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ФИО: Ястребов Олег Александрович
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**Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
PEOPLES' FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA
NAMED AFTER PATRICE LUMUMBA
RUDN University
LAW INSTITUTE**

educational division (faculty/institute/academy) as higher education programme developer

COURSE SYLLABUS

AFRICAN SYSTEM OF HUMAN RIGHTS

course title

Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of:

40.04.01 JURISPRUDENCE

field of studies / speciality code and title

The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme of higher education:

INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

higher education programme profile/specialisation title

1. COURSE GOAL(s)

The goals and objectives of the discipline “African System of Human Rights” are to create complex idea of International Human rights protection, particularly the regional system: African system of human rights protection. The course is designed for the Law students having basic training on International Public and International Private Law specializing in master programs of international legal regulations.

The course aims to train students’ skills on elaboration of recommendations to the improvement of the National and the Regional legislations in the ground of Human Rights Protection based on Treaties and Regulations of Human Rights Law at national, regional and universal levels.

The main objectives of the course are as the following:

- to acquaint students with specific subject of Human Rights Law,
- to define the place of international human rights law in the system of the Public International Law,
- to analyze and study the system of sources of Human Rights Law, to create students’ vision on the necessity of intergovernmental and non-governmental organization participations in elaboration of Human Rights Law at international level.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mastering the course “African System of Human Rights” intends to train and guide students to achieve the development of following competences (competences in part):

Table 2.1. List of target competencies (parts of competencies)

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Competence formation indicators (within this course)
GPC-4	Able to argue a legal position in writing and orally in a case, including in adversarial proceedings.	<p>GPC-4.1. Knows the content of basic and specific legal concepts, terms and definitions, is able to use them to build an oral and written position on a specific legal problem;</p> <p>GPC-4.2. Able to argue a legal position in writing and verbally, including taking into account the adversarial principle in legal proceedings;</p> <p>GPC-4.3. Has skills in drafting legal documents and public speaking skills to argue a legal position for professional litigation.</p>
PC-4	Able skillfully to apply the sources of international law in specific areas of professional activity, apply universally recognised principles and norms of international law, treaty and customary rules, other sources of international legal obligations, as well as international legal means of procedure in his/her professional activity.	<p>PC-4.1. Aware of the specifics of international legal regulation and international law enforcement practice in specific areas of professional activity;</p> <p>PC-4.2. Applies international legal acts in specific areas of professional activity;</p> <p>PC-4.3. Implement the principles and norms of modern international law and procedural means of international law in professional activity;</p> <p>PC-4.4. Has professional skills of qualified application of international legal sources in specific areas of professional activity;</p> <p>PC-4.5. Knows how to implement the principles and norms of modern international law in professional activity, including at the domestic level, in accordance with the principle <i>pacta sunt servanda</i> and the provisions of the Constitution.</p>

3. COURSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The course refers to the core/variable/elective* component of (B1) block of the higher educational programme curriculum.

* - Underline whatever applicable.

Within the higher education programme students also master other (modules) and / or internships that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as results of the course study.

Table 3.1. The list of the higher education programme components/disciplines that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as the course study results

Competence Code	Competence descriptor	Previous courses/internships*	Subsequent courses/internships*
GPC-4	Able to argue a legal position in writing and orally in a case, including in adversarial proceedings	Philosophy of Law / Философия права	Educational Internship (Teaching) / Учебная практика (педагогическая) / Externship and Pre-Degree Internship / Производственная практика, в т. ч. преддипломная
PC-4	Able skillfully to apply the sources of international law in specific areas of professional activity, apply universally recognised principles and norms of international law, treaty and customary rules, other sources of international legal obligations, as well as international legal means of procedure in his/her professional activity	International Law: Issues of Migration and Asylum / Международное право: вопросы миграции и убежища	The Right to Health in International Law / Международно-правовые основы права на здоровье / Inter-American System of Human Rights / Межамериканская система защиты прав человека / Externship and Pre-Degree Internship / Производственная практика, в т.ч. преддипломная

* - filled in based on the competency matrix

4. COURSE WORKLOAD AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The total workload of the course is 3 credits (108 academic hours)

Table 4.1. Types of academic activities during the periods of higher education programme mastering (**full-time training**) *

Types of academic activities	TOTAL, academic hours	Semester / training modules			
		5	6	7	8
<i>Classroom learning, academic hours</i>	32		32		
including:					
Lectures (LC)	-		-		

Types of academic activities		TOTAL, academic hours	Semester / training modules			
			5	6	7	8
Lab work (LW)		-		-		
Seminars (workshops/tutorials) (S)		32		32		
<i>Self-study (ies), academic hours</i>		49		49		
<i>Evaluation and assessment (exam or pass/fail grading)</i>		27		27		
Course Workload	academic hours	108		108		
	credits	3		3		

5. COURSE CONTENTS

Table 5.1. Course contents and academic activities types

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Course contents	Academic activities types
Section 1. Integration process and history of human rights protection in Africa	Topic 1.2. The impact of the transatlantic trade, colonialism and the neocolonialism on Africa.	The transatlantic slave trade caused massive depopulation and social disruption. Colonialism imposed artificial borders, extractive economies, and forced labour, leading to underdevelopment and ethnic divisions. Neocolonialism perpetuates dependency through unfair trade, debt, and corporate exploitation, resulting in weak institutions and ongoing rights violations.	S
	Topic 1.2. The role of the UN in human rights protection in Africa: Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples of 1960.	UN Resolution 1514 (1960) proclaimed self-determination as a human right and called for an end to colonialism. It provided legal and moral support for African independence movements, accelerated decolonisation in the 1960s–70s, and established the link between self-determination and human rights protection in post-colonial Africa.	S
	Topic 1.3. The aim and the creation of the organization of African	The OAU was founded in 1963 to promote African unity, cooperation, sovereignty, and	S

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Course contents	Academic activities types
	Unity: The Charter of the Organization of African Unity.	the eradication of colonialism. Its Charter prioritised non-interference and state sovereignty but laid the foundation for later human rights instruments, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.	
Section 2. African Charter on human and peoples' rights and the mechanisms of implementation	Topic 2.1. The Organization of African Unity and human rights protection in Africa: struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination, protection of refugees (The OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in African of 1969).	The OAU condemned apartheid as a crime against humanity and supported liberation movements. The 1969 OAU Refugee Convention expanded the refugee definition to include those fleeing foreign domination or public disorder, emphasised voluntary repatriation, and remains a cornerstone of African refugee law.	S
	Topic 2.2. Civil and political rights and the Economic, Cultural and Social rights according to the African charter on human and peoples' rights.	The African Charter (1981) integrates all three rights generations. Civil/political rights include non-discrimination, fair trial, and free speech. Economic/social/cultural rights cover work, health, and education. It also uniquely includes peoples' rights (self-determination, development, peace) and individual duties to the community.	S
	Topic 2.3. Mechanism of implementation of the African Charter on human and peoples' rights: The African Commission on human and peoples' rights. The African Court on human and peoples' rights.	The African Commission (Banjul) monitors compliance, reviews state reports, and hears communications (non-binding recommendations). The African Court (Arusha, 2006) issues binding judgments. Cases must first go through the Commission. Individual access to the Court requires a state declaration accepting such jurisdiction.	S

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Course contents	Academic activities types
Section 3. Comparing universal and African system of human rights protection	Topic 3.1. Differences and similarities between the African system of human rights and the Universal system.	Similarities: Both protect civil, political, economic, social rights; use state reporting and individual complaints. Differences: African system includes peoples' rights and individual duties; has a binding court (UN does not); broader limitation clause; no strict exhaustion of local remedies in urgent cases.	S
	Topic 3.2. Differences and similarities between the African and European systems of human rights protection.	Similarities: Both regional systems with a court and individual petitions; binding judgments. Differences: Europe lacks economic/social rights in its main convention (separate charter) and has no peoples' rights or individual duties. European Court has mandatory jurisdiction; African Court requires optional declaration for individual access. Europe has stricter admissibility rules.	S
	Topic 3.3. Differences and similarities between African and European systems of human rights protection.	Similarities: Subsidiarity principle; inter-state and individual applications. Differences: European system older, more caseload, awards compensation; African system younger, focuses on collective/development rights, permits broader reservations, lacks comparable enforcement.	S
Section 4. Protection of human rights in African sub-regional organizations	Topic 4.1. Protection of human rights within the framework of the ECOWAS Court of justice.	The ECOWAS Court (2005 Protocol) allows individuals and NGOs to bring direct human rights claims without exhausting local remedies. It applies the African Charter and UDHR. Judgments are binding. Notable cases include SERAP v. Nigeria (environmental rights) and Habré v. Senegal (torture).	S

