

Periodic Programme Evaluation of the Two Year Master's Programme 'Theory and Practice of Human Rights'

Internal Evaluation Report

The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
The Faculty of Law
The University of Oslo

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Preface

This is the first time the inter-disciplinary M.Phil. Programme Theory and Practice of Human Rights has been subject to a comprehensive periodic programme evaluation. The purpose of this internal evaluation report is to assess the academic quality of the programme, based on the scientific content of the academic curriculum and its delivery, the learning environment, and student feedback on particular courses and the programme more generally. The final report aims at providing a solid foundation for further professional and strategic development and improvement of the quality of the programme. A central question of this evaluation is how the programme has integrated and how it can further develop and improve its inter-disciplinary nature.

This report provides an internal evaluation of the Master's programme based on data material from the period 2011-2015, which include student evaluations of the programme, reports of student and lecturer's evaluation of courses which are part of the programme, and evaluations of the programme as a whole prepared by an external assessor during the period 2006-2012.

In the course of 2015, the Programme Director, Dr Gentian Zyberi, has steered the internal evaluation process and drafted this internal evaluation report, with the administrative support of the Programme Coordinator, Morten Slind Olsen. The external evaluation process shall be carried out by a committee composed of several individuals not affiliated with the Faculty of Law at the University of Oslo. The external evaluation process, resulting in a joint report of the committee, is expected to be completed in the course of spring 2016.

The process of preparing this internal evaluation report has involved discussing the report with staff of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, student representatives, and other persons. The comments and suggestions received during these consultations have been reflected in this report.

Oslo, 25 November 2015

Dr Gentian Zyberi, LL.M

Morten Slind Olsen



Programme Director

Programme Coordinator

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1. General information

1.1. About the programme

The Master's programme is multi-disciplinary and focuses on human rights in both theory and practice from legal, historical, philosophical, political, and social science-based perspectives. Students are provided with specialised knowledge about human rights law, including the relationship between this law and other types of human rights initiatives and activities. Human rights are approached as an element of public international law, at global and regional levels, and the different forms of implementation — international, regional, and national — are examined. They are also contextualised within a social science perspective and knowledge about and understanding of the normative and institutional framework, contemporary issues relating to terrorism, religion, ethnicity, women, and development are studied in different courses. There are opportunities to do practical and skills-based work (internships, individual and group-presentations, and mock trials) and discussions about human rights as social and cultural practices are included in the courses. The final part of the programme consists of writing a thesis through which the students acquire methodological and practical skills well-suited to match a growing demand for professionals with a background in human rights. This programme leads to the following degree: Master of Philosophy in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights.

1.2. Programme description

This two-year programme allows students with a bachelor's degree, prospective human rights professionals, and young scholars to develop their expertise in the field of human rights — or in a particular, specialised area within the field — and it enables human rights practitioners to widen their theoretical hold on the human rights system and its historical and philosophical underpinnings. Completion of this Master programme enables one to:

- work independently and carry out a professional and original work in the field of human rights, in NGOs, international organisations, ministries, and state agencies that address human rights;
- work in conjunction with human rights specialists and other scholars in expanding knowledge about human rights as well as promoting respect for the values they embody and symbolise;
- communicate acquired skills in the field of human rights through teaching as well as legal action and policy-making; and

- pursue an academic career in human rights.

1.3. Programme structure

The Master's degree programme requires successful completion of nine courses and a written master's thesis (30 ECTS credits) for a total of 120 ECTS credits. Five courses are mandatory and a minimum of four elective courses must be chosen from among the various elective courses offered at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights or other institutes within the Faculty of Law or other departments at the University of Oslo.

During Term I, students are required to follow three mandatory courses:

1. HUMR5131 - Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights
2. HUMR5132 - Human Rights Law in Context
3. HUMR5140 - Introduction to Human Rights Law

During Term II, students are required to attend two mandatory courses:

1. HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice
2. HUMR5191 - Human Rights Methodology: Research, Analysis and Thesis

In addition, students should choose one elective course. Elective courses offered by the NCHR are the following:

HUMR5145 - Human Rights in Asia

HUMR5508 - Human Rights and Diversity - Leading Cases and Core Dilemmas

HUMR5702 - Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practices

Another elective course which was approved by the Faculty in the fall 2015 is 'Human Rights in Asia'. Students will be able to take this course in the spring semester from spring 2016 onwards.

During Term III, students are required to choose three elective courses. The elective courses offered by the NCHR are, for the time being, the following:

HUMR5133 - Business and Human Rights (autumn)

HUMR5134 - The Right to Peace (autumn 2016)

HUMR5502 - Ethnic Challenges to the Nation State: Studying State Responses from a Human Rights Perspective (autumn)

JUS5503 - Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: Striking a Balance? (autumn 2015)

Mandatory courses aim at giving students a solid basis to understand the global and regional human rights systems from a legal perspective as well as providing a basic political and philosophical

understanding of human rights. In addition, they present students with the tools necessary for writing a master thesis.

Elective courses aim at providing students with a deeper understanding of selected human rights topics, which are of particular interest to them. In the second and third terms, students are expected to complete four elective courses. Alternatively, one of the required elective courses may be taken in the fourth term, depending on individual preferences and on what is offered. The terms in which the elective courses are offered at the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) may vary from one two-year period to the next.

Students are free to choose elective courses from the NCHR or from other Master's degree programmes at the University of Oslo. It is also possible to choose elective courses from the Faculty of Law. As a general rule, all electives must be taught in English and be related to human rights.

Table 1: Programme structure

4. semester	HUMR5200 - Thesis in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights		
3. semester	Elective course	Elective course	Elective course
2. semester	HUMR5191 - Human Rights Methodology: Research, Analysis and Thesis	HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice	Elective course
1. semester	HUMR5140 - Introduction to Human Rights Law	HUMR5131 - Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights	HUMR5132 - Human Rights Law in Context
	10 ECTS credits	10 ECTS credits	10 ECTS credits

1.4. Admission to the MA programme

The criteria for admission require that a candidate has completed at least one and a half years (90 ECTS-credits) of the bachelor's studies in law, a social science (i.e., political science, anthropology, or sociology), philosophy, history, or a related field, as long as the study in question includes courses that are relevant for the study of human rights. A combination of these subjects is also possible.

Admission to the Master's degree studies requires:

- Higher Education Entrance Qualification and a completed bachelor's degree comparable to a Norwegian bachelor's degree.
- a specialisation defined by the programme.
- a minimum grade average of C (in Norwegian scale) or equivalent from the specialisation in your degree.
- a language requirement documented by one of the tests/exams below:
 - a) Passed examination in English foundation course (140 hours/5 periods per week) in Norwegian upper secondary school with a minimum grade of 4 (or an equivalent grade from a Nordic upper secondary school) or alternatively passed examination in English from second and/or third school year; or
 - b) An internationally recognised English language proficiency test.

