MASTER IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Main Language of Instruction:
French ◯   English ☑   Arabic ◯

Campus Where the Program Is Offered: CSS

OBJECTIVES

The Master in Human Rights and Democratization aims to equip students with both theoretical and practical knowledge of the Arab region, while fostering expertise in human rights, democratic governance, and applied human rights. This program offers research-oriented courses and practical training opportunities in the field of human rights and democratization.

It is designed for students aspiring to become experts in public or intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and INGOs, or pursue research and academic careers in this field.

1) The program offers comprehensive multidisciplinary training that fulfills the theoretical, critical and practical prerequisites for careers in human rights and democratic governance.
2) The program includes foundational courses in political science and law, the two main disciplines. It also offers general and specialized courses in human rights, covering domains such as women's rights and gender policies, child rights, minority issues and rights, international mobility rights, and different areas in democratic governance, such as democratic transition and the management of diversity.
3) Practical knowledge is acquired through several program features, including a mandatory internship, a collective field research, a project development and implementation, and engagement with practitioners in courses and human rights laboratories.
4) The program offers cross-regional mobility, offering students the opportunity to spend one semester in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine or Tunisia.
5) By the end of the program, students are required to write a research paper demonstrating their ability to organize and address a research question related to human rights and democratic governance. They must also submit an internship report demonstrating their ability to analyze a problem encountered during an internship with a leading national or international organization in the Arab region. This dual requirement enhances students' research and practical skills.

The Master in Human Rights and Democratization is a Master's degree program offered by the Saint Joseph University of Beirut through its Institute of Political Science, in partnership with Birzeit University (Palestine), Carthage University (Tunisia), the International University of Rabat (Morocco), and the University of Southern Denmark. It is a regional postgraduate program, forming part of the Global Campus of Human Rights, the world's largest network of universities engaged in human rights education.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES (COMPETENCIES)

The program's learning objectives are to equip students with:

1. A substantial understanding of the institutional and procedural frameworks of human rights and protection mechanisms at national, regional, and international levels.
2. A substantial understanding of democratic governance, including its foundations, fundamental principles, and its global and regional evolution.
3. The ability to synthesize interdisciplinary approaches and contributions to address issues such as corruption, migration, refugees, statelessness, gender justice, development, social movements, humanitarian aid, conflict, etc.
4. The ability to critically evaluate human rights and democratic governance frameworks, policies and advocacy strategies.
5. The ability to evaluate human rights violations through case studies and legal analysis from multiple perspectives (national, regional, and international).
6. The skill to conduct research in human rights and democratic governance, including the collection of reliable data and its analysis.

Graduates should be able to:
- Work autonomously and collaboratively within the field of human rights (NGOs, INGOs, governmental institutions)
- Communicate their acquired skills in human rights through advocacy, policy-making, trainings, or litigation (depending on their training and background)
- Pursue an academic career in human rights and democratic governance.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates undergo a selection process where their files are reviewed by an international commission consisting of representatives from the Arab partner universities. They are ranked based on their academic achievements, the relevance of their studies, their motivation and their engagement in the field of human rights and democratic governance. Subsequently, the Institute of Political Science examines their eligibility, and interviews are conducted with the shortlisted candidates.

Eligible candidates must hold a Bachelor's degree in social sciences. However, in exceptional cases, candidates with a different academic background may be considered for admission if they have undergone training in the field of human rights and academic governance, and have gained voluntary or professional experience in these domains.

Candidates holding a Master's degree or an equivalent of 60 European postgraduate credits in a field relevant to human rights, such as political science, law and other social sciences, may be considered for admission to the second year of the program. Their acceptance is subject to the recognition of at least 35 European credits obtained in a previous post-graduate degree (demonstrating alignment with the learning objectives of post-graduate courses offered by the Institute of Political Science).