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Course contents	Academic activities types
	Topic 4.2. Protection of human rights within the framework of the SADC tribunal.	The SADC Tribunal initially allowed direct individual claims and ruled against Zimbabwe in <i>Campbell v. Zimbabwe</i> (2008). In response, SADC suspended the Tribunal in 2010. A 2014 Protocol severely restricted individual access, requiring national court exhaustion. Human rights protection in SADC is now largely ineffective.	S
	Topic 4.3. Protection of human rights within the framework of the EAC.	The East African Court of Justice (EACJ) has indirect human rights jurisdiction through Treaty rule-of-law principles (e.g., <i>Katabazi case</i> , 2007). No separate human rights charter exists. Individuals can bring claims on Treaty violations with human rights dimensions. Enforcement depends on state political will.	S

* - to be filled in only for **full**-time training; *LC* - lectures; *LW* - lab work; *S* - seminars.

6. CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Table 6.1. Classroom equipment and technology support requirements

Type of academic activities	Classroom equipment	Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study (if necessary)
Lecture	Classroom for lectures, equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams),

Type of academic activities	Classroom equipment	Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study (if necessary)
		Chrome
Lab	Classroom for lab work, group and individual consultations, evaluation and assessment, equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Seminars	Classroom for seminars, group and individual consultations, evaluation and assessment, equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome Specialized software: Trados
Computer classroom	Computer classroom for academic activity, group and individual consultations, evaluation and assessment, equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, 30 personal computers, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Self-studies Classroom	Classroom for Self-studies, equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Courtroom	Classroom for court hearing simulation equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome

* The premises for students' self-studies are subject to **MANDATORY** mention

7. RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR COURSE STUDY

Main reading (sources):

1. Nmehielle, V. O. The African Human Rights System. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, Nijhoff. 2021.
2. Obiora Chinedu Okafor. The African Human Rights System, Activist Forces, and International Institutions. York University, Toronto, 2024.
3. Murray Rachel. Human Rights in Africa: From the OAU to the African Union. 2023.
4. Serges Djoyou Kanga. The Right to Development in the African Human Rights System. 2018

Internet-(based) sources:

1. Electronic libraries with access for RUDN students
 - RUDN Electronic library system <http://lib.rudn.ru/MegaPro/Web>
 - Electronic library system «University Library online» <http://www.biblioclub.ru>
 - Electronic Library «URAIT» <http://www.biblio-online.ru>
 - Electronic library system «Student. Consultant» www.studentlibrary.ru
 - Electronic library system «Lan» <http://e.lanbook.com/>
 - Electronic library system "Troitskyi most"
2. Databases and search engines:
 - Electronic Legal and Regulatory Documentation Fund <http://docs.cntd.ru/>
 - Search system Yandex <https://www.yandex.ru/>
 - Search system Google <https://www.google.ru/>
 - SCOPUS <http://www.elsevierscience.ru/products/scopus/>

*Training toolkit for self- studies to master the course *:*

* The training toolkit for self- studies to master the course is placed on the course page in the university telecommunication training and information system under the set procedure.

8. ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT AND GRADING SYSTEM* FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' COMPETENCES LEVEL UPON COURSE COMPLETION

The assessment toolkit and the grading system* to evaluate the competences formation level (competences in part) upon the course study completion are specified in the Appendix to the course syllabus.

* The assessment toolkit and the grading system are formed on the basis of the requirements of the relevant local normative act of RUDN University (regulations / order).

DEVELOPER:

Head of the Department of
of International Law,
Full Professor

A. K. Abashidze

Position, Name of the
Department

Signature

Full name

HEAD OF EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Head of the Department of
of International Law,
Full Professor

A. K. Abashidze

Position, Name of the
Department

Signature

Full name

HEAD OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Associate professor of the
Department of International
Law, Candidate of Legal
Sciences

S.M. Kopylov

Position, Name of the
Department

Signature

Full name