Ranking of applicants

Applicants are ranked according to their grade average in the specialisation of their degree. Those applicants who cannot be ranked according to their grade average will be ranked on the basis of an individual assessment. Admission to this programme is usually highly competitive; as such, fulfilment of the minimum grade requirement does not guarantee a study place in the programme. Relevant professional experience/practice and motivation for the study will also come into consideration when assessing the applicants. The additional ranking is done after the applicants have had their ordinary ranking point total calculated.

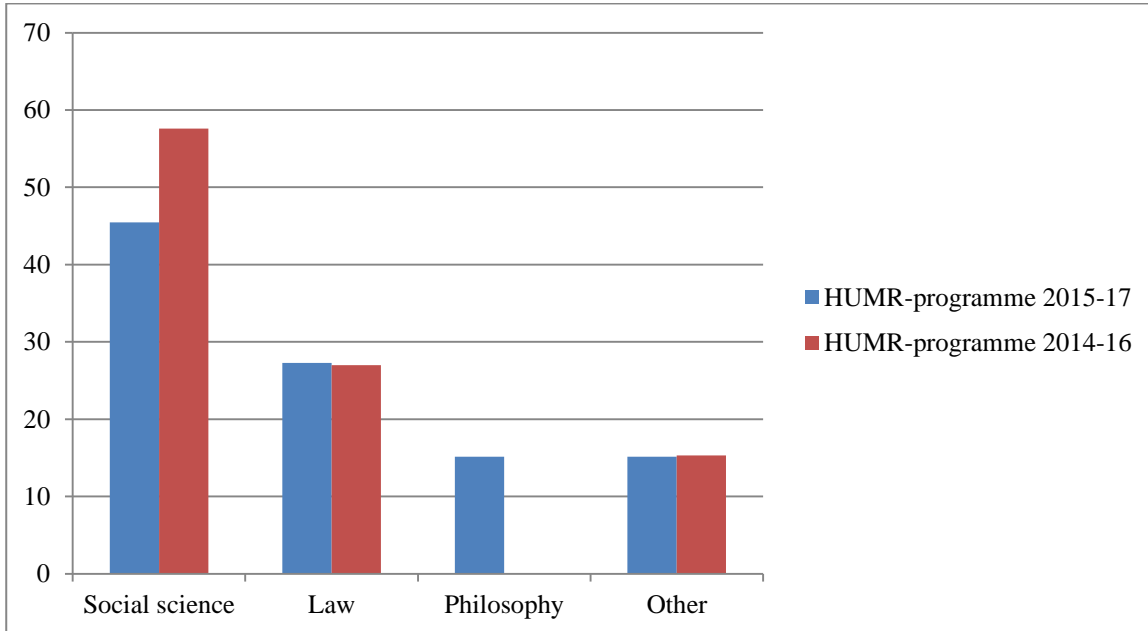
Table 2: Number of applicants to the HUMR programme*

Study programme	2008 Applications (total)	2010 Applications (total)	2011 Applications (total)	2012 Applications (total)	2013 Applications (total)	2014 Applications (total)	2015 Applications (total)
The Theory and Practice of Human Rights	180	305	385	558	850	745	772

*Source: Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS

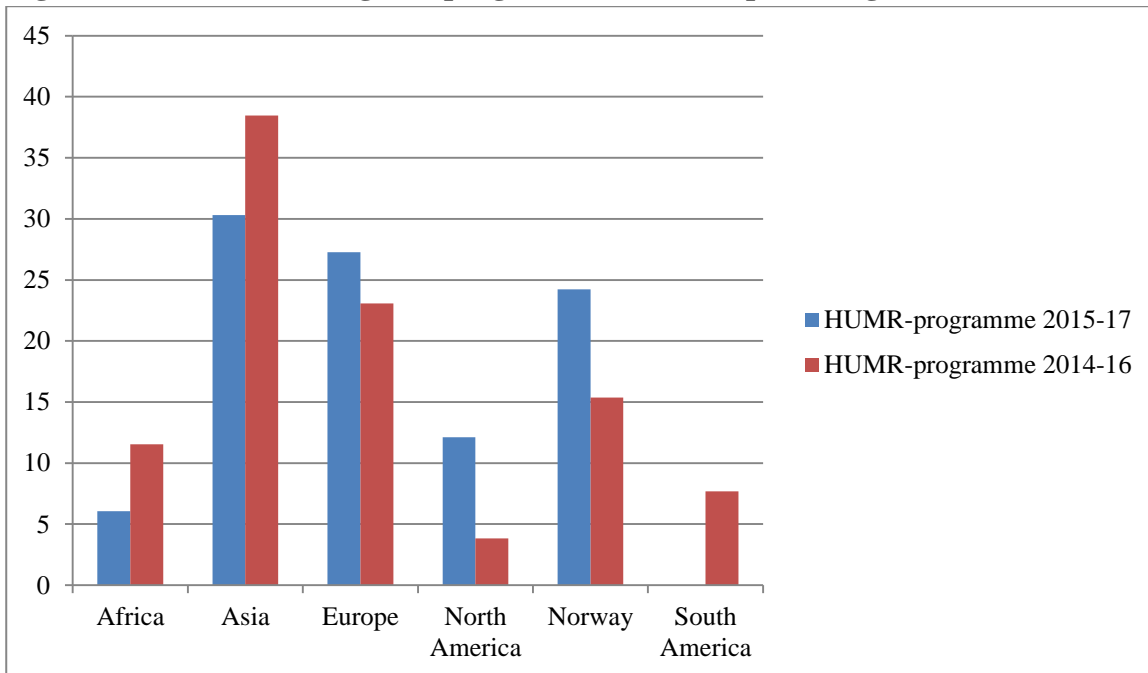
2. Class composition (academic background, gender, nationality)

Figure 1: Academic background programme students (percentage)*



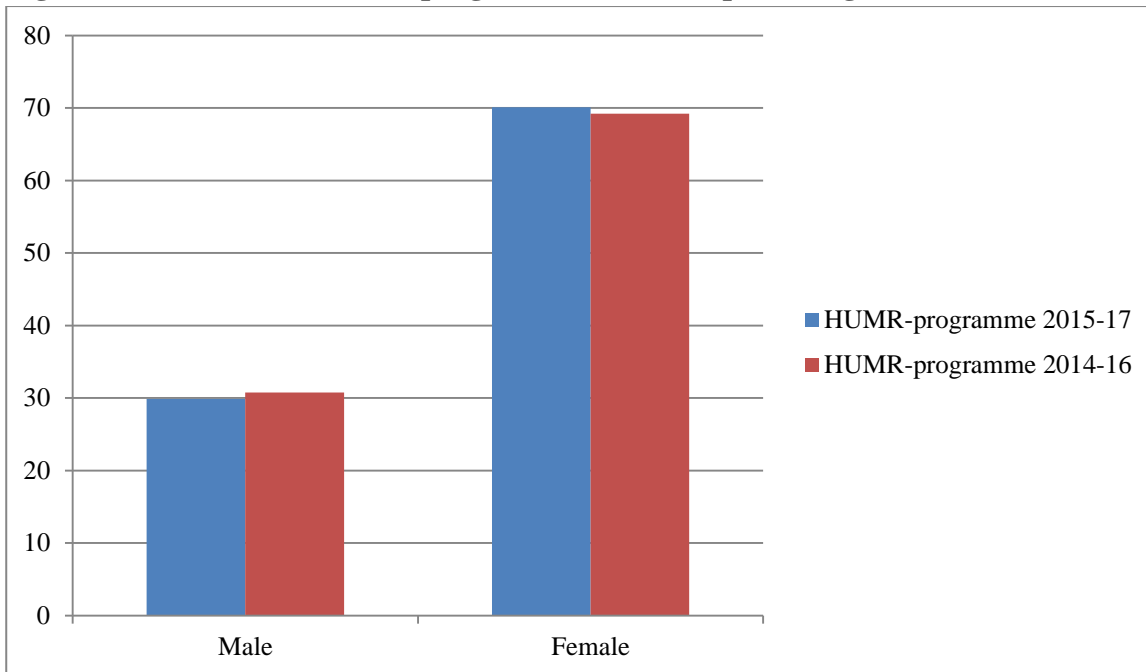
*Source: Shadow system at the Faculty of Law

Figure 2: Continent of origin of programme students (percentage)*



*Source: Shadow system at the Faculty of Law

Figure 3: Gender distribution programme students (percentage)*



*Source: Shadow system at the Faculty of Law

The number of applicants to the programme has increased manifold over the years, as has their overall quality. Students come from different countries and have varied backgrounds, characteristics which fit well with the multi-disciplinary nature of the programme.

3. Teaching goals of courses offered by the Centre

In order to provide general insight on the Master programme, this section first lists the teaching goals for the compulsory courses of the Master programme. Subsequently, the teaching goals for several elective courses which are offered from the Centre are listed. Finally, information about the master thesis is included.

3.1. Mandatory courses

3.1.1. HUMR5131 - Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights

This course provides an introduction to the history, philosophy, and politics of human rights. It offers a detailed presentation of the basic features and the historical evolution of the modern human

rights system. The course examines philosophical positions and debates on the legitimacy and justification of universal human rights as well as critiques from philosophical and social sciences perspectives. Students will learn about the status, functions, and uses of human rights in international relations, do comparative analysis of human rights practices in different regime types, follow human rights networking and promotion domestically and across borders, and explore the grounding of human rights in different cultures and normative traditions.

3.1.2. HUMR5132 - Human Rights Law in Context

Over the last decades, the catalogue of human rights has expanded considerably. This is evident in the fields of law or philosophy and in the political demands of individuals and states. This course sets out to examine how these different rights have emerged, been interpreted, and applied in practice. The focus will be on a selection of civil, political, equality, socio-economic rights, collective, and extra-territorial rights. Each selected right will be presented through a multi-disciplinary method. This will involve establishing the historical and political background of the right, assessing philosophical debates and *problematiques*, examining its recognition and interpretation in international and comparative law, and assessing its broader interpretation and application in practice. Attention will also be devoted to potential and actual conflicts between different rights.

3.1.3. HUMR5140 - Introduction to Human Rights Law

The legal protection of human rights on the international level has developed rapidly since the end of World War II while the post-Cold War period has seen a proliferation of remedial mechanisms. The course places human rights law in a broader context of international law, and gives an overview of the legal developments in human rights from 1789 through to the present. Particular focus is given to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, international and regional human rights treaties and UN Charter bodies. However, primary attention of the course lies in describing important legal characteristics of human rights treaties, such as the personal and territorial scope of application, the treaty bodies, the supervision and enforcement mechanisms, and the legal impact on a national and international level. Further, the course introduces particular substantive rights which will be addressed more in-depth at other courses in the programme.

3.1.4. HUMR5191 - Human Rights Methodology: Research, Analysis, and Thesis

The course provides insight into research methodologies in legal and social sciences relevant for conducting research in the field of human rights and for writing a master thesis. Basic issues and controversies in the conduct of scholarly research are discussed with the aim of offering students the necessary tools and guidelines for researching and writing a good scholarly thesis based on

independent thinking and sound argumentation. With the aim of encouraging inter-disciplinary work, students planning to write their thesis in the field of social sciences are given insights into relevant legal methods, and students writing their thesis in the field of law are given insights into related social sciences. Further, the course will allow students to develop and discuss their thesis topic. Students are expected to develop a preliminary draft that includes a thesis problem, stating succinctly its background and importance, its relation to international human rights, an introduction to the research agenda, any preliminary conclusions, a draft outline, and a bibliography.

3.1.5. HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice

Human rights have developed as a distinct practice within movements and NGOs and across many professions and institutions. Many graduates from the course will seek to work in the human rights field while those seeking to continue an academic career often require exposure to the daily mechanics of ‘human rights work’. Such exposure should also help students develop a research question and material for their thesis. This course will begin with a seminar day that introduces important elements relating to human rights practice, ethics, and challenges. Students will then be expected to submit an essay on a topic relating to human rights in practice or undertake a 6-8 week internship with an approved institution and submit a report of the internship. A limited number of internships will be offered by the NCHR and its partners. Students can also arrange an internship and have it approved by the Course Coordinator.

3.2. Elective courses

3.2.1. HUMR5508 - Human Rights and Diversity - Leading Cases and Core Dilemmas

This multi-disciplinary course focuses on how human rights case law addresses dilemmas in cultural diversity. The main focus is jurisprudence in the fields of freedom of religion or belief and minority rights, including rights of indigenous peoples, as these rights are interpreted both by international case law and in various regional and national jurisprudence. The intention of the case analysis is to focus on select international human rights norms and core dilemmas that states face in fulfilling their obligations under international human rights law while also taking various cultural traditions into consideration. These dilemmas will be discussed in light of normative theories on the individual and state.

3.2.2. HUMR5702 - Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practices

This course addresses different ways of thinking about the relationship between development and international human rights. It discusses shifts in the conceptualisation of development and examines

the increasingly central place of human rights in development discourse, as expressed in ideas about ‘sustainable development’, ‘development as freedom’, ‘rights-based development’, and the ‘right to development’ as a human right. Reflecting on these broader global discourses of development and human rights specific development issues and challenges are discussed, such as poverty and the UN Millennium/Sustainable Development Goals, governance and civil and political rights, health right, land rights, rights of persons living with disabilities, and the developmental challenges of climate change. The course offers critical examinations of conceptual, legal, and institutional developments by addressing human rights in the practices of international development agencies and as appropriated by civil society.

