

Human Rights & World Politics

GOV S365W (80790)

Summer 2023

Class Meetings: Online and asynchronous.

ASSISTANT INSTRUCTOR (AI)

Keith Padraic Chew, MA (he/him/his)

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Zoom Only Office Hours:

T/W/Th 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM, 15-minute slots. Appointment required. Students **MUST** sign up for office hours in advance at this following link 48 hours in advance: <https://calendly.com/keithpchow/gov-s365w-office-hours>. Calendly will provide you with the Zoom meeting link for the office hours timeslot you sign up for.

Bio: Keith Padraic Chew is the assistant instructor for Human Rights and World Politics Summer 2023. He is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Government and the lab manager of the Politics of Race and Ethnicity Lab at the University of Texas at Austin.

The AI is the sole point of contact for this course. A video in Canvas explains the division of labor between the AI and the Instructor.

INSTRUCTOR / CONTENT CREATOR

Dr. Rhonda Evans

Associate Professor of Instruction, Department of Government

Director, Edward A. Clark Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies

HOW TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON (EMAIL/CANVAS POLICY)

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence. We will email you at your officially registered email address, **and** notifications will be sent to that address via the Announcements function in Canvas. You are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. It is your responsibility to keep the University informed about changes to your e-mail address.

You should check your e-mail daily to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. Before emailing questions about some aspect of how the course operates, review this syllabus and the Canvas page, which provides a lot more detail about how the course and assignments operate.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Human rights feature prominently in contemporary world politics. Today there exists a large and highly legalized international human rights regime consisting of the United Nations (UN) and several regionally-based human rights systems. Focusing on the UN, this course introduces you to the legal, political, and policy dimensions of international human rights. In so doing, it addresses the: (1) origins and future of the international human rights system; (2) legal and institutional infrastructures and processes that exist at domestic and international levels for the promotion and protection of human rights; (3) main actors involved in human rights advocacy, including states, international organizations, activists, nongovernmental organizations; (4) interests of these actors as well as the tactics that they employ to advance their interests; and, (5) the challenges of assessing the effectiveness of human rights advocacy and how these challenges can be met by employing basic precepts of quantitative and qualitative social science research.

In terms of substance, students should be able to answer the following questions by the semester's end: What are international human rights, and why are they codified in law? Why do states ratify international human rights

treaties? How is compliance with international human rights law promoted through the UN? Is the international human rights system legitimate? How do international human rights law and institutions figure into human rights advocacy? Is international human rights law effective? If so, under what conditions is it effective? And, finally, how do we *know* if it works? Considering the significant resources and efforts that are devoted to international human rights institutions and advocacy each year, these are clearly very important questions. And yet, you may be surprised to discover that much remains to be learned about the efficacy of international human rights law and advocacy. Understanding why that's the case leads us to the transferable skills that this course emphasizes.

In exploring why we have limited knowledge about the effectiveness of international human rights law, we will consider various challenges to studying international human rights law from an *empirical* as opposed to a *normative* perspective. You should emerge from this course with a better understanding of the mechanics of social scientific research, enhanced critical thinking capabilities, and improved writing skills. The course will increase your knowledge about international human rights, but more importantly, it is designed to help you develop your critical thinking, writing, and research skills. These are precisely the skills that employers and postgraduate admissions committees look for in applicants. I urge you to be more deliberate in your efforts to acquire and improve these skills as well as in your efforts to emphasize the skills you possess on your resumes, cover letters, LinkedIn pages, etc.

What? You don't have a polished resume or a LinkedIn page? Get on it! The time to start working on these self-promotion tools is before you actually need them. Rest assured that some of your competitors are already on it.... Your future-self will thank you! For COLA students, check out [Liberal Arts Career Services](#). All others should explore the options that their colleges and schools offer.

TRIGGER WARNING

One cannot discuss "human rights" without also discussing the "wrongs" that humans inflict on one another. Course readings may expose students to subjects that make them uncomfortable or cause discomfort. We examine these subjects in the context of intellectual inquiry of the sort encountered at the university level.

COURSE MATERIALS

All course materials are freely available to you through Canvas. Materials for each class meeting are contained in a designated module as either PDFs or external URL links. If you have difficulty opening a URL link in Canvas, simply click the blue box labelled "Open Site in New Window."

