

Human Rights, Advocacy, & Action SESP 203

Winter, 2008, Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 p.m. – 2:20 p.m., Annenberg G08

Instructor: Dr. Bradley D. Olson

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., or by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will study issues and dilemmas in the area of human rights, including torture, war, genocide, immigration, trafficking, and humanitarian assistance. In addition, we will discuss the global involvement of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, such as Amnesty, in human rights work. We will take an interdisciplinary approach, focusing particularly on the role of psychological constructs such as prejudice, obedience to authority, altruism, and community research and action. This knowledge will help in our own grassroots strategies to bring about policy change by equally blending ethics and action. As a class, we will actually attempt to get the US to ratify three conventions of the United Nations: on the elimination of discrimination against women, on the rights of the child, and on the rights of persons with disabilities. We will build partnerships, communicate to broader sets of stakeholders, and document and evaluate our social change efforts.

Learning Objectives

1. to analyze human rights issues, and build greater writing and advocacy skills using the language of human rights
2. to use UN conventions and other human rights instruments to a greater, and more positive effect in the world
3. to develop stronger social justice-related arguments and to disseminate them to relevant stakeholders
4. to strategize, take notes, and evaluate your social change efforts, and eventually place them into a report or narrative for others to learn from your work

Readings and Required Materials

Two course packs Vol. I and Vol. II are available at Quartet Copies.

Learning Climate

This class is a *seminar/civic-engagement* course. Although there will be lecture, it is structured around cooperative and experiential learning, which are based on two key concepts:

Cooperation—You are actively responsible for your learning and for helping each other. Therefore, appropriate, positive, active participation and attendance are necessary.

Experience—You gain the most from a course when you actively engage with the material. You are expected to read, experience, question, and reflect on all activities we undergo as a class. At times, in addition to lecture, we may invite a guest speaker, but as often, we will participate in activities and conversations that assist you in our human

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rights advocacy and action.

Attendance—Attendance is necessary for academic success. It is important to be on time for all classes. Attendance will also be taken at the beginning of each class. If you expect to miss a class, please e-mail me beforehand if you can.

Teaching Methods and Philosophy

The course will combine knowledge and action. We will work as a common group, and connect with outside organizations. There will be a mixture of lecture and discussion, interactive exercises, planning, and of course action. We will be discussing controversial issues, and there is certainly no requirement for us to always agree with each other, but we should also strive to work together positively and effectively. To accomplish goals, it is not only important to be in class, and prepared for class, but also as responsive as possible outside of class as well. I expect you to read what is assigned for every class and accomplish other work planned as well. There may be times we add or reduce readings. Most of the added readings will be part of the group's work, chosen by the group. When I reduce, you are of course free to read the whole section.

Evaluations and Grading

Quizzes: 20%

Group projects: 40%

Final paper: 25%

In-Class participation: 15%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	B-	80-82%	D	60-69%
A-	90-92%	C+	77-79%	F	<60
B+	87-89%	C	73-76%		
B	83-86%	C-	70-72%		

Class participation assessment guidelines:

Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are substantive, provide major insights, and help direct the discussion. Student is eager to volunteer, interacts and negotiates with other students, always goes beyond what is expected, and is always well -prepared.

Good Contributor: Contributions reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights, and sometimes direction for the class. Student is attentive, responsive, and goes beyond what is required, if not always successfully, and is almost always well-prepared.

Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation, but waits to be called upon.

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Non-Participant: This person says little or nothing in class and contributes minimally. There is little effort to participate; the responses are generally incorrect and reflect little preparation.

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation, erratic oral and written performance. Contributes nothing to the class as a whole.

Academic Integrity Statement

Students in this course are expected to comply with the policies found in the booklet, "Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic guide". All papers submitted for credit in this course must be sent as email attachments as well as delivered in printed form. Your written work may be electronically tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern, visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/>. If you need a copy of the brochure visit the SESP Student Affairs Office.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability needing accommodations is requested to speak directly to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) (847-467-5530) and the instructor, as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first two weeks of class). All discussions will remain confidential.

Class Schedule, subject to change

Class 1
Tues., Jan. 6 **Introductions & Expectations**
Studying and Working for Human Rights

Class 2
Thurs., Jan. 8 **Approaches to Advocacy & Action**

- Alinsky, Saul. (1989). Rules for Radicals, pp. 126-164.
- Gandhi, M. Discipline for Satyagraha, pp. 37-81.

JANUARY 13TH, NO CLASS!

Class 3
Thurs., Jan. 15 **Intro to Human Rights:**

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Universalism versus Cultural Relativism in Human Rights: Universality in Practice
- Economic and Social Rights in Human Rights: Universality in Practice
- Change, the United Nations, and Human Rights

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Class 4
Tues., Jan. 20

United Nations:

- Non-Governmental Organizations in Human Rights: Universality in Practice
- Nelson, P. J. (2007). Human Rights, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Future of Development Cooperation

PREJUDICE

Class 5
Thurs., Jan. 22

Indigenous Populations and Self-Determination

- Collective Rights: The Right of Self-Determination in Human Rights: Universality in Practice
- UN Convention (no. 169) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries entry into force September 5, 1991.
- Wright, R. The Psychological Reactions of Oppressed People
- Brown, R. (1986). Ethnic Conflict
- Brown, R. (1986). Stereotypes

Class 6
Tues., Jan. 27

Rights of the Child:

- Convention on the Rights of the Child entry into force September 2nd, 1990.
- Ruck, M. D., Keating, D. P., Abramovitch, R., & Koegl, C. J. (1998).
- Adolescents' and children's knowledge about rights: Some evidence for how young people view rights in their own lives
- Hart, S. N. (1991). From Property to Person Status: Historical Perspective on Children's Rights. *American Psychologist*, 46, 53-59.

Class 7
Thurs., Jan. 29

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:

- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Ensalaco, M. (2006). Murder in Ciudad Juarez: A Parable of Women's Struggle for Human Rights. *Violence Against Women*, 12(5), 417-440.

Class 8
Tues., Feb. 3

Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Exchange and Equity:

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Brown, R. Exchange, Equity, and Altruism

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Class 9

Thurs., Feb. 5

In-Class Quiz; and Action Planning Day

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Class 10

Tues., Feb. 10

Immigration, Migration, & Asylum:

- Hernandez, C. C. G. (2008). No Human Being is Illegal: Moving Beyond Deportation Law. *Monthly Review*
- Parker, A. Inalienable Rights: Can Human-Rights Law Help to End U.S. Mistreatment of Noncitizens?

Class 11

Thurs., Feb. 12

Trafficking and Modern Slavery:

- Vital Voices: Advocacy and Service Work of NGOs in the Fight Against Human Trafficking. *NGO Watch. UN Chronicle*, No. 1, 2005.
- Gajic-Veljanoski, O. & Stewart, D. E. (2007). Women Trafficked into Prostitution: Determinants, Human Rights, and Health Needs.
- McKelvey, T. (2004). Of Human Bondage. *The American Prospect*.

OBEDIENCE AND GROSS VIOLATIONS

Class 12

Tues., Feb. 17

Torture and Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment:

- Gross and Systematic Violations in Human Rights: Universality in Practice.
- Greene, M. B. (2006). Bullying in Schools: A Plea for Measure of Human Rights. *Journal of Social Issues*, 62(1), 63-79.
- Rasmussen, A., Rosenfeld, B., Reeves, K., & Keller, A. S. (2007). The Effects of Torