

Final examination essay for HUMR 5131 Autumn 2022

Deadline: November 18 at 1:00 PM

Maximum length (including footnotes): 4000 words

PLEASE ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. Philosophy of human rights

In his article “Personal rights and public space”, Thomas Nagel writes:

“When appeal is made to human rights in the international context, the aim is to rest one's case on features of moral status so basic that they can be invoked without having to consider in detail the broader circumstances of the situation. If someone has been tortured, or shot for demonstrating peacefully, or imprisoned for criticizing the government, we do not have to investigate the economic performance or popularity of the regime that has done it to decide that this was an impermissible violation of the person's rights. The particulars of the treatment are enough.” (Nagel, T. (1995). Personal Rights and Public Space. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 24(2), 83-107, p. 85.)

Discuss whether you agree with this view of human rights or not. In your discussion, you should draw on relevant texts from the course syllabus.

2. Politics of human rights

"International human rights law is intertwined with politics". Discuss this statement in light of one or two of the following dimensions of politics: 1) governance, 2) distributive politics, 3) international relations. In your discussion, you should draw on relevant texts from the course syllabus.



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