You're not required to purchase the book *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*, 3rd ed. By Charles Lipson (University Chicago Press, 2018), but I highly recommend it. It's available on campus ([here](#)), and a used copy can be purchased from our [Amazon](#) overlords for about \$10. A couple of chapters are available to you in the Student Resources module in Canvas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 0: Introduction to the Course

Module 1: Why international human rights?

Ann Marie Clark, "Human Rights Norms as Challenges to State Sovereignty," in *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 3-11; 21-27.

Module 2: Does international human rights law work?

Eric Posner, "The Case against Human Rights," *The Guardian*, 4 December 2014 (9 pages);

Beth A. Simmons, "What's Right with Human Rights," *Democracy Journal*, Winter 2015, No. 35 (10 pages);

Human Rights Measurement Initiative and Universal Rights Group, *Is the global situation of human rights improving or deteriorating? Making the case for the empirical measurement of human rights change*, 2019 (2 pages of text).

Module 3: Are international human rights universal?

Michael Freeman, "Universalism of human rights and cultural relativism," in Scott Sheeran and Sir Nigel Rodley (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of International Human Rights Law* (New York: Routledge), pp. 49-57.

Module 4: Are international human rights Western constructs?

Jack Donnelly, "A Brief History of Human Rights," *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), pp. 75-92.

Module 5: How do human rights work?

Michael Goodhart, "Human Rights and the Politics of Contestation," in Mark Goodale (ed.), *Human Rights at the Crossroads* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 31-44.

Module 6: Why international human rights law? Part I

Beth A. Simmons, "Why International Law? The Development of the International Human Rights Regime in the 20th Century," from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 23-36.

Module 7: Why international human rights law? Part II

Beth A. Simmons, "Why International Law? The Development of the International Human Rights Regime in the 20th Century," from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 36-56.

Module 8: Why international human rights law? Part III

Ann Marie Clark, "Torture," in *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 37-69.

Module 9: Why do states ratify international human rights treaties? Part I

Beth A. Simmons, "Theories of Commitment," from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 57-71.

Module 10: Why do states ratify international human rights treaties? Part II

Beth A. Simmons, "Theories of Commitment," from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 71-80; 108-111.

Module 11: Hard Law: Treaty Ratification, Reservations, and Derogations

Rhona K.M. Smith, “Human Rights in International Law” in Goodhart (ed.), *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, 2nd ed., pp. 26-44.

Module 12: Treaty Bodies and Soft Law, Part I

Rhona K.M. Smith, “Human Rights in International Law” in Goodhart (ed.), *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*, 2nd ed., pp. 26-44.

Mallene Alleyne and Felix Kirchmeier, “Small states face big challenges in engaging UN treaty bodies,” *Open Global Rights*, 4 December 2019 (4 pages).

Module 13: Treaty Bodies and Soft Law, Part II

Claire Callejon, et al. *Treaty Bodies Individual Communications Procedures: Providing Redress and Reparation to Victims of Human Rights Violations* (The Geneva Academy of Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, 2019), pp. 12-21. (not required)

Nigel S. Rodley, “The Role and Impact of Treaty Bodies,” in Shelton (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of International Human Rights Law*, pp. 626-41.

Mallene Alleyne and Felix Kirchmeier, “Small states face big challenges in engaging UN treaty bodies,” *Open Global Rights*, 4 December 2019 (4 pages).

Module 14: Treaty Bodies and Soft Law, Part III

Cecilia Medina, “The Role of International Tribunals: Law-Making or Creative Interpretation?” in Dinah Shelton (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Human Rights Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 649-55.

Module 15: Interpreting International Human Rights Treaties: A Simulation

ICCPR.

Module 16: Law and Politics of an Individual Communication: A Case Study

TBD

Module 17: Social Science Research, Part I

Janet Buttolph Johnson and H.T. Reynolds, “The Empirical Approach to Political Science” and “The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Hypotheses, Concepts, and Variables,” *Political Science Research Methods*, 7th ed. (Sage/CQ Press, 2012), pp. 33-48; 102-115; 119-126

Module 18: Social Science Research, Part II

Janet Buttolph Johnson and H.T. Reynolds, “The Importance of Theory” and “The Building Blocks of Social Scientific Research: Measurement,” *Political Science Research Methods*, 7th ed. (Sage/CQ Press, 2012), pp. 43-46; 127-134; 136; 149-153.

Module 19: Measuring Human Rights, Part I

Todd Landman, “Measuring Human Rights: Principles, Practice and Policy,” 26 *Human Rights Quarterly* (2004): 906-21.

Module 20: Measuring Human Rights, Part II

Todd Landman, “Measuring Human Rights: Principles, Practice and Policy,” 26 *Human Rights Quarterly* (2004): 921-31.

Is the global situation of human rights improving or deteriorating? Making the case for the empirical measurement of human rights change (Human Rights Measurement Initiative and Universal Rights Group, 2019) (7 pages).

Module 21: A Critical Perspective on Constructing Measures

Sally Engle Merry, “A World of Quantification,” from *The Seductions of Quantification: Measuring Human Rights, Gender Violence, and Sex Trafficking* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), pp. 1-22.

Is the global situation of human rights improving or deteriorating? Making the case for the empirical measurement of human rights change (Human Rights Measurement Initiative and Universal Rights Group, 2019) (7 pages).

Module 22: A Theory of Compliance, Part I

Beth A. Simmons, “Theories of Compliance,” from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 112-129.

Module 23: A Theory of Compliance, Part II

Beth A. Simmons, “Theories of Compliance,” from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 129-148.

Module 24: A Quantitative Approach to Studying Compliance

Beth A. Simmons, “Equality for Women,” from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 202-222.

Module 25: A Qualitative Approach to Studying Compliance

Beth A. Simmons, “Equality for Women,” from *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 236-245.

Module 26: Reflections on the Course

No reading.

REQUIRED LEARNING ASSESSMENTS

This course employs a variety of mechanisms to assess student learning. All of the following requirements must be met in order to receive a passing grade for the course, i.e., you don’t submit one of them, you fail the entire course.

<i>Course Requirement</i>	<i>Percentage of Final Grade</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Quizzes	20%	See below and Canvas
Writing Assignment 1	30%	July 31 by 11:59 pm
Writing Assignment 2	30%	August 12 by 11:59 pm
Learning Journal Entries (Average)	20%	See below and Canvas

Quizzes [Q]: The course contains a total of 23 quizzes. Your grade will be the average of the two required quizzes and 14 of the discretionary quizzes (16 quizzes total). Quizzes count towards 20% of your final course grade.

Two Required Quizzes:

The Syllabus and Academic Integrity quizzes located in Module 1 are required. You are required to achieve at least a **90%** on each quiz. You can retake them as many times as is necessary to reach that grade, but keep in mind that **you cannot access course material beyond Module 1 until you have cleared this hurdle.**

Discretionary Quizzes:

Beyond the two required quizzes described above, you must complete a minimum of **14** quizzes from the remaining modules. You select which of these quizzes to take.

You will be limited to **two attempts** at taking each quiz. We will take the higher of the two grades. Each quiz covers the material presented in the module that accompanies it. You will not be quizzed on the details of the supplementary documents, though those documents may be referenced in the quiz as examples to illustrate key points from the lectures. Most quizzes contain between 10 and 20 questions, and they are timed. The syllabus and academic integrity quizzes may contain more than 20 questions. You will know in advance how many questions each quiz contains and how long you will have to take it.

Quizzes are open-book and open-notes, subject to the Academic Integrity Policy that appears below. In terms of format, quiz questions will be true-false and/or multiple-choice. They will be generated from a bank of questions so that students will receive different versions of the same quiz. **Late quizzes** will be docked a letter grade for every day that they are late.

Writing Assignments [WA]: You must submit **both** writing assignments to receive credit for the course. Submission must be made as **Word** documents via Canvas. Put your name on your assignments.

[WA1]:

Released: Tuesday, **July 26** at 8:00 am.

Due: Sunday, **July 31** by 11:59 pm (worth 30% of final course grade).

[WA2]:

Released: Monday, **August 8** at 8:00 am.

Due: Friday, **August 12** by 11:59 pm (worth 30% of final course grade).

For more details on each writing assignment, please see their respective Canvas modules. **Five points** will be deducted from writing assignments submitted after the due date/time for each day that they are late.

Because writing assignments are **meant to test your individual knowledge** rather than constitute a group effort, you may use your notes (content that you created), but **you may not use group-generated documents.** See *Sec.*

11-402 Academic Dishonesty. Use of group-generated documents for individual assignments will be treated as acts of academic dishonesty and treated accordingly.

Learning Journal Entries [LJE]: In order to facilitate your active participation in the learning experience that this course presents, you are required to keep a virtual Learning Journal. This requirement serves to foster your engagement with and reflection on the material and to help you develop your critical thinking skills. Because it's meant to get you thinking about the material, research beyond the course readings materials and lectures is prohibited. Read the material, watch the lecture, and then take some time to think for yourself. As with so many things in life, the "right" answer is not out there for you to find via Google.

You must submit a total of **17 Learning Journal Entries (LJEs)**. The average of your grades on all 17 will serve as your LJE grade, which is worth **20%** of your final course grade. Entries must be **between 300 and 500 words**. In order to receive credit, you must post these to Canvas using the designated LJE link that's embedded in each module.

Three Required LJEs:

You are required to write two LJEs in Module 1 **and one** LJE at the end of the course in Module 23. You cannot access subsequent modules until you have submitted the LJEs for Module 1. You will not receive a grade for the course unless you have submitted a LJE for Module 23.

Discretionary LJEs:

Beyond the three required LJEs described above, you must complete **14** LJEs from the remaining modules.

You may **not** submit more than 14 discretionary LJEs.

For more details on LJEs, please see the LJE Canvas module. Late LJEs will be docked **a letter grade for every day** that they are late.

What if I require SSD Accommodations?

I strive to create a supportive learning environment for all students and to ensure that all students enjoy equal access and opportunity in the course of their educational experiences at UT-Austin. Some students require accommodations in order to achieve these objectives. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

While it's true that the professor can see your SSD accommodations letters in the faculty portal, you are nevertheless **required to meet with the AI to discuss your accommodations within the two weeks of the course** or shortly after your accommodations have been approved if that occurs **mid-semester** so that we can be sure to meet your accommodations needs and facilitate your learning experience in the class. Accommodations will not be provided until you have met with the AI. Of course, you are not required to disclose any information about your disability. Your SSD information will be kept confidential. Help us help you.

In some instances, a student has not gone through the formal process of documenting their disability with the University. If you find yourself in this situation, visit this [website \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

If you require note-taking accommodations, notes can be collected from a student in the class and provided to you. The AI will coordinate this. The AI is your primary point of contact regarding notes.

Grading Policies:

Final course grades will be calculated according to the University's +/- system. Do we round up? It depends. To illustrate, a 93.5 (for example) would be rounded up to an A, whereas a 93.4 would be an A-. Expect ten points to be deducted for every day that an assignment is late.

90-93 A-
87-89 B+
84-86 B
80-83 B-
77-79 C+
74-76 C
70-73 C-
67-69 D+
64-66 D
60-63 D-
59 and below F

How might I get feedback on my performance in the course?

We ask that you first invest some time in evaluating your work. Our own writing can read quite differently a day or more after it was written. [That's why it's a great idea to get an early start on writing assignments.] So, for writing assignments, before meeting with the AI we ask that you take some time to re-read and self-assess your work against the general feedback provided to the class on Canvas. Consider the paper's strengths and weaknesses. Think about how you would characterize your paper. What parts of it are excellent, very good, just good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory? Which of those terms would you use to characterize its overall quality? You can share this self-assessment with the AI in an email. Your assessment will be used to inform your discussion with the AI.

Why do this? We learn by reviewing our own work in a meaningful way. This process is meant to facilitate your own active role in your educational experience. By critically assessing your own work, you are better prepared to engage in a more substantive conversation with the AI. This process is not meant to be an onerous burden or obstacle to getting feedback. Rather, it is meant to help you learn how to improve your analysis and writing skills.

What if I want to contest my grade?

Before lodging a grade complaint for a writing assignment, we ask that you first follow the process described in the previous section, entitled "How Do I Get Feedback on my Work?" Contact the AI via email within seven days of grades being posted to Canvas. The AI will meet with you and may exercise discretion to alter the grade. Students who remain dissatisfied with a final course grade may elect to pursue action at the College-level. More on that [here \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Do you offer extra credit or make-up work?

No. Work hard. There will be none, nada, zilch. This is my line in the sand. Understand that when you ask a professor to offer you extra credit or make-up work you are asking *them* to do *extra work* to help you, someone who clearly didn't do the requisite work or who failed to achieve a particular grade.

But, what if I need a particular grade in this course in order to graduate, get into law school, or maintain my scholarship, my academic standing, or my parents' love or financial support?