COURSE/CREDITS GRANTED BY EQUIVALENCE

The equivalence committee carefully reviews the candidate's transcripts, acknowledging up to 45 European credits from a previous post-graduate degree if their learning objectives align with those of the post-graduate courses offered by the Institute of Political Science.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

All courses are mandatory for students admitted to the first semester of the Master's program(M1), totaling 120 European credits. Students admitted to the first semester of the second year (M2) must complete all the courses of the second year (M2) amounting to sixty credits, as well as any additional courses mandated by the Equivalence Committee.

Required Courses (120 Cr.)

Geopolitics of the Middle East and North Africa (5 Cr.). Political Sociology of the Arab World (5 Cr.). Human Rights in Armed Conflict (5 Cr.). International Law and Human Rights (5 Cr.). Human Rights Laboratory 1 (3 Cr.). Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights I (5 Cr.). Tutoring (2 Cr.). Gender Policies and Women's Rights (5 Cr.). Human Rights Laboratory (2 Cr.). International Criminal Prosecution and Transitional Justice (5 Cr.). Public Policy and Human Rights (5 Cr.). Peace and Conflict (4 Cr.). Politics of Globalization (5 Cr.). Refugees, Migration and Mobility Rights (4 Cr.). Arab Political Thought (2 Cr.). Comparative Constitutional System (4 Cr.). Democracy and Human Rights in the MENA (4 Cr.). Democratization and Liberalization (4 Cr.). International Human Rights Law and Protection Mechanisms in the MENA (3 Cr.). Political Parties and Pressure Groups in the MENA (4 Cr.). Transition Processes in the MENA (4 Cr.). Thesis (20 Cr.). Legacy of Colonialism (2 Cr.). Internship (4 Cr.). Conference ISP (1 Cr.).
Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights II (5 Cr.). Vulnerable Persons and Groups Human Rights (3 Cr.)

SUGGESTED STUDY PLAN

Semester 1

Code	Course Name	Credits
072GMEAM1	Geopolitics of the Middle East and North Africa	5
072PSAWM1	Political Sociology of the Arab World	5
072HRACM1	Human Rights in Armed Conflict	5
072ILHRM1	International Law and Human Rights	5
07HRLBM1	Human Rights Laboratory 1	3
072ARDHM4	Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights I	5
072TUTOM1	Tutoring	2
	Total	**30**

Semester 2

Code	Course Name	Credits
072GPWRM2	Gender Policies and Women's Rights	5
072HRLBM2 072HLABM2	Human Rights Laboratory 2 or 3: ▪ Human Rights Laboratory 2 ▪ Human Rights Laboratory 3	2
072ICTJM2	International Criminal Prosecution and Transitional Justice	5
072PHRCM2	Public Policy and Human Rights	5
072MOPCM2	Peace and Conflict	4
072PGOIM2	Politics of Globalization	5
072RMMRM2	Refugees, Migration and Mobility Rights	4
	Total	**30**

Semester 3

Code	Course Name	Credits
072APTHM3	Arab Political Thought	2
072CCSYM3	Comparative Constitutional System	4
072DOHRM3	Democracy and Human Rights in the MENA	4
072DELIM3	Democratization and Liberalization	4
072IHRLM4	International Human Rights Law and Protection Mechanisms in the MENA	3
072PPGM3	Political Parties and Pressure Groups in the MENA	4
072TRPRM3	Transition Processes in the MENA	4
	Total	**25**

Semester 4

Code	Course Name	Credits
072MRM2M8	Thesis	20
072LECOM3	Legacy of Colonialism	2
072INS4M3	Internship	4

072CONFM2	Conference ISP	1
	Total	**27**

Summer Trimester

Code	Course Name	Credits
072ARHRM1	Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights II	5
072VPHRM1	Vulnerable Persons and Groups Human Rights ▪ Children Rights ▪ Minority Rights	3
	Total	**8**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

072ARDHM4   Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights I   5 Cr.