3.2.4. HUMR5133 - Business and Human Rights

The rise of contemporary economic globalisation has changed traditional discussions on the duties of businesses to be framed increasingly in terms of human rights and in a transnational and global manner. Yet, in spite of growing support for the idea that businesses should respect human rights, this notion is still far from having global acceptance and recognition. This course addresses recent developments in linking business practices and human rights and focuses on efforts to make human rights an important normative framework for the conduct of business in different societal and political contexts. It offers arguments in favour of and against extending human rights to the corporate sector and discusses legal developments, including extra-territorial obligations and national and international remedial mechanisms. It examines strengths and weaknesses of making human rights regulatory measures for corporate behaviour. Students will study practical cases of respecting human rights by transnational companies.

3.2.5. HUMR5134 - The Right to Peace (every second year)

Peace and Conflict studies tend to focus on the causes and dynamics of conflict. This course seeks to explore the normative framework and substantive components of a ‘Right to Peace’. How do we actively create peace? We begin with a review of the philosophical origins of the right to peace, followed by legal analysis of relevant international instruments. Special lectures address the substantive components of Peace: Sustainable Development, Fair Trade, Environmental Protection, Gender Equality, Non-Discrimination, Governance, Democracy, Transitional Justice, and The Role of International Courts in Pursuing Peace. Particular attention is paid to the role of civil society and non-state actors.

3.2.6. HUMR5145 - Human Rights in Asia

This course will provide students with a broad overview of the situation of human rights in Asia, with a specific focus on three countries, namely China, Indonesia, and Vietnam. These are countries

in which the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights has for a number of years been active through different programmes focusing on human rights education and training in various areas. The programme is composed of three parts: The first part provides some background information about human rights in Asia, deals with theoretical and philosophical understandings of human rights in Asia, including the discourse of Asian values, and provides an overview of the regional human rights system (ASEAN). The second part focuses on the human rights situation in the three focus-countries. The third part centres on the rights of a number of categories of vulnerable persons, namely minorities and indigenous peoples, women, children, and migrant workers.

3.2.7. HUMR5502 - Ethnic Challenges to the Nation State: Studying State Responses from a Human Rights Perspective

This course addresses challenges faced by states with culturally or ethnically heterogeneous populations within their borders. With a multi-disciplinary and case-oriented approach, it considers the state's moral, political, and legal responses to these challenges. The course offers comparative perspectives on the development of legal and political orders in nations-states and regional entities in response to the standards of the international human rights system. Case studies may vary but will usually include Guatemala, China (PRC), Indonesia, Norway, and the Palestine. Issues such as democratic theory, ethnicity, group identity formation, federalism, autonomy, self-determination, indigenous rights, minority rights, and non-discrimination will be addressed. The perennial tensions between group and individual rights will be discussed and, as will be seen, also 'rights – based approaches' have their limitations.

3.2.8. JUS5503 - Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: Striking a Balance?

In order to combat terrorism, states and international organisations have adopted numerous policies and initiatives, especially since 11 September 2001. These counter-terrorism measures pose certain challenges to the international legal system. The course addresses the challenges to the international legal system that counter-terrorism measures entail. We provide an introduction to relevant topics of international law, but the course focuses on the accommodation of and limitations to counter-terrorism measures that international human rights, refugee law, international humanitarian law, and international criminal law place on states.

3.2.9. JUS5730 - International Humanitarian Law (The Law of Armed Conflict)

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) establishes protection for civilians, other non-combatants as well as combatants, and limits methods and means of warfare in armed conflict. The rules seek to balance fundamental principles of humanity against military necessity. The principle of proportionality, the principle of distinction between military objectives and civilian objects, as well

as the prohibition against means of combat that lead to unnecessary suffering and superfluous injury, form the basis for this body of law. The legal bases for IHL are rules of international customary law as well as treaty law, in particular the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 with their additional protocols of 1977, and the Hague Regulations of 1907. In addition there are several specific treaties pertaining to e.g. use of certain weapons and other means of warfare. International Humanitarian Law is a part of the wider topic Public International Law. The main focus of this course is on the rules that apply during an armed conflict, including those on the conduct of hostilities, protection of different categories of persons and objects, means and methods of warfare, as well as issues of implementation and accountability. Additionally, the relationship of IHL with other branches of Public International Law, especially with International Criminal Law and International Human Rights Law, is given specific attention.

3.3. Master's thesis

The master thesis is the culmination of the Master's programme, where students must show their scholarly ability to engage in-depth with a particular human rights issue. During the writing process the student has an academic advisor from whom they receive guidance. A thesis should be no more than 18,000 words, footnotes included (not included in the word-count are the preface, table of contents, acknowledgements, bibliography, tables, and annexes). The thesis is an independent work, and the topic is of the student's own choice within the field of the programme. If the thesis is multidisciplinary, its content should be no more than 20,000 words, footnotes included (not included in the word-count are the preface, table of contents, acknowledgements, bibliography, tables and annexes). It is also possible to write a longer thesis which is awarded with 60 credits. The master thesis is deposited in the library of the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights and in the electronic repository DUO.¹

4. Teaching and evaluation forms

4.1. Teaching staff

Most of the teaching is done by senior academic staff of the NCHR. There has been an increased tendency in the last years to involve more PhD candidates at the Centre in the teaching process. Furthermore, there has traditionally been good cooperation with colleagues from other departments at the Faculty of Law and other institutions, who guest lecture in our courses. The Department of Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences of the University of Oslo offers several courses

¹ For more information and the full collection of the Master theses completed as part of the human rights programme see <<https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/78>>.

for teachers, dealing with different aspects of teaching, ranging from developing courses to methods of teaching.² Courses are geared towards both temporary and tenured academic staff. Tenured academic staff must complete the necessary courses and receive the certification for basic teaching competence within two years of their appointment.

4.2. Internships

An internship aimed at gathering practical work-experience in the field of human rights is part of the compulsory programme of the Master (HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice). The Centre has secured a limited number of internship placements with several human rights organisations and relevant institutions. At the same time, students can also apply for other internships, under the condition that they are approved by the course coordinator of the HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice.

4.3. Student assessment and course evaluations

The assessment of the students for the courses is done through different methods, which include a final four-hour examination, a final paper, or a combination of the two. Final examinations of four-hour duration are the preferred method of assessment at the Faculty of Law, but increasingly they have been substituted by final papers and take-home exams, especially in the Human Rights Master Programme. Courses are evaluated regularly, through official evaluations administered by the Faculty, and through mid-term evaluations carried out by the course coordinators themselves.

Table 3: Evaluation cycle Autumn 2011 - Spring 2016

Course	Lectures	Examination	A11	S12	A12	S13	A13	S14	A14	S15	A15	S16
HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice	Spring	Spring		X						X		
HUMR5131 - Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights	Autumn	Autumn					X					X
HUMR5132 - Human Rights Law in Context	Autumn	Autumn					X					X
HUMR5134 - The Right to Peace	F12, F14 etc.	F12, F14 etc.			X						X	
HUMR5140 - Introduction to Human Rights Law	Autumn	Autumn					X					X

² For more information on these opportunities see <<http://www.uv.uio.no/iped/english/fup/teaching-and-learning-in-higher-education>>. These courses are offered mainly in Norwegian.