The burden is on you (not us) to hit that mark. Your best strategy is to work hard, make use of the AI's office hours, get feedback on your work, etc. from the beginning of the course in order to maximize your performance throughout the course. *Your* grade is entirely up to *you*. Apprising us of your plight at or near the semester's end, pleading for special treatment, and attempting to lay a guilt trip on us will not work. The Professor has zero patience for this sort of entitled, manipulative, and unprofessional behavior.

What if I'm really struggling in the course or with life more generally?

If you experience a personal or family emergency (e.g., COVID-19 issues, death in the family, protracted sickness, serious mental health issues, etc.) that prevents you from participating in the course, contact [Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students \(Links to an external site.\)](#). They will work with you to communicate with your professors (including me) and let them know of your situation. Taking this step makes it easier for professors to accommodate students in distress. If you do not have off-campus access to a computer and/or Wi-Fi, please contact [Student Emergency Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for support.

The University also provides resources to help if you experience a mental health crisis (e.g., depression, anxiety, etc.). Call the confidential [Counseling and Mental Health Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#) Crisis line at 512-471-CALL (2255). Call from wherever you are even if you aren't sure you're in a full-blown crisis but sincerely need help. Staff are there to help you. You're paying for these services. Please use them if you need them.

IMPORTANT (MUST-READ) ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at UT; therefore, we will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize, or falsify with regard to exams or the writing assignment. Should we determine that an academic integrity violation has taken place, we will follow the University's formal process for dealing with such matters. You are expected to be familiar with the UT Honor Code: <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>. We refer you specifically to *Subchapter 11-400. Prohibited Conduct* in its entirety. Also consult the section on **sharing course materials and intellectual property policies** that appear in the final, **must-read** section of the syllabus. **I define plagiarism to include using text written by a generation system as one's own (e.g., entering a prompt into an artificial intelligence tool and using the output in a paper).**

GroupMe, etc.:

Why is it that nearly all students despise "group-work" but are only too eager to collaborate on compiling group documents? Because I understand that group discussions among students can facilitate the learning process, I do not discourage those. I do, however, prohibit the construction of group documents related to graded assignments. This is a distinction *with* a difference. I will be happy discuss it with you. Use of GroupMe or other similar mechanisms for the compilation of group work to be used by individuals for their graded assignments will result in failure of the course. **We enforce academic integrity policies ruthlessly.**

Accommodations for Religious Holidays and Students with Disabilities:

The AI will manage all accommodations. By UT Austin policy, you must notify us of your pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, (512) 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Intellectual Property Policy:

This course was created by Dr. Evans, and as such, it is her intellectual property. Students are, therefore, not permitted to disseminate by any means any of the course content created by Dr. Evans, including lecture recordings, power point presentations and slides, or other learning materials. Students who do so without permission will face legal action in a court of law.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (writing assignments, etc.), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with

anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course."

The Professional Environment:

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the professor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center (<http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>).

Email Policy:

See also the policy at the start of the syllabus. The text of your email should clearly state the nature of your inquiry, the name of the course, and either your name as it appears on the course roster or the preferred name that you provided to us. All email correspondence from us to you will be automatically sent to your official UT email address. Therefore, you should know your official UT email address, and as a matter of practice, you should check your account regularly. I have endeavored to make this syllabus as thorough and clear as possible. Before emailing questions about the course, review the syllabus. It just may contain the answer that you seek. Substantive questions about the course material that require lengthy explanations or discussion will only be answered in class (where they are especially welcomed) or during office hours. I will not respond to these types of questions by email.

Classroom AND Online/Canvas Behavior:

This applies with equal force in the online world. It's important that we have a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, and we all share the responsibility for creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Here are some guidelines for classroom behavior: (1) pay attention during class; (2) classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing; and, (3) any discussion from class that continues on any listserv or class discussion list should adhere to these same rules and expectations. It is a good rule to let professors know at the start of class if you will need to "leave" early.

TITLE IX REPORTING AND TEXAS SB212

Reporting Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Beginning 1 January 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 **requires all employees of Texas universities**, including faculty, **to report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking** that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported.

We are Responsible Employees and MUST (we are legally required to) report any Title IX related incidents that are disclosed to us in writing, discussion, emails, or one-on-one exchanges. Before talking with us, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee.

If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including the types of conduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Safety Matters:

Occupants of buildings on the UT-Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their professor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class professors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, the UT-Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: www.utexas.edu/emergency. The Office of Campus Safety and Security can be reached at 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>, and the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) can be reached at 512-232-5050.