

**Interactive Methodologies through Human Rights Education Activities:
Teacher Training Guidelines**

Name of organization:

“Humanist” Centre for Methodological Studies



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**PROGRAMME AND METHODOLOGICAL
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SPECIAL COURSE**

“HUMAN RIGHTS”

(Specialty “History and Social Studies Teacher”)

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Introductory notes

Main objectives of the special course

This course is designed for history students who are also prospective teachers of history. The target audience is history teachers in modern Russian who teach law, social studies and other subjects concerned with social science—subjects that call upon students to become acquainted with the problem of human rights. The course is designed to give future teachers basic knowledge on the theory of human rights and to acquaint student-historians with the techniques of teaching human rights. Some recommendations of this special course can also be used while holding human rights education seminars for humanities' teachers.

Structure of the course

The overall course consists of two parts: general and special. The general part (which is described elsewhere) consists of five lessons and aims to define the basic range of problems and to present the ideology of human rights as an integral system of principles and concepts. The special part (the focus of this document) is dedicated to a closer consideration of basic rights and active methods of teaching.

Methodological support

The special course is based on the methodological workings regarding the teaching of human rights, which were created by Moscow's Youth Centre of Human Rights and Legal Culture and included in the module course, a program approved by the Ministry of Education in 1998. In the corresponding sections effort has been made to include precise references to the materials of the modular course¹. However, it is important to note that these materials were initially created for working with students. It is certainly possible to adapt texts or situations to a more adult audience.

When working with the most relevant themes for the modern society (freedom of conscience, freedom of speech), it is recommended that the techniques designed specially for the adult audience be used. The plans for such lessons are described in more detail, and the methodological materials for them are given in the appendix to the present volume.

Besides that, the materials of an optional course for senior high school students called "The Mythology of enmity: cognition and overcoming"² are included in the methodological recommendations. Because this course is much less known to teachers, the full texts of these lessons have been included.

Many issues are left to the discretion of the teacher. These are: the distribution of time between themes, the choice of themes for detailed consideration and also the set of methodological techniques. For some lessons, only general comments on the aims and the possible composition of different methodologies are included. Since this course also aims at developing training techniques and strategies involved in human rights teaching, it is recommended that participants of the special course actively involve themselves in conducting lessons. Trying once is better than seeing others do it a hundred times!

Materials for the participants

For the student participants of the "Human Rights" course, guidance materials are available that consist of two parts (in accordance with the scheme of the special course). The materials are non-homogeneous according to genre and were specially prepared by the collaborators of the Youth Centre of Human Rights. In general they have synoptic characteristics. There is also a textbook

¹ Teaching human rights in 6-8 forms of secondary school. Book for the teacher. In 2 volumes. M., 2000

² The mythology of enmity: cognition and overcoming. Optional course for senior forms. M.: Права человека, 2003.

section--i.e. articles, extracts from the books, documents--which can become the basis of work on the lessons, tests and self-training. Inquisitive students can also find additional material which go beyond the framework of lessons.

Reference lists

At the end of the collected volume of methodological materials there is a list of recommended supplementary literature. During the lessons, we recommend using video materials – scenes from feature and documentary films etc. In some cases we included the use of video material in the module program referenced by themes. However the possibilities of using cinema and video materials are much wider, that is why we offer teachers an approximate list of feature and documentary films which can be used. The major part of these materials is widely known and one will have no problems finding them.

In case of time limitation, using the whole feature films is impractical, in some cases it is not even necessary, sometimes the scene that is related to the theme does not require the explanation of the context. In other cases we can recommend using the key moments of the film and explaining concisely the main content. Video clips can serve as a good beginning for a discussion, especially if these are movies of a serious nature. However, comedy scenes can be used in the course of lessons with the same success. In this case, the moment of transfer from a comedy situation to a serious discussion will be perceived as an evidence of methodical skills of the teacher.

Closing remarks

The offered special course was elaborated and approved in the years 2003-2004 in the course of a pilot project implemented by the joint efforts of the Youth centre of human rights and legal culture (Moscow city) and Karelian State pedagogical university (Petrozavodsk city) and was supported by the project of UNO “Support for the development of education in the field of human rights”. We tried to take into account the remarks and recommendations of our colleagues, however this does not mean that the work on the course is finished.

Dear colleagues! The youth center awaits your considerations, comments and recommendations. All the questions, suggestions and observations referring to the teaching of the special course can be sent via email to luhovic@mail.ru, ycenter@online.ru, or to the following address: 103152, Moscow, 12, Maly Karetny lane, “Мемориал” for the Youth center of human rights.

Planning of the Lessons

Lesson 1. Objectives and contents of the special “Human rights” course. Peculiarities of holding of the lessons. Main philosophical aspects of the theory of human rights.

Main concepts:

Human rights, rights, law, moral and positive rights, natural laws.

Notional structure of the lesson.

1. Introductory part. Definition of objectives.
2. Peculiarities of holding the lessons of the special “Human rights” course. Active techniques in the form of presenting the materials.
3. Place of the special course in the teaching system.
4. The meaning of the word “right”. Moral and positive rights. Natural rights as a special group of moral rights. Human rights.
5. Different methods of substantiation of human rights: religious theory, naturally-legal, theory of social contract, Marxism.
6. Field of human rights – relationship “authority - personality”. The Problem of the correlation of rights and obligations.
7. The Problem of universality of human rights for different cultures.

Progress of lesson:

The offered notional structure logically divides the lesson into two unequal parts: introductory and informative. The introductory part (first 3 points) takes no more than 20-25 minutes, though it is a very important period. The participants of the special course have to start feeling that the material offered to them is unusual. Historians, who could be already familiar with the course “Bases of state and law” or “Legal science” or “Civic studies” are offered the other approach to the legal and social study disciplines, which determines the choice of the technique rested upon the active methods. For fulfilling the first and second points – definition of objectives – one can chose one of the variants:

1. Teamwork. This is also a good way of getting acquainted with the participants.

The audience is divided into several groups (four-five people in each). Each group has to answer four basic questions: Why have you chosen the present the special course? What do you want to find out? What do you want to learn? Is there any connection between your presence here and your plans for the future? Besides answering these questions, each member of the group has to write down and generalize the opinions of their colleagues concerning one of the offered questions. Then the results of the discussion are reported to everyone (thus, each member of the group will speak)

After fulfilling the exercise, the students are handed the program of the special course and the teacher briefly comments on the matching or mismatching of students’ answers. The methodological part merits more detailed explanations. One can at once say that the bases of it are the active techniques, developed in the Youth center of human rights and that the program of modular course, elaborated in the Center has the label of the Ministry of Education. One can also acquaint the participants with the basic methodological textbook, a two-volume book called “Teaching human rights in secondary school” and also the collected volume of learning materials for the special course, which is handed on the first lesson. The materials contained in the volume will be used during the lessons (it should be always present), for homework and as additional source of information for one or other themes.