This course aims to equip students with the specific research methodology required for human rights research. It incorporates various aspects such as legal sources, identification of duty bearers and rights holders, and the ability to measure observance and violations. Through seminars, students will learn how to design and implement their research, starting from formulating a hypothesis to drawing conclusions based on data collection and the analysis of results. The course provides an introduction to quantitative and qualitative research, with field visits emphasizing ethical issues and data gaps. Students will develop a thesis proposal that is feasible, useful and scientifically sound. Additionally, they will benefit from insights shared by practitioners, and engage in a week-long field research on refugee rights and issues. Students will also participate in a seminar on project development and will be guided through its implementation phase.

072HRACM1   Human Rights in Armed Conflict   5 Cr.

This course aims to explore International Humanitarian Law (IHL), examining the laws that govern armed conflict as they have developed customarily and through treaties. The primary aim of IHL is to protect wounded soldiers, the civilian population and prisoners of war. Furthermore, this course covers the role played by the International Red Cross and other NGOs in the development of humanitarian norms. Additionally, it delves into human rights issues in different conflict-ridden countries with particular focus on the Arab region (Yemen, Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Libya).

072GMEAM1   Geopolitics of the Middle East and North Africa   5 Cr.

This course aims to equip students with the necessary tools to understand territorial conflicts, and regional and international rivalries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It includes a general introduction to geopolitics, a geopolitical analysis of the MENA region, and emphasizes the role of non-Arab regional states. By the end of this course, students will be able to comprehend and identify power factors, while visualizing and analyzing regional dynamics.

072HRLBM1   Human Rights Laboratory 1   3 Cr.

Each year, the Human Rights Laboratory course focuses on one or two themes, which students explore theoretically and critically during the first semester, followed by a practical perspective provided by practitioners during the second semester.
Currently, this course focuses on dealing with past violence through the lens of war memory, with a specific focus on Lebanon. Students will address the following issues: How does memory work? What are its different types? What can block it? And what are the consequences of this blockage? Utilizing the tools acquired in class, students will analyze key events in the history of the Lebanese war and present their work within the framework of a flipped classroom learning approach.

072ILHRM1	International Law and Human Rights	5 Cr.

This course aims to present a detailed panorama of Public International Law (IL) encompassing rules, customary practices, and principles governing relations between Sates and other actors in the international community.
Additionally, the course offers a global understanding of the subjects, actors, and sources of IL, along with related disciplines.
It also addresses the issue of the effectiveness of international law, particularly its enforcement, through cases studies.
Moreover, this course covers the position of human rights within international law and its development.

072PSAWM1	Sociologie Politique Comparée: Political Sociology of the Arab World	5 Cr.

This course covers the interrelations and interactions between socio-cultural factors and the political sphere, highlighting the importance of empirical research and a neutral approach to understanding society and groups. While exploring the dynamics of state formation in the Arab world, students will be introduced to "importation", and look into different features of regional states, such as "rentierism" and "authoritarianism". They will also assess the utility of certain notions such as "asabya" developed in the 14th century, and delve into specific topics relevant to the discipline and the region.

072TUTOM1	Tutoring	2 Cr.

Human rights and democratic governance represent growing professional domains encompassing advocacy, service provision and education/research. This course examines their recent developments while assisting students in positioning themselves within these evolving fields.
Students will be guided through the development of a specialization project tailored to their professional goals. This involves formulating a research problem, situating it within a theocratical framework, and identifying the appropriate approach for addressing a certain question (methodology and operationalization).
Facilitated group discussions allow collective reflection on the multifaced complexities in both fields, and the issues they raise across multiple levels (social, ethical, economic, political and legal). This engagement is fostered through different interactions with local organizations.

072PHRCM2	Public Policy and Human Rights	5 Cr.

The State plays a pivotal role in shaping a society's socioeconomic trajectory, ensuring the alignment of local laws with international and regional treaties, and fostering peace and stability. One of the main reasons behind the State's failure to achieve peace, stability and prosperity in the Arab region lies in the deficiencies of public policy, particularly since policymaking itself was seldom treated as an academic discipline across the region.
This course aims to introduce graduate students to the principles and practices of public policymaking, thereby highlighting the structural and managerial particularities of the Arab State before delving into policy planning, design, execution, implementation, and analysis. By the end of this course, students will be equipped to leverage evidence-based public policymaking to advance human rights and socioeconomic development, all while navigating the structural, political, and socioeconomic particularities of a fragile and conflict-ridden region.