HUMR5191 - Human Rights Methodology: Research, Analysis and Thesis	Spring	Spring							X				X
HUMR5200 - Master's thesis	Spring	Spring							X				
HUMR5501 - Ethnic Challenges to the Nation State..	Autumn	Autumn								X			
HUMR5503 - Human Rights and Counter-terrorism: Striking a Balance?	F13,F15 etc.	F13,F15 etc.						X					
HUMR5508 - Human Rights and Diversity - Leading Cases and Core Dilemmas	Spring	Spring		X							X		
HUMR5702 - Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practices	Spring	Spring							X				X

5. The learning environment

5.1. Teaching facilities

Most of the teaching in this programme takes place in the Asbjørn Eide Seminar Room at the Centre. This room can seat up to 40 persons and is equipped with a projector and audio facilities. Most of the elective courses which are not offered by the Centre are taught at classrooms in the Domus Academica (Karl Johans gate 47) and other suitable venues of the Law Faculty. Generally, these classrooms are rather good and usually have podcast facilities. Moreover, the Centre provides many study places, located at the 2nd and the 3rd floor, and at the same time also offers high-quality library services.

5.2. IT resources (Fronter, podcast)

All courses at the University of Oslo are provided with an electronic environment, namely Fronter, which is used by teaching staff to share relevant teaching materials and announcements with the

students. While the Asbjørn Eide Seminar Room at the Centre is yet to be equipped with podcast facilities, other classrooms at the Faculty of Law do have such facilities and there is an increasing tendency to make use of podcasts in the courses. This tendency is strongly supported and encouraged at the Faculty and University level, since attending lectures is not compulsory and many students seem to make regular use of podcasts.

5.3. The Library at the Centre and its services

The Centre has its own library with a rich collection of human rights literature. The library also offers access to a large number of electronic journals and books, as well as a number of electronic databases through the university library. The fact that the library is situated within the Centre makes it easily accessible to the students. At the beginning of the academic year, the head librarian, Kirsten Fuglestved, offers a course to new students on how to do research by using the library system, as well as on how to use programmes as EndNote to do research more effectively. In addition, she teaches 2nd term students about how to find human rights documents and information from various international organisations and institutions. Students can also approach her with specific questions. In the period October-November, the Programme Director, in cooperation with Kirsten and academic staff members of the Centre, organises a two-hour seminar for students concerning the writing of a master thesis, and discuss different potential topics the students can choose from. This helps the students to get started on choosing a topic and finding a supervisor before the spring semester when they have to complete their work on the master thesis.

5.4. Steering of the Master Programme (the Programme Director and the Programme Coordinator)

The MA programme is headed by a Programme Director and the Programme Board of Master of Laws (PMR) on behalf of the Dean at the Faculty of Law. The PMR decides on the academic content, priorities, and quality assurance of the programme. The PMR also decides on programme plans and course descriptions within the frames set by the Faculty Board and Dean. The head of the PMR shall also decide on minor matters, clear matters and matters of haste in relation to the programme. Decisions on academic matters beside this are delegated to the Programme Director. A list of the main delegated responsibilities includes the following:

- Leading admission committee meetings and the admission process;
- Providing academic counselling for the programme students, including coordinating the master's theses supervisions and the responsibility to assess and recognise elective courses from other departments at the Faculty of Law and at other departments at the UiO, in cooperation with the faculty administration;

- The overall academic responsibility for the courses offered by the NCHR, including several courses for which the Director is responsible;
- Responsible for coordinating the course leaders of the programme in accordance with the Academic Committee Counsel led by the Director and programme evaluations;
- Making sure the courses are coherent and live up to their name, reflect NCHR's competence and the academic demand of the students;
- Responsible for managing teaching assistants;
- Responsible for socialising the new international students into a Norwegian academic environment through an annual welcome meeting, "Meeting the NCHR staff lunch" and overnight cabin trip;
- Responsible for being available for NCHR's management, teaching staff, programme students, and the Faculty of Law's administration in order to make decisions on various matters regarding the programme.

The MA programme is administered by the Faculty of Law through a Programme Coordinator, who is responsible for the English MA programmes offered by the Faculty. The main duties of the Programme Coordinator include the following:

- Assessment and admission of applicants to the programme;
- Teaching- and examination administration;
- Administrative procedure for programme students;
- Study counselling and administrative support of programme students;
- Administrative responsible for master's theses.

5.5. Completion of studies

Table 4: Completion of studies HUMR-programme 2008-2015

Class	Active students	Drop-outs	Candidates ordinary timeline	Candidates with one extra semester	Candidates in total
2004-06	25	5 (20%)	17 (68%)	1 (4%)	20 (80%)
2006-08	24	4 (20%)	17 (70%)	-	20 (83%)
2008-10	33	2 (6%)	25 (75%)	3 (9%)	31 (93%)
2010-12	23	6 (26%)	12 (52%)	2 (8%)	17 (74%)
2011-13	21	6 (28%)	12 (57%)	2 (9%)	15 (71%)*
2012-14	29	4 (13%)	16 (55%)	4 (13%)	22 (75%)**
2013-15	24	8 (33%)	10 (41%)	NA	10 (41%***)

2014-16	26	-	NA	NA	NA
2015-17	31	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: FS250.002

* 1 active student (programme still to be completed)

** 3 active students (programme still to be completed)

*** 6 active students (programme still to be completed)

The student drop-out rate has fluctuated over the years, with the highest being that registered for the 2013-2015 cohort. This can be attributed to a number of factors, including the fact that some students accepted to the programme fail to show up without notifying the administration; some students change to another programme during the first few months; and others drop-out of the programme for financial or personal reasons. The majority of the students finish their studies on time. Concerning students who have not completed the programme, the delay or drop-out seems to be related to a change in the student's personal circumstances, rather than lack of support from the academic staff concerned with supervising their master thesis.

