

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE  
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number      SD2022S  
Date of Senate Approval      2/03/2022

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**APC Document 16 (HRST):                      Add new course HRST 301, Writing Human Rights Wrongs;  
Add HRST Undergraduate Research courses, HRST 499**

**Effective Date: Fall 2022**

**1. Add:**                      On page 177, new course, **HRST 301, Writing Human Rights Wrongs:**

**301      Writing Human Rights Wrongs (4)**

This course scaffolds a student-led endeavor to showcase undergraduate research in human rights (broadly defined), including reading, reviewing, writing, and ultimately publishing submissions to Dignity: An Undergraduate Human Rights Journal, including print and on-line components. Students will gain a deeper, interdisciplinary understanding of human rights by reading professional journals and undergraduate research submissions on human rights topics across the disciplines. Students will hone written and oral communication skills while conducting and communicating original human rights scholarly content in collaboration with peers and faculty advisors at UNC Asheville and across the UNC system. In addition, students will gain experience both leading and collaborating in the production and dissemination of original research. Students will learn and practice organizational and managerial skills in an academic context. May be repeated once for credit. Prerequisite: permission of instructor. Spring and Fall.

**2. Add:**                      On page 177, **HRST 499, Undergraduate Research in Human Rights Studies**

**499      Undergraduate Research in Human Rights Studies (1-4)**

Independent research under the supervision of a faculty mentor. An IP grade may be awarded at the discretion of instructor. May be repeated for a total of 8 hours credit. See program director.

**Impact Statement:** Adding HRST 301 does have resource implications and impacts departments that contribute to the Human Rights Studies minor. To publish the Dignity every year, HRST 301 would need to be offered every semester. Given the work students and the instructor are expected to engage in we seek to keep the enrollments low (7 to 10 students). So far, two separate special topics courses have been offered with an HRST prefix (see Table 1 below) to support the journal. Linda Cornett was the instructor in every case and taught them as overloads. As this is not sustainable, we hope that HRST 301 can be taught by other faculty across the university and even by faculty at other UNC system schools. Eric Roubinek (History) and Grace Campbell (Philosophy) have expressed interest in teaching a section of HRST 301 in the future (once every 2 or 3 years). We also have commitments from Peter Haschke and Linda Cornett to teach sections of the course regularly and are reaching out to others across campus to solicit support. Teaching this course would detract from faculties' commitments to their home departments and the Liberal Arts Core, and as such constitutes a clear resource implication.

From the perspective of students, no negative impacts are expected. The course is optional and does not add new requirements to the minor. As an additional option, the course should make it easier rather than harder for students to complete the program.

**Table 1:** Dignity Journal Courses

Course	Last offered	Enrollments
<b>ST: Writing Human Rights Wrongs</b>	<b>Fall 2020, Fall 2021</b>	<b>7/10, 5/9</b>
<b>ST: Human Rights for the Record</b>	<b>Spring 2021</b>	<b>4/10</b>

**Rationale:** UNC Asheville’s interdisciplinary Human Rights Studies minor both reflects and fortifies deep and widespread student and faculty interest in human rights and already has produced a wealth of undergraduate human rights scholarship. Beginning Fall 2020, UNC Asheville students in the minor initiated an experiment in producing - from start to finish - a student-led Journal (Dignity) showcasing undergraduate research in human rights across the disciplines, in numerous traditional and non-traditional scholarly formats, while drawing students and faculty participation across the UNC system. As the Editorial Board explained in their mission statement:

“Dignity: An Undergraduate Human Rights Journal endeavors to showcase a broad spectrum of human rights scholarship by undergraduate students in the University of North Carolina System. The Journal fosters awareness of international and domestic human rights by publishing an annual academic journal containing high-quality, undergraduate human rights research from across the disciplines. Dignity: Online features other forms of human rights scholarship including essays, film and book reviews, and artwork. We hope to inspire under-graduate students to see themselves as valuable contributors to human rights discourse by cultivating a community of engaged student scholars.

Dignity is a student-run publication founded in 2020 at the University of North Carolina at Asheville that invites the active participation of students and faculty across the UNC system as reviewers, editors, and contributors.”

After two intense semesters of work, the student editorial board for Dignity published the first edition of the Journal, including print and on-line content, May 1, 2021. (See [dignityjournal.com](http://dignityjournal.com)) The first edition generated 21 submissions (6 long-form, 15 short-form), from four UNC institutions, representing 20 distinct disciplines (counting majors and minors), resulting in 10 publications.

By all accounts, the experience was an invaluable learning opportunity in many ways: it exposed students to high-quality professional and undergraduate human rights scholarship from across the disciplines; it afforded students opportunities to create and publish original human rights scholarship in traditional (long-form) and non-traditional (short-form) formats; it cultivated habits of collegiality while also enhancing students’ managerial skills; and it trained students in technical as well as creative scholarly production skills. As importantly, it strengthened students’ individual and collective self-confidence and sense of efficacy.

Adding HRST 301 to the course offerings for the minor would institutionalize not only the journal itself but also Human Rights Studies’ commitment to providing unique, high-impact learning and leadership opportunities for undergraduate students and scholars, in the minor and across the campus. It also aspires to bring together students and faculty from across the UNC system around shared human rights interests and commitments.

In HRST 301, students are introduced to the editorial process as well as human rights scholarship across disciplines and a more advanced treatment of the publication and peer-review process and affords some additional responsibilities (thus adding to the students' development and learning).

The editorial experience afforded to students enrolled in HRST 301:

1. can be expected to expose students to a wider scope and diversity of contemporary human rights discourses than they would likely encounter in a single human rights course.
2. provides students the opportunity to interact cooperatively as professionals in a research network—with students from other campuses, but also with any number of faculty and scholars from other institutions who become involved with the journal as advisors.
3. creates a record of editorial experience that enhances students' prospects for advanced study or professional training (e.g., law school, graduate programs, foreign service).

Adding HRST 499, Undergraduate Research in Human Rights Studies, will afford students additional opportunities for research, and have it listed as such on their record.