072PGOIM2	Politics of Globalization	5 Cr.

Globalization is often equated with internationalization and liberalization, and sometimes even with westernization. When the concept is associated with international trade, it encompasses a long history spanning several millennia and manifesting in several forms depending on the transportation and communication technologies that underpinned it. It is commonly defined as a process or a set of processes of increased interactions, amplifying the economic, political and cultural interconnectedness and interdependence of peoples, countries, corporations and organizations. This course aims to cover the contemporary dynamics impacting international organizations, as well as the evolution of global and regional social movements in the region. It also examines a specific area of globalization - global health - which has been put to test with the current pandemic.

072MOPCM2	Peace and Conflict	4 Cr.

This course aims to show the complexity of conflicts and conflict analysis by deconstructing prevailing approaches and exploring tools used for conflict management and resolution. Students will analyze specific conflicts, identifying

different factors (demographic, geographic, military, economic, geopolitical, and historical) and highlighting the complicated interaction of external and internal factors in violence and wars. This analysis is conducted through a multifactorial approach rooted in political science.

072GPWRM2	Gender Policies and Women's Rights	5 Cr.

This course aims to introduce the notions of gender and sex, and explore their implications in public policies. It examines the notion of women's rights as human rights, employing an interdisciplinary and comparative approach. Students will develop the ability to critically assess gender policies and their impact on women's rights issues. Additionally, they will plan and conduct an independent research project on these themes. No prerequisites are required for enrollment in this course.

072HRLBM2	Human Rights Laboratory 2	2 Cr.

072HLABM2	Human Rights Laboratory 3	2 Cr.

During the second semester, the Human Rights Laboratory focuses on exploring the multiple and sometimes conflicting perspectives of actors engaged in a specific theme related to human rights. Over the past three years, the Laboratory's theme was "The Missing and the Forcibly Disappeared," inviting many social and political actors to share their insights, experiences, and efforts in addressing this issue.
 – The course Human Rights Laboratory 2 examines the issue of missing and forcibly disappeared persons in post-war Lebanon.
 – The course Human Rights Laboratory 3 examines the issue of missing and forcibly disappeared persons in Syria.

072ICTJM2	International Criminal Prosecution and Transitional Justice	5 Cr.

This course focuses on justice in post-conflict contexts or following the fall of an authoritarian regime, examining two approaches: international criminal law and transitional justice. The seminar on International Criminal Prosecution delves into international crime and its different categories. Through case studies before international tribunals, the course dissects the challenges of defining core international crimes and the complex issue of attributing responsibility for such crimes before international criminal courts and tribunals. The seminar on transitional justice introduces the concept and its mechanisms aimed at addressing past human rights violations and facilitating progress. It focuses on institutional reform, reparation and truth-seeking measures with an emphasis on truth commissions from a comparative perspective. Students will be able to analyze problems related to past human rights abuses in post-conflict societies, and will apply their knowledge by organizing and participating in an exercise simulating a truth commission.

072RMMRM2	Refugees, Migration and Mobility Rights	4 Cr.

This course aims to explore the current trends of international migration while examining the issue of mobility rights and their translation into different laws and policies. Special attention is given to forced migration and the status of refugees, with a focus on identifying and exploring underlying factors such as persecution, armed conflict and natural disasters. The course also analyzes responses to large-scaled forced migration and assesses the impact of specific policies on both refugee and host populations.

072APTHM3	Arab Political Thought	2 Cr.

This course aims at understanding contemporary ideological debates across the Arab World by analyzing the ideas of prominent thinkers and intellectuals who have shaped political currents and influenced the formation of political parties since the late 19th century. Key notions such as modernity, Islam, nation, democracy and socialism will be examined, with a focus on ongoing debates related to secularism, identity, progress and authenticity.

072CCSYM3	Comparative Constitutional Systems	4 Cr.