5.6. Learning results

Grade distribution, including pass/fail (courses)

Figure 4: Candidates and grade average HUMR-courses 2008-2015

Course	2015		2014		2013		2012	
	Candidates	GPA	Candidates	GPA	Candidates	GPA	Candidates	GPA
HUMR5200 - Thesis in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights	18*	B	22	C	17	B	14	B
HUMR5131 - Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights	40*	NA	30	C	18	C	24	C
HUMR5132 - Human Rights Law in Context	34*	NA	30	B	14	B	22	B

HUMR5140 - Introduction to Human Rights Law	38*	NA	33	B	22	B	24	B
HUMR4504 - Human Rights in Practice	27	Pass	15	Pass	23	Pass	20	Pass
HUMR5191 - Human Rights Methodology: Research, Analysis and Thesis	29	C	15	B	22	Pass	19	Pass
HUMR5133 - Business and Human Rights	23*	NA	16	B	20	B	15	C
HUMR5134 - The Right to Peace	-	-	18	B	-	-	29	C
HUMR5502 - Ethnic Challenges to the Nation State: Studying State Responses from a Human Rights Perspective	12*	NA	12	C	27	C	11	C
JUS5503 - Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: Striking a Balance? **	56*	NA			37	B		
HUMR5508 - Human Rights and Diversity - Leading Cases and Core	17	B	2	A	16	B	7	B

Dilemmas								
HUMR5702 - Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practices	26	B	14	B	6	C	5	B

Source: FS568.001 and FS565.001

*Number of students registered for examination fall semester 2015

**Changed course code from HUMR to JUS in 2013

As can be seen from the table above, over the years, student results for these courses are quite high. Be that as it may, the number of students for the elective courses could be somewhat higher. This issue needs to be addressed in cooperation with other departments and faculties for whom these courses might be of interest.

6. Evaluations over the years

The academic quality of the Master's programme has been evaluated throughout the years both internally, through student evaluations, and externally by an external programme supervisor. The subsections below provide a succinct summary of these evaluations provided by an external programme supervisor, by students concerning specific courses, and also gathered through discussions between the Programme Director and the Programme Coordinator and first and second year students.

6.1. Evaluations by the external programme supervisor (*tilsysnssensor*)

The evaluation of the Master programme over the course of many years has been rather positive, both in terms of the knowledge and skills displayed by the students, but also in terms of the student assessment process in general. A number of evaluation reports of the programme have been drawn in the period 2006-2012 by an external programme supervisor (*tilsysnssensor*). In the 2006-2007 evaluation report, the external programme supervisor noted that "The range of students' knowledge and skills is very similar to that which would be found in a good university in the United Kingdom", and that the evaluation process in general "seems to be very sound and in line with high

international standards.”³ In the 2007-2008 evaluation report, she noted that “Both courses have important aims, and the examination of students is quite well designed to test the relevant skills and knowledge.”⁴ In the evaluation report for 2008-2009, the knowledge of international and regional law of human rights was noted as being good, with the need for developing further the critical capacity of the students.⁵

In her evaluation for the period 2009-2010 she has stated that the “use of the grading scale and the quality of the work of the students in this programme at University of Oslo is adequate and comparable to what I have seen at the other institutions”⁶ and that the “standard seems to be comparable to other LLM/MA programmes in international human rights internationally.”⁷ In the evaluation report of 2010-2011, the external supervisor noted that “there seems to be a good mix of compulsory foundational modules with optional modules that can cater to each student’s personal interests while retaining a coherent programme” and that “the programme is of high quality, that the students are taught to high levels and that their research skills improve through the programme.”⁸ In the evaluation report of 2011-2012, the evaluator noted that “The assessment is done anonymously, which is a good quality principle. The evaluation of the quality seems to have been carried out in an impartial and professional manner.”⁹ Moreover, the study was assessed overall as “a high quality programme where the results reflect a good learning process.”¹⁰ In their entirety, these reports provide a positive evaluation of the programme with regard to the quality of the students, the quality of the courses part of the programme, and the student assessment procedures.

³ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of selected examinations for Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practice and Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights; and a thesis in The Theory and Practice of Human Rights. See 2006-2007 Report, p. 2. Annex 1.

⁴ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of five written assignments for the course “Ethnic Challenges to the Nation State: Studying State Responses from a Human Rights Perspective” and five four-hour examination papers for the course “Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: Striking a Balance?”. See 2007-2008 Report, p. 2. Annex 1.

⁵ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of five examination papers for the course “International Human Rights Law: Substantive Rights” and five examination papers for the course “International Human Rights Law: Institutions and Procedures”. 2008-2009 Report, p. 2 and 3. Annex 1.

⁶ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of five essays from the Methodology course (HUMR5191) and 5 master theses (HUMR5200). 2009-2010 Report, p. 3, Annex 1.

⁷ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of five essays from the Methodology course (HUMR5191) and 5 master theses (HUMR5200). 2009-2010 Report, see p. 4, Annex 1.

⁸ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of five exam scripts in the two following modules, namely HUMR5190 Research Methodology and Thesis Development (essays), and HUMR5701 Human Rights and Development: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory and Practices. See 2010-2011 Report, p. 3. Annex 1.

⁹ This evaluation was conducted on the basis of 4 essays in HUMR5503 – Human Rights and Counter Terrorism: Striking a Balance; and 4 MPhil Thesis in HUMR5200 Thesis in the Theory and Practice of Human Rights. 2011-2012 Evaluation Report, p. 2. Annex 1.

¹⁰ 2011-2012 Evaluation Report, p. 3. Annex 1.

6.2. General evaluation from meetings with students and the NOKUT survey of 2013-2014

Several evaluation meetings have been organised by the Programme Director and Programme Administrator where the master students have provided feedback on various aspects of the programme. In an evaluation meeting of 25 October 2011 the first-year students seemed to be quite satisfied with the forms of assessment and the learning environment, while expressing the desire to have more information about the activities of the centre including its research projects.¹¹ Another meeting with second-year students held on 3 November 2011 revealed that the students were satisfied with different forms of assessment, including both 4-hour exams and take-home exams in the form of final papers.¹² At the same time, the students did express a wish for more flexibility with regard to the timing of the internship programme and that more information with regard to relevant courses offered at other faculties is made available. A recent survey conducted by NOKUT, including results from 2013 and 2014 shows a level of satisfaction with the programme above average, when compared with similar programmes in social sciences and law.¹³ The survey includes student assessments on the following issues:

- study environment (socially, academically, services, facilities and equipment) – 4,3 out of 5 (average 3,9);
- participation (opportunities to influence) – 3,4 out of 5 (average 3,4);
- engagement (stimulation and coherence) – 4,2 out of 5 (average 4,0);
- working life relevance (job opportunities, working life relevance) – 4,2 out of 5 (average 4,0);
- teaching (teaching and academic counselling) – 3,7 out of 5 (average 3,5);
- examinations (exam and written assignments) – too few respondents;
- learning outcome (self-evaluation of learning outcome) – 4,1 out of 5 (average 3,9); and
- overall assessment of the programme (student general satisfaction with the programme) – 4,3 out of 5 (average 4,0).

6.3. Student evaluations of specific courses

The evaluation of the Human Rights in Practice course (HUMR 4504) of spring 2011 shows that students were satisfied with the opportunity to do an internship.¹⁴ The student evaluation of

¹¹ Evaluation meeting 25 October 2011 – 12 students and Stener (program director) and Elisabeth (student administration officer) – Annex 2.

¹² Evaluation meeting 3 November 2011 – 4 students and Stener (program director) and Elisabeth (student administration officer) - Annex 2.

