, intercultural learning, and gain more awareness about various lived circumstances of individuals and other societal challenges and human rights issues. There will be chances to share ideas and explore and model inclusive practices by applying the human rights approach.

By actively participating in this course, students will have opportunities to:

- Explore and discuss essential concepts of diversity, social inequity and human rights global context, with a specific focus on the European and Hungarian context.
- Discuss and challenge why inclusion and human rights matter and the values and efficacy of human rights systems as mechanisms to advance concepts of equality, freedom, and human dignity.
- Reflect on and examine the role and manifestation of power and privilege in contributing to social inequities and human rights violations.
- Learning about the intersectional approach to acknowledge structural barriers (including structural discrimination)
- Critically explore human rights protection systems instruments concerning inequity, focusing on Europe and Hungary.
- Share ideas and explore and model inclusive practices by applying the human rights approach.

### Learning outcomes and competences:

Participants of the course...

Knowledge:

- know the main historical elements of the development of human rights, primarily in Europe, its most important theories, connections, and problem-solving methods.
- know basic human rights and the international legal protection system, primarily in Europe.
- know the main organizations that reduce the social exclusion of different groups, primarily European umbrella organizations.

Skills:

- can critically analyse their activities and reflectively evaluate their views.
- can strive for inclusive procedures whenever possible.
- can understand the basic domestic and international literature professionally, reflect on them, and use them individually and in groups throughout the sessions.
- are capable of the cooperation and communication required for teamwork.
- can interpret international legal protection documents and recognize the interests of people at risk of discrimination and exclusion.

#### Attitude:

- strive to develop self- and peer knowledge, self-acceptance, and self-reflectivity.
- During teamwork, they firmly represent their professional principles and experiential knowledge.
- For effective cooperation, individuals allow aspirations of the other participants to take effect.
- Are open to learning about digital technologies, information communication tools and the methodological procedures related to them.
- Are committed to approaches that enhance access and participation, including people with various lived experiences.
- See science approaches in their context, form a well-founded professional opinion on them, and engage in respectful discussions and debate.
- Open to global and European values and principles in the context of human rights and sustainable development goals and strive to implement them in their work.
- Based on a human rights approach, they respect the rights and dignity of people with various lived experiences.

#### Autonomy and responsibility:

- Take responsibility for their scientifically and methodologically sound views and decisions on the field of area.
- Consciously represent the methodological culture of the field of area.
- Take responsibility for strengthening the independence and autonomy of the people with various lived experiences.
- Create a system of relationships with partners based on mutual respect and trust without prejudice.
- Feel responsible for continuously shaping their self-definition as future professional and for the narrower and wider community where they carry out activities.

#### **The content of the course:**

##### Topics:

1. Setting the global historical scene: the evolution of human rights

This block provides an insight into changing and challenging nature of human rights theory and practice within the global historical, political, and social frameworks. Contextualisation, an overview of crucial terminologies and concepts, will frame the conversation.

2. Why do human rights matter? A subject to debate

This block focuses on an immersion experience designed to help participants critically reflect on human rights, inclusion, diversity, and sharing dilemmas and concerns about them.

3. Power, privilege

This block creates opportunities for participants to reflect on and examine the role and manifestation of power and privilege in contributing to social inequities and human rights violations.

4. Intersectionality

This block looks at what does intersectionality mean, how the intersectional lens or approach can be applied when addressing injustice, structural barriers (including structural discrimination)

5. Human rights protection systems & instruments

This block puts Human rights protection systems & tools in the spotlight. Participants will get familiarised with the different instruments that support individuals and various stakeholders to promote and protect human rights.

6. Human Rights & Inclusion in action

This block will be practically focused. Participants will have the opportunity to work together to explore and model inclusive practices and implement what they have learned during the course by applying the human rights approach.

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9. Summary of the course

Through participation in this course, students will be able to:

- Understand and critically evaluate current terminologies and concepts.
- Examine the complex interplay of social, political, & economic forces related to the access and participation of individuals from all walks of life.
- Investigate & evaluate key legislations, policies, practices and stakeholders connected to human rights protection.
- Develop critical thinking, reflect on the power of (un)conscious biases.
- Leave the course with practical tools that contribute to accelerating change in any social setting.
- Take an interdisciplinary vision in planning and realising collaborations and tackling societal challenges.

Teaching and learning methods:

Interactive, using formal and non-formal educational methods.

**System of evaluation:**

5 ECTS - Individual presentation (open to any creative/innovative format) during the semester (30%) and a short essay (8-10 pages) (70%)

**Relevant literature:**

Compulsory reading:

1. Crenshaw, K. (2017) *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*. New York: The New Press.
2. Stephen P. Marks (2016). *Human Rights: A Brief Introduction*. School of Public Health, Harvard University. Retrieved from: <https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/134/2016/07/Human-Rights-A-brief-intro-2016.pdf>
3. Shestack, J. J. (2017). The philosophical foundations of human rights. Routledge. In *Human Rights* (pp. 3–36).
4. Iris Marion Young. (2000). *Inclusion and Democracy*. Oxford: OUP. "Introduction": pp. 1–16; "External and Internal Exclusion": pp. 53–57.
5. Elizabeth Anderson. (2006). The Epistemology of Democracy. *Episteme* 3(1–2), 8–22. [on the instrumental vs non-instrumental significance of diversity & inclusion, reflecting on community forestry cases in South Asia]
6. Agarwal, B. (2001). Participatory Exclusions, Community Forestry, and Gender: An Analysis for South Asia and a Conceptual Framework. *World Development* 29(10), 1623–48.

Recommended reading:

7. To Be Announced (TBA)

Further required reading is part of every course syllabus.