This course focuses on how constitutions and courts shape freedoms and rights, emphasizing the role of domestic jurisdiction in implementing human rights through a comparative examination across the Arab World and beyond. A specific seminar is dedicated to the framing and interpretation of shari'a by constitutions and high courts, exploring the relationships between religion and law within contemporary Muslim-majority countries.

072DOHRM3	**Democracy and Human Rights in the MENA**	4 Cr.

This course aims to conduct a parallel analysis of the foundation of democracy and human rights, discussing their fundamental principles and evolution both globally and regionally. Democracy is approached as a mode of political organization that goes beyond a specific form of the State, distinguishing its substantial definition from its procedural one. Human rights are explained within the context of international law, showing its instruments and mechanisms. They are then contrasted with the international politics of human rights.

072DELIM3	**Democratization and Liberalization**	4 Cr.

This course aims to explore the factors and processes that hinder the development of effective democracies in the Arab World. It examines the political consequences of liberalization and how economic structures (rent, interests and corruption) and security agencies can hinder or even reverse democratic progress. Additionally, the course delves into issues related to good governance within the security sector and explores best practices concerning the fight against corruption, while analyzing the dynamics of de-democratization evident in the post-Arab Spring Middle East.

072IHRLM4	**International Human Rights Law, and Mechanisms of Protection**	3 Cr.

This course aims to provide students with an overview of the human rights machinery at both the international and domestic levels, offering insights into how institutions operate at each level and how the domestic system interacts with international human rights mechanisms. Moreover, it addresses the escalating threats faced by human rights defenders and civil society organizations in recent years. New tactics are being employed, resulting in significant changes and severe limitations on the space for civil society globally. This seminar series explores and analyzes these changes, examining the factors driving the clampdown, the legal frameworks involved, and the ways in which organizations are responding. Case studies illustrate current developments and the final session includes a practical exercise.

072PPPGM3	**Political Parties and Pressure Groups**	4 Cr.

This course examines the analytical and conceptual tools employed to understand and explain political movements and parties in the Arab World. Concepts such as class, kinship, tribe, sect, civil society, and informal politics are critically examined and assessed. Students will deal with theoretical and empirical questions central to understanding political movements and groups in the Arab World. They will also look into different examples of mobilization (tactics, methods and tools) through practical exercises related to campaigning strategies.

072TRPRM3	**Transition Processes in the MENA**	4 Cr.

This course explores the notion of political change within the "Arab Spring", examining the series of events and comparing them to transition processes in other contexts. During this course, specific seminars focus on internal processes such as transitional justice, and external ones such as military interventions, international tribunals or diplomacy. Special attention is given to EU foreign policy regarding democratization and human rights in the Middle East and North Africa.

072LECOM3	**Legacy of Colonialism**	2 Cr.

This course provides historical and geopolitical overviews of the Middle East and North Africa from the dismantlement of the Ottoman Empire to this day, highlighting challenges including colonialism, state-building, the neo-liberal order, and the impact of the continuously changing world order. A specific seminar is dedicated to examining the region's new strategic landscape five years after the beginning of the "Arab Spring".

072VPHRM1	**Vulnerable Persons and Groups Human Rights**	3 Cr.

Vulnerable persons and groups require special protection mechanisms under national and international law. This course focuses on the specific legal frameworks aimed at curbing or reversing discrimination and ensuring equal access to rights.
This course offers two options:
- Specific seminars on the issue of children's rights.
- Minority rights across the region and their contrasting contexts.

072ARHRM1   **Applied Research in Democracy and Human Rights II**   **5 Cr.**

This applied course focuses on effective Project Management (PM) in the field of human rights based on international best practices, published by The Project Management Institute (PMI). It is designed to address the increasing importance of projects in advancing human rights and democratic governance in today's globalized world. Following the principle of "learning by doing," the course emphasizes understanding the project lifecycle: initiating, planning, executing, monitoring and controlling, and closing, in addition to key project processes.

Throughout this course, students will develop, in small groups, several projects related to the program's main themes of democratic governance and human rights. They not only implement the project, but also report on it and assess its human rights impact.