

# STUDY HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNATIONAL  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
EXCHANGE



IHRE.ORG

BARD COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG



## ABOUT IHRE

**The International Human Rights Exchange (IHRE)** is the world's only full-semester, multidisciplinary program in human rights. Each semester undergraduate students and faculty from Southern Africa, North America, and other regions of the world come together to participate in a deep and multi-faceted intellectual engagement with human rights.

The IHRE program is housed at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa and is a joint venture with Bard College. The program inspires and activates students by advancing their knowledge and experience of human rights. Program activities include:

- Rigorous and thought-provoking classes taught in a seminar style, including a core course on the international human rights framework; a practicum on human rights advocacy; and a multidisciplinary selection of electives;
- A hands-on, mentored internship with a leading NGO working on the frontlines of social change;
- Guest lectures offered by leading luminaries in the human rights field; and
- An exploration of human rights challenges off-campus through human rights workshops, visits to key sites such as Soweto and the Apartheid Museum, and other cultural activities



Greetings!

Thank you for your interest in the International Human Rights Exchange (IHRE) program in Johannesburg, South Africa.

South Africa has a strong culture of human rights. Its constitution, its history of successful struggle against apartheid, and its search for transitional justice have endowed it with a global leadership role in human rights theory and practice.

As an IHRE participant you will attend challenging classes examining human rights from a range of academic disciplines. The curriculum – which blends a core course on international human rights, a seminar on human rights advocacy, and a wide range of electives – offers a critical exploration of human rights topics in a multidisciplinary forum. Taught by professors from both African and North American institutions in a seminar style, classes provide a highly interactive and cross-cultural context for discussion and debate.

Students will also explore the practice of human rights through participation in a hands-on, mentored internship. IHRE works with an impressive array of NGOs, all of which are working on the frontlines to promote and protect human rights in South Africa. Through these internships students gain invaluable experience working with programs effecting change in economic, cultural, social, political, and civil rights matters affecting South Africans today.

Many students credit IHRE with helping them to discover how best to apply their talents and interests to work in the field of social justice. A number of alumni have obtained jobs and fellowships as a result of their IHRE internship work. For a list of the organizations we work with, please visit our website at [www.ihre.org](http://www.ihre.org).

IHRE is designed to inspire and activate students by advancing their knowledge of human rights. Through engagement in the classroom, in the community, and among peers and faculty members, IHRE will challenge you and offer you new insights, and broaden your horizons. Both in the classroom and off-campus, members of the IHRE community engage in rigorous academic debate on the key human rights issues of our time while simultaneously working to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and we hope to see you in South Africa!

Warm wishes,

IHRE Program Staff

“**IHRE** gave me a deeper and richer understanding of the complexities within the human rights field, challenged me to question why I believe in human rights, and provided me a more nuanced understanding of their importance.”  
—**Rachael Goldenberg, Wellesley College**



## A BRIEF HISTORY

The **International Human Rights Exchange (IHRE)** was founded as a partnership among U.S. and Southern African colleges and universities. In its first five years, IHRE offered a month-long intensive summer course in South Africa. In 2007, IHRE became a joint semester program of Bard College and the University of the Witwatersrand.

Founded in 1860, **Bard College** is a four-year residential college of liberal arts and sciences in New York State. The College has developed an ethos particularly sensitive to issues of justice and injustice and is a place of refuge and a haven for iconoclastic thinking and action. Bard was the first institution of higher education in the U.S. to offer an undergraduate degree program in human rights.

The **University of the Witwatersrand** is renowned for its intellectual leadership and its commitment to nurturing critical thinkers, creative innovators, problem-posers, and problem-solvers. Wits is home to over 25,000 students and is an urban, comprehensive university. With over 1,500 international students from more than 90 countries speaking 130 languages, Wits offers a unique mix of academic excellence, cultural diversity, and an exciting social life.

## IHRE STUDENT PROFILE

Students with a commitment to social justice and/or a history of academic or personal involvement with human rights issues are particularly encouraged to consider IHRE. The breadth and depth of the IHRE curriculum, combined with the exposure to human rights issues seen from African perspectives and in the context of South Africa's recent history, are especially valuable for students preparing to embark on a career in social justice or human rights.

IHRE is proud of its diversity and inclusiveness. Approximately two-thirds of participants come from Wits and other African universities, and one-third are students from North American institutions. Participants represent a broad range of ethnic, social, and disciplinary backgrounds; all demonstrate strong interest in and/or previous experience in human rights and social justice.

"IHRE confirmed my passion for human rights. I truly enjoyed learning from my classmates and professors as they shared their opinions and perspectives in an extremely unique and intimate setting. The classes are small enough for discussion yet diverse enough for interesting debates."  
—Shafferan Sonneveld,  
Wilfrid Laurier University

## ACADEMICS

IHRE is a rigorous multidisciplinary academic program that emphasizes intellectual openness. In keeping with liberal arts pedagogical principles, most classes are small (average size 20). Students are encouraged to think critically, question received ideas, and subject theory to the test of experience.

