



Course ID:	Course Title:	Spring 2023
PV502	Poverty and Human Rights	Prerequisite:
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Online / Independent	Instructor:	Derek Cook M.Sc., RSW	First Day of Classes:	May 8, 2023
Days:	Daily	Email:	Derek.Cook@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	End of the First Day of Class
Time:	1:00 – 4:00	Phone:	403-410-2913	Last Day to Withdraw:	End of the Last Day of Class
Room:	L2084	Office:	L2072	Last Day to Apply for Extension:	
Lab/ Tutorial:		Office Hours:		Last Day of Classes:	May 19, 2023
Final Exam:	None				

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

Course Description

This course will provide a sound understanding of poverty from a human rights perspective. The course will focus on the role of domestic and international human rights law in addressing the structural causes of poverty and how a human rights approach fits within a Judeo-Christian framework. Various theological perspectives and critiques of the human rights approach will be explored.

Expected Learning Outcomes

It is the aim of the course that students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate skills related to perception of human needs with empathy.
2. Demonstrate awareness of ethically responsible attitudes toward social problems and, in particular, vulnerable populations in society, and be empowered to give voice to these issues in the public and professional arena, with a specific ability to:
 - Describe the current international and domestic human rights framework, its development, legal foundations and implementation.
 - Articulate the connection between poverty and human rights.
 - Describe the state of rights implementation with respect to specific poverty issues.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of a Christian view of sociological and psychological processes in conjunction with scientific study, with a specific ability to:
 - Articulate the various theological understandings of poverty and human rights prevalent in the Christian tradition, with particular emphasis on the period from the reformation era (industrial revolution) to the present age.
4. Critically analyze the shifting roles of the church, state and civil society in response to the changing theoretical and theological understandings of poverty and rights.

Textbooks

- Witte, J. and F. Alexander [eds] (2010). *Christianity and Human Rights: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Course Schedule

- See Appendix A.

Requirements:

a) Attendance and Participation (30%):

Students are expected to attend each class, having read assigned materials ahead of time, prepared to actively participate in these discussions. It is expected that students will be engaged in, and offer meaningful input to, class discussions. If external circumstances or illness prevent attending or adequately preparing for a class, please let your instructor know in advance so that this can be taken into account.

b) Presentation (20%)

Choose a particular issue related to poverty and provide a brief overview of the issue and how it is connected to one of the human rights dimensions discussed in class (civil, political, economic, social or cultural). Demonstrate how a human rights approach could inform a strategy to address the issue, applying basic human rights principles. Presentations to be delivered the last day of class (May 19).

c) Major Paper (50%)

Prepare a research paper that addresses a particular human rights issue and its relation to poverty. The paper should also provide a theological frame to the human rights issue being discussed. The paper should include:

- A description of the human rights issue including the specific right(s) and the basis for those rights.
- An overview and discussion of the issue being addressed including its dimensions, incidence, trends and the population(s) being impacted.
- An overview of how human rights approaches or remedies have been attempted historically either through policy, legislation or the courts.
- A discussion of how the issue could be addressed using a human rights approach.
- An overview of the competing theological perspectives of rights and how they apply to the chosen rights issue;
- An overview and critique of historical and current church engagement with the issue from a rights perspective;
- A personal perspective of the theological basis for Christian engagement with the issue from a rights perspective.

The paper should be 5000 – 6000 words in length and include appropriate external sources. Due July 15.

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

Numeric Grade	Grade	Interpretation	Grade Points
95-100	A+	Excellent	4.00
90-94	A		4.00
85-89	A-		3.70
80-84	B+	Good	3.30
76-79	B		3.00
72-75	B-		2.70
68-71	C+	Satisfactory	2.30
64-67	C		2.00
60-63	C-		1.70
55-59	D+	Poor	1.30
50-54	D	Minimal Pass	1.0
0-49	F	Failure	0.00
	P	Pass	No Grade Points

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other:

Any added features in the syllabus are optional. You may or may not wish to include elements such as a bibliography, reading list, or reporting form. This section should also include information on out of classroom activities, such as field trips, and any supplementary fees required to complete those additional elements.

Ambrose University Important Information:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are

reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/content/academic-calendar-2>.

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and are normally granted for 30 days beyond the last day of the term.

Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course.

A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a

postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/writingcentre>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See ambrose.edu/crisissupport for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Appendix A – Daily Course Topics and Readings

Week of	Topic	Readings
May 8	Poverty and Human Rights Basics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the structure of poverty and how poverty intersects with human rights. Understand the basic principles of human rights and the international human rights system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Declaration of Human Rights CESR Human Rights Insights – Is Poverty a Violation of Human Rights? Witte and Alexander, Chapter 9: The International Human Rights System. Viljoen, F. "International Human Rights Law: A Short History."
May 9	Human Rights and Poverty Reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepen understanding of Economic, Social and Cultural (ESC) Rights and explore current ESC Rights issues. Understand how to use a human rights approach in efforts to reduce poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Canada Without Poverty – Human Rights Guide to Poverty Reduction. The UN Report to Canada on the 6th Universal Periodic Review.
May 10	Human Rights Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the historical origins and philosophical foundations of the idea of human rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desmond Tutu – “To Be Human is to Be Free” in Witte and Alexander. Regan, E. Chapter 1: “A Boundary Discourse – Secular and Religious.” Flynn, J. “Human Rights in History and Contemporary Practice.”
May 11	A Theology of Rights: Human Rights in Scripture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the concept of human flourishing. Understand the theological foundations of human rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reize, Toffelmire and Stovell – “Human Flourishing and a Theology of Poverty Alleviation.” Witte and Alexander – Chapters 1-3.
May 12	Human Rights and the Church <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the historical engagement of the church with human rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Witte and Alexander – Chapters 4 - 6
May 15	Contemporary Faith Perspectives and Critiques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand current engagement of the Christian church with human rights. Explore inter-faith approaches to human rights. Understand Christian and secular critiques of human rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Witte and Alexander – Chapter 7. Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the World’s Religions. Sen, A. “Culture and Human Rights.”

May 16	<p>Poverty and Civil / Political Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the development of civil and political rights in Canada. Explore the connection between poverty and civil / political rights. Explore current civil / political rights issues in Canada and their connection to poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clement, D. "Human Rights in Canada." Chapters 3 – 4 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
May 17	<p>Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Adequate Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the applicability of ESC Rights in Canada. Understand key income and employment challenges in Canada. Explore the right to an adequate standard of living. Understand policy developments that have shaped the context of the right to an adequate income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OHCHR – Social Protection Floors and Economic and Social Rights. The Role of International Social and Economic Rights in the Interpretations of Domestic Law in Canada. Opportunity for All: Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy.
May 18	<p>Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Food and Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand key concepts of food and housing insecurity. Understand the intersection between the rights to food and housing and other rights. Understand current challenges with respect to the rights to food and housing. Understand policy developments that have shaped the context of the rights to food and housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OHCHR – The Right to Adequate Food. OHCHR – The Right to Adequate Housing.
May 19	<p>Synthesis</p>	Witte and Alexander, Chapter 16 – Christianity, Human Rights and a Theology That Touches the Ground.