

Background

The Diploma in Leadership, Governance and Human Rights (DLGHR) programme was initiated in 2013 at a Diploma level at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and currently has five core courses.

In collaboration with the PHCHR (Office of the High Commission on Human Rights) Pacific Office, and in recognition to improve understanding of defending human rights in the Pacific Island Countries, USP has developed two courses on human rights defenders as part of the LGHR programme: a 200 level and a 300 level course. Both these courses would focus on developing and strengthening knowledge about methods of protection, legal mechanisms and organisational development of human rights, the diverse situation on HRDs, threats encountered by HRDs and their loved ones as well as strategies to take action and mitigate risks.

Both these courses will be delivered in blended mode to the 12-member USP countries. This would ensure that all interested Pacific Islanders could have access to these courses.

It is anticipated that by 2022, the DLGHR will be upgraded to a Bachelor's level degree.

**RIGHTS
DEFENDERS**
PROMOTE. PROTECT. DEFEND.

DG201 – Introduction to the role and challenges of human rights defenders

This course attempts to expose students to issues and challenges relating to human rights defenders. “Human rights defender” is a term used to describe people who, individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights. The topics in this course try to define who human rights defenders are, the support and protection they have from State, protective documents eg. The UN Declaration on HRDs, the six UN Special Procedures and the OHCHR Special Rapporteur on HRDs, business and human rights and the shrinking democratic working space for HRDs. The course also looks at the Pacific experience of HRDs in the last 20 years.

Course Outline

- Unit 1 Who or what are HRDs
- Unit 2 The UN Declaration on HRDs & EU Guidelines on HRDs
- Unit 3 Role of state actors in protecting the HRDs
- Unit 4 Role of non-state actors in protecting the HRDs
- Unit 5 Six UN Special Procedures / Special Rapporteur on HRDs, Treaty Bodies and the UPR Process
- Unit 6 Business and Human Rights
- Unit 7 Key concepts of advocacy
- Unit 8 Working in Shrinking Democratic space
- Unit 9 Message development and delivery
- Unit 10 HRDs own Risk management
- Unit 11 PICs and their approach to HRDs in last 20 years
- Unit 12 Non-violent resistance

DG302 – Building resilience among human rights defenders

The increasingly shrinking space for civil society means that the environments that human rights defenders work in have become more challenging. Mass surveillance and stricter laws on civil society are all threats to the vital work and livelihood of a human rights defender. For human rights defenders and civil society to be able to continue their work safely and effectively, building resilience to these external pressures is key. It allows a human rights defender and their organisation to anticipate, prepare for, respond and adapt to changes and disruptions so that they can survive and thrive. This 300 level course will aim to empower individuals/activist/human rights defenders with skills to build long term resilience.

Course Outline

- Unit 1 Strategies to mitigate risks and ways to take action
- Unit 2 Digital security and safety
- Unit 3 Effective investigation and Data / Evidence collection processes
- Unit 4 Improving security and protection for informants
- Unit 5 Security incidents and threat analysis
- Unit 6 Identifying and analysing your vulnerabilities and capacities
- Unit 7 Enhancing monitoring and advocacy skills
- Unit 8 Forming solidarity networks
- Unit 9 Access to sources of funding
- Unit 10 Self-care & well-being
- Unit 11 Negotiating spaces
- Unit 12 Families and Loved Ones in the Security and Protection of Defenders at Risk

Human rights defenders

Some Human Rights Defenders focus their actions at local and national levels and some others work on different levels at the same time.

On successful completion of these courses, students will be able to:

- Understand the role and responsibilities of HRDs, their States and the wider international protocol.
- Apply the processes of data/evidence collection and investigation effectively.
- Analyse the vulnerabilities and capacities of human rights defenders.
- Demonstrate the ability to enhance monitoring and advocacy skills.
- Develop solidarity networks and negotiate for resources.
- Explain how to mitigate threats and challenges to human rights defenders and their loved ones.



Contact us

The Coordinator,
Leadership, Governance and Human Rights
(LGHR) programme
School of Law and Social Sciences (SOLASS)
The University of the South Pacific (USP)
Private Bag, Suva. Fiji.

Ph (679) 3231849
www.usp.ac.fj

The CORE courses in the Leadership, Governance and Human Rights programme are:

- DG100 Introduction to Leadership, Governance and Human Rights
- DG101 Principles of Good Leadership and Governance
- DG102 Laws, Legal Systems and Access to Justice
- DG200 Human Rights at Local, National, Regional and International Levels
- DG201 Introduction to the Role and Challenges of Human Rights Defenders
- DG202 Corruption & Anti-Corruption in the Pacific Island Countries
- DG301 Internship – Leadership, Governance & Human Rights
- DG302 Building Resilience among Human Rights Defenders



Human Rights Defenders Courses

DG201: Introduction to Human Rights Defenders

DG302: Human Rights Defenders Skills Enhancement & Resilience Building