## CORE CURRICULUM

### Human Rights: Perspectives from the Disciplines

Drawing on the South African experience, among others, this required course introduces significant material on human rights, discusses different disciplinary perspectives within the field, and considers issues of apartheid and transitional justice as a lens through which to explore issues of human rights.

### Engagement with Human Rights

This core seminar examines the theory and practice of human rights advocacy. It is supplemented by an internship of 10-12 hours per week at a human rights organization in Johannesburg.

## ELECTIVES

### Development, Welfare Economics, and Human Rights

This course covers emerging trends in inequalities of growth and levels of development among countries as well as individuals. Development and welfare economics are explored in the broader context of human rights.

## ELECTIVES (continued)

### Gender and Human Rights

This course includes a broad overview of the movements toward gender equity from the early 20th century to the present, and of gender and rights in the political, economic, and socio-cultural spheres.

### Human Rights and African Literature

This course explores traditional African understandings of human rights as expressed in the literature of personal narrative. It considers indigenous concepts of fairness and justice in proverbs, legends, myths, poems, tales, and novels.

### Human Rights and Culture

This elective looks at the paradigm of universal human rights and its consistency with the reality of diverse cultures, the problems and opportunities of “global culture,” and the relationship between the “right to culture” and other human rights.

### Human Rights and the Media

The course investigates the politics of “manufacturing consent” about the legitimacy of conflict and trauma during times of war, and provokes questions on the validity of the media’s role in creating popular memories, and their relationship to human rights.

### Islam and Human Rights

Given the increasing debate surrounding the situation of human rights and Islam, this course examines the profound tension between the competing paradigms of universal human rights, cultural and religious relativism, and Islam.

### Migration and Human Rights

The course explores the complex relationships between nationality, citizenship, migration, and human rights. Particularly, it will ask how mobility across national borders challenges the state form and the human rights of citizens and international migrants.

### The Philosophy of Human Rights

This course analyzes questions including: How do human rights differ from other kinds of rights? Are individuals alone capable of having human rights, or can groups such as nations also have them? Are we justified in believing in human rights?

### Politics and Human Rights

The course looks at the origins of rights-talk in political discourse, what rights involve, and how social movements have invoked rights to advance their cause as well as criticized rights as irrelevant to their cause.

We encourage international students to also consider enrolling directly in a regular course at Wits. In general, students may choose from any 1st year offering in the Humanities. Students may also be able to enroll in upper level courses.

### **Psychosocial Perspectives on Human Rights and Social Justice**

Considering the human dimensions of human rights, this course explores the meaning and practice of “rights” from the perspectives of psychology, social work, and critical (post)colonial studies.

### **State Sovereignty and Human Rights**

Looking at the relationships between human rights and state sovereignty, the course considers the role played by various actors in human rights – states, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and multinational corporations.

### **Theatre and Human Rights**

Combining both a theoretical and experiential perspective, this course explores the significant role applied drama and theatre has played, and continues to play in the field of human rights education, development, and cultural discourse across the African continent.

Sample course syllabi from previous IHRE courses can be downloaded on our website.



## FACULTY

Courses are taught primarily by professors from the University of the Witwatersrand and other African universities as well as guest faculty from North America representing prestigious schools such as Emory University, Bryn Mawr College, Wellesley College, and Bard College, among others.

Given the multidisciplinary nature of the IHRE program, faculty represent a wide range of disciplines and perspectives. The common thread is that all are dedicated human rights scholars and practitioners eager to foster student engagement through rigorous intellectual debate and demanding coursework.

Tendayi Emily Achiume	Ayesha Kajee
Wesahl Agherdien Domingo	Alaa Kaoud
Jacqui Ala	Aurelia Kazadi Wa Kabwe-Segatti
Cathi Albertyn	Jonathan Klaaren
Michael Allen	Peace Kiguwa
Florian Nikolas Becker	Sandy Koll
Kerry Bystrom	Peter Krapp
Solomon Berhane	Loren Landau
Kennedy Chinyowa	Timothy Longman
Sarah Chiumbu	Stacey Meadow
Thomas Cushman	Grace Meadows
Olivia Custer	Sheila Meintjies
David R. Davis	Jyoti Mistry
Manisha Desai	Thabisani Ndlovu
Wesahl Domingo	Kimani Ndungu
Dmitry Dubrovsky	Sibusiso Ntshangase
Marie Gibert	Yoon Jung Park
Kelly Gillespie	Tanya Sakota-Kokot
Michal Givoni	Jesse Shipley
Benita de Robillard	Matiangai Sirleaf
Pumla Dineo Gqola	Linda Smith
Daryl Glaser	Shatema Threadcraft
Shireen Hassim	Jed Tucker
Nava Hinrichs	Chaka Uzundu
David Hornsby	Shahid Vawda
Peter Hudson	Eric Worby
Augustine Hungwe	Natalie Zähringer
Lynelle John	



## INTERNSHIP

One integral component of IHRE is an internship at a Johannesburg civil society organization. Students undertake substantive work under the guidance of an in-house mentor, working approximately 10 hours a week, on Thursdays and Fridays. Separate academic credit is not given for the internship; rather it is a component of the core seminar, *Engagement with Human Rights*.

“IHRE was a great chance to get a glimpse of the world of NGOs and human rights. My internship gave me a unique opportunity to learn about a country and people in turmoil and bring that knowledge back to the human rights work I have been doing in the U.S.”

—Maura Donovan, Hamilton College

## INTERNSHIP HOSTS

“The main highlight of my IHRE experience was my internship. For me, it was the perfect component to link my in-class experience with real life challenges.”

—Aaron Hayes,  
University of  
Connecticut

Action Support Centre  
AIDS Consortium  
Amnesty International – South Africa  
Anti-Privatisation Forum  
Black Sash  
Central Methodist Church /  
Albert Street School  
Children of Fire  
Civil Society Watch / CIVICUS  
Commission for Gender Equality  
The Edge Institute  
Forced Migration Studies Programme  
Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action  
Gender Links  
Habitat for Humanity – South Africa  
Homeless Talk  
Human Rights Institute of South Africa  
Jet Education Services  
Khulumani Support Group  
Lawyers for Human Rights  
Legal Resources Centre  
Market Photo Workshop  
ProBono.org  
Reproductive Health and  
HIV Research Unit  
Sonke Gender Justice Project  
Soul City Institute for Health &  
Development Communication  
South African Human Rights Commission  
South African Non-Governmental  
Organization Network  
Steve Biko Foundation  
Street Law Project  
Tomorrow Trust  
Treatment Action Campaign  
Tshwaranang Legal Centre  
Women’s Net





## STUDENT LIFE

IHRE frequently organizes cultural and social activities both on and off campus. Participants are also encouraged to propose and organize activities for the IHRE student community. Previous IHRE-sponsored activities have included:

- An intensive Community Human Rights Workshop at the start of the program;
- An on-going human rights film series;
- Group service projects with local organizations;
- A visit to the Apartheid Museum;
- An excursion to Soweto, with stops at Mandela's home and the Hector Pieterse Museum;
- A visit to the Lesedi Cultural Village;
- A picnic at the Johannesburg Zoo; and
- An excursion to Newtown (Museum Africa, Kippies/Bassline Jazz Club, and Market Theatre).

“Having a connection to South Africa, and understanding some of the issues that present themselves there, is critical in this day and age. Being in Johannesburg, South Africa’s economic hub where rich and poor meet face-to-face, brought me closer to those issues by exposing me to them first hand.”

—Gavino Garay, Bard College



## PROGRAM DATES

IHRE is offered in both the spring and fall semesters. Students take classes at the University of the Witwatersrand in accordance with their academic calendar. The spring semester IHRE program typically takes place from late January through mid-June. The fall semester IHRE program typically runs from mid-July through late November. Please check our website for an updated program schedule.

## PRE-DEPARTURE WORKSHOP & ORIENTATION

Prior to the start of classes, North American students gather at Bard College for a required pre-departure workshop, typically scheduled around two weeks in advance of the start of classes at Wits. IHRE students also participate in a mandatory in-country orientation and an intensive Community Human Rights Workshop in a rural area of South Africa the week before classes begin.

## STUDENT SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

All IHRE students are directly enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand and enjoy the services and amenities provided to the Wits student body.

Wits offers students a wide range of social and extracurricular activities. It is home to a number of student clubs and organizations, houses over 97 sports clubs and societies, and features the Wits Theatre. The Wits campus also boasts 14 museums and two art galleries, containing collections of rare art and South African cultural heritage.

"I think the biggest lesson I learned is that one does not need to be a human rights lawyer or head of an NGO to be part of a positive cause. The curriculum is filled with the ways in which people of all background (artistic, academic, activist, etc.) can be involved.  
—Ronald Joseph,  
Bard College

## HOUSING

All students from North American institutions live in International House, a residence hall on the main campus. Dorms are within easy walking distance to classes, the student union, the cafeteria, the library, and the IHRE office.

## PROGRAM COST

Below are estimated program costs for students from North American institutions based on available figures for the 2011/2012 academic year. For the most updated information, please visit our website: [www.ihre.org](http://www.ihre.org)

Bard Tuition	\$21,238
Room	<i>Included in tuition</i>
Group Flight Charge	\$ 2,450
Meals	\$ 1,500
Personal Expenses	\$ 1,675
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>\$26,863</b>

## SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID

Bard works closely with study abroad staff at the student's home institution to ensure that, when possible, financial aid packages can be applied to IHRE tuition. Students should also investigate potential scholarships, grants, and loans which may help cover the cost of participation. Participants from North American institutions may be eligible to apply for need-based scholarships directly from the Institute for International Liberal Education at Bard College.

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## APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Admission is competitive and space is limited. *Students are encouraged to apply in advance of the deadline.*

### Application Deadlines

Fall Semester	<b>March 1</b>
Spring Semester	<b>October 15</b>

For information on how to apply, please visit our website.

### Institute for International Liberal Education / Bard College

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