¹³ For more details on these results see <http://www.studiebarometeret.no/en/Sammenligne/1110_JFM2-HUMR>.

¹⁴ See Annex 3.1.

Introduction to the History, Philosophy and Politics of Human Rights (HUMR5131) of fall 2013 has been both positive and negative, with concerns mainly related to the pressure on students to engage within a short period of time with complex concepts and a vast amount of literature in varied fields, especially philosophy.¹⁵ The periodic evaluation of Human Rights Law in Context (HUMR5132) has largely been positive, with feedback from students suggesting appreciation of the course in terms of curriculum, content, teaching, and also of administrative aspects of the course.¹⁶ The periodic evaluation of Introduction to Human Rights Law (HUMR5140) of fall 2013 has largely been positive, along the same lines as HUMR5132.¹⁷ The fall 2014 evaluation of Ethnic Challenges to the Nation-State (HUMR 5502) showed a high level of satisfaction with the course.¹⁸ Other evaluations conducted over the last years are also generally positive. However, some issues have been raised by the students and subsequently addressed, including the amount of reading materials, the degree of difficulty of exams, and the coherence of courses which are taught by several lecturers. Some of these concerns can be addressed through a better communication between the lecturers, the person responsible for the course, and the student representative.

7. Internationalisation and inclusion of Master students in research activities

The efforts aimed at the internationalisation of the Master's programme conform to the University Strategy 2020,¹⁹ the Law Faculty's strategy,²⁰ and the Centre's own strategy.²¹ The internationalisation of the Master's programme is pursued in a number of ways, including by trying to attract the best students from different parts of the world, by cooperating and exchanging experiences with colleagues based in other human rights centres, by inviting lecturers from other institutions to give guest lectures, by informing students about and by having a student team from our programme participate in international moot courts competitions (ELSA Human Rights Moot Court and others) and other relevant competitions, and by organising internships for our students with human rights organisations in Norway and in different parts of the world. The University of Oslo has offered a small number of scholarships which are aimed at enabling students from developing countries to attend this programme.²² The programme has continually attracted qualified

¹⁵ See Annex 3.2.

¹⁶ See Annex 3.3.

¹⁷ See Annex 3.4.

¹⁸ See Annex 3.5.

¹⁹ For more information on the University's strategy see <<https://www.uio.no/english/for-employees/organization/strategic>>.

²⁰ For more information on the Law Faculty's 2010-2020 strategy see <<http://www.jus.uio.no/om/strategi/strategisk-plan/jus-strategisk-2020-for-nett.pdf>> (in Norwegian).

²¹ For more information on the Centre's 2015-2018 strategy see <<http://www.jus.uio.no/smr/om/strategi/strategi-2015-2018.pdf>> (in Norwegian).

²² For more information see respectively the Fritt Ord Student Stipend at <<http://www.jus.uio.no/smr/studier/stipend/frittord-eng.html>> and the Norwegian Quota Scheme at

students from all over the world, as shown both by the number of students interested and by their academic results. The Centre has an ongoing cooperation with a number of other human rights centres, especially Nordic ones which are part of the AHRI network.²³ This cooperation should be further developed and the possibility of offering joint degrees or establishing exchange programmes with partner institutions from this network should be explored in the coming years.

Master students in an advanced stage of their studies can also participate in meetings of the Centre's four Thematic Research Groups and present some of the preliminary results of their master thesis research. This participation is aimed at sharing research results with a broader group and enabling students to get some feedback on their research from both academic staff and from staff of the international programmes who have theoretical and practical experience on those issues.

8. Issues for further reflection

While evaluating as adequate the assessment of the students, in the 2006-2007 evaluation report the external programme supervisor noted the need for including some brief comments explaining the grade awarded, as well as for an examiners' meeting to be held at the end of the examination course, in which any problematic cases are settled, and the supervisor can comment on the course and discuss issues in dialogical form, with the department.²⁴ Many changes have been made to the assessment procedures at the University of Oslo and currently students are given an opportunity and are encouraged to ask for an explanation of their grade and can ask for a re-assessment.

Other issues raised by the students concerning the learning environment include also:

- Occasional noise, which can be disturbing.
- Placing more computers in the student common study area.
- Information about courses and schedules to be made available as soon as possible.
- Suggested reading list to consult while preparing for the programme.

The first issue has been addressed by placing relevant announcements in the common areas aimed at ensuring the sharing of these areas without disturbing others. The second issue needs to be addressed jointly with the technical staff and within the technical requirements for noise and air pollution in working spaces at the University of Oslo, as well as taking into account the resources of

<<http://www.uio.no/english/studies/admission/quota-scheme>>. However, this quota programme is being replaced with a partnership programme with developing countries; for more information see <<http://siu.no/Hoeyere-utdanning/Samarbeid-med-utviklingsland/Partnerskapsprogram>> (in Norwegian).

²³ For more information on the AHRI network see <<http://www.ahri-network.org>>.

²⁴ 2006-2007 Evaluation Report, p. 3 Annex 1. This information is included in order to reflect the improvements made over time to the assessment system at the University of Oslo.

the Centre. Regarding the third issue, information about courses and schedules is now placed on the respective websites of the courses and in Fronter as soon as possible and is updated on a running basis. The fourth issue is difficult to tackle given the vast amount of literature in the field of human rights. Generally, it is for the students who expect to start their studies at the Centre to check the different courses, find out what materials and textbooks are used, and start gathering and going through them beforehand. Nevertheless, the Centre could consider recommending a short list of key relevant literature for prospective students.

An important aspect of maintaining the high-quality of the programme is the regular updating of the curriculum for each course. Simultaneously, the academic staff of the Centre has to discuss the possibilities and the potential need for establishing new courses in a sustainable manner. To that aim, in addition to the informal discussions among colleagues, the teaching staff might need to meet at intervals of 2 or 3 years and spend a day (or two) outside the Centre in order to go through all our HUMR-coded courses in detail, gather feedback and provide input for course revisions, update the literature, discuss potential new courses, and so on. While the Education Committee meets regularly, it is difficult for this body to serve this purpose efficiently without devoting additional time and resources to the administration of these aspects of the programme.

More insights from and follow-up of our graduates career trajectory could benefit the MA programme and Faculty in terms of steering the programme and courses, promotion, recruitment and networking, among other things. Currently, the Programme Director and the Programme Coordinator are exploring ways to establish an Alumni Programme for the Master's students, starting with an informal Facebook page.

9. Conclusion

This report provides an internal evaluation of the Master's programme based on data-material from the period 2011-2015, which include general evaluations of the programme by students, reports of student and lecturer's evaluation of courses which are part of the programme, and evaluations of the programme as a whole by an external assessor during the period 2006-2012. The aim of this report is to provide a solid foundation for further professional and strategic development and improvement of the quality of the programme. The assessment of the programme, based on the scientific content of the academic curriculum and its delivery, the learning environment, and student feedback on particular courses and the programme more generally, shows a general level of satisfaction of students which is above the average when compared with similar programmes offered at the University of Oslo.

A central question of this evaluation has been how the programme has integrated and how it can further develop and improve its inter-disciplinary nature. Feedback from the students and the lecturers show that combining successfully the different disciplines in the courses remains a challenge. These challenges stem from a number of factors, including the different levels of knowledge among the students concerning the various fields covered by the programme, namely law, philosophy, political sciences, and anthropology; the vast amount of knowledge and literature to be covered in the limited time available; and the challenge of combining knowledge from the different fields in the same courses. In order to remedy these problems, a number of seminars have been introduced alongside the lectures for the compulsory courses, which provide an opportunity for students to jointly engage with and discuss about selected human rights issues.

This internal evaluation report and the forthcoming external evaluation report (expected in spring 2016) will provide a suitable basis for the further development and improvement of the courses and methods of teaching in this Master's programme.

List of Annexes

Annex 1 – Evaluations by the external programme supervisor

Annex 2 – General evaluation meetings

Annex 3 – Student evaluations of specific courses

Annex 4 – Examples of master's theses titles, HUMR-programme 2012-15

Annex 4

Examples of Master's theses titles, HUMR-programme 2012-15

- 1 [THE ROLE OF PROVISIONAL MEASURES IN THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO FAIR TRIAL: AN EXAMINATION OF THE AFRICAN SYSTEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS](#)
- 2 [China s Nomadic Settlement Policy and the Cultural Rights of Nomadic Pastoralists: A Case Study of the Kazakh Nomads in Xinjiang](#)
- 3 [Corporatism, Freedom of Association and Shenzhen s Trade Union Reform](#)
- 4 [National implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights Thesis – Assessment of gaps between the Guiding Principles and Norwegian Company Law](#)
- 5 [Law is Violation: Are Human Rights a Hollow Vessel?](#)
- 6 [Counter-terrorism and social rights: The assessment of adverse effects of counter-terrorism on social rights of families of terror suspects and convicts in Indonesia](#)
- 7 [The Right to Health of Mentally ill Persons in Ghana A case study of the New Jerusalem Chapel in Ghana](#)
- 8 [Calling for truth about mass killings of 1965/6: Civil Society Initiatives in revealing the truth of mass killings of 1965/6 under the transitional justice framework in Indonesia](#)
- 9 [Complementarity: A gap between theory and practice? ICC`s contribution to domestic proceedings in Uganda](#)
- 10 [Human Rights in Industrial Zones: Beyond State Duty and Corporate Responsibility. The Case of Vietnam](#)
- 11 [The Ugandan Anti-Homosexuality Bill. Study on how and to what extent the Bill violates human rights. How are homosexuality and the Bill perceived in Ugandan society?](#)
- 12 [Victim blaming in cases of rape: a study set in São Paulo, Brazil](#)
- 13 [Reclaiming Minority s Freedom of Religion or Belief in Indonesia: Evaluating State Response to the Ahmadiyya Conflict in Lombok, Indonesia](#)
- 14 [Out of sight, out of mind? - The protection of failed asylum seekers](#)
- 15 [Policing Youth in Vietnam Using Juvenile Justice as a Means of Social Control](#)
- 16 [The Right to Work and Social Security in the Context of the Global Financial Recession - A Study of Compliance with Obligations under ICESR – Slovakia](#)
- 17 [The Protection of Linguistic Minorities in Universities: the case of Yunnan, China](#)
- 18 [Under Surveillance: Individual Privacy Rights in the New Era of Secret e-Surveillance](#)
- 19 [Defining the margin of terror - Explaining the chilling effect of insult and defamation laws on the media and artists in Zimbabwe](#)
- 20 [Human rights in the transition to a 'green economy' – Norway and a 'just transition' to a low-carbon society](#)

- 21 [The Right to Employment for People with Disabilities : A Study on Jordan](#)
- 22 [Labour Conditions in Export Processing Zones and the Role of the ILO : Focus on Freedom of Association](#)
- 23 [Addressing resistance to human rights in human rights education : The case of Indonesia](#)
- 24 [The Right to Food of Refugees in Ghana: A Case Study of the Ampain Refugee Camp in Ghana](#)
- 25 [Transitional Justice and Enforced Disappearance: The right to truth and the obligation to search for the disappeared. The Colombian case.](#)
- 26 [The Protection Quandary: Voluntary Human Shields : Addressing Voluntary Shields' Loss of Protection under International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law](#)
- 27 [TABLOIDISATION IN ONLINE NEWSPAPERS IN VIETNAM : THE FREE DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERTAINMENT NEWS IN ONLINE NEWSPAPERS IN VIETNAM: BEHIND THE CONFLICT BETWEEN FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY AND MORAL VALUES](#)
- 28 [The 2012 Russian Foreign Agent Law : An evaluation of the legitimacy of the Foreign Agent Law with reference to freedom of association and expression as specified in the European Convention on Human Rights](#)
- 29 [Safe havens or recruitment pools? The relationship between child soldier recruitment and areas of displacement. Vulnerability, agency and rebel motivations.](#)
- 30 [Prejudice of Law Enforcement officials as a Challenge for the Protection of Rights of Bete-Israelis in Ethiopia The Case of Northern Shewa Zone](#)
- 31 [MEETING SOCIO-ECONOMIC RIGHTS OBLIGATIONS IN THE FACE OF POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND ECONOMIC MARGINALIZATION; A MAJOR CHALLENGE CONFRONTING GHANA](#)
- 32 [The Multicultural Agora in the Age of Globalization](#)
- 33 [The Prevalent Practice of Kamaiya Bonded Child Labour in the Mid- and Far-Western Terai of Nepal](#)
- 34 [GOVERNMENT'S COMPULSORY LAND ACQUISITION AND THE RIGHT TO PROPERTY: the Case of Mining Communities in Ghana](#)
- 35 [To what degree could responsible mining play a role to prevent human rights violations arising from the industry? : A human rights law perspective](#)
- 36 [Transitional Justice for Papua: Lessons to be learned from Indonesian experiences?](#)
- 37 [The Politics of Human Rights and Global Justice : Rawls and Habermas on the Prevention of Gross Violations of Human Rights](#)
- 38 [Silent Voices: working with children prone to commercial sexual exploitation : Assessing the gap with a human rights and intersectional discrimination approach](#)
- 39 [State Responsibility and International Human Rights. : A Case of Domestic Violence Against Women in Norway](#)

- 40 [Patchy law and return practices in Europe: On vulnerable persons' human rights in the context of the present and future Dublin Regulation](#)
- 41 [Access to Justice Hurdles to Holding Corporations Liable under the Alien Tort Statute](#)
- 42 [Do Human Rights Violations Increase the Risk of Civil War?](#)
[Legal Opinion on \(the Neptune Spear Operation that led to\) the Death of Bin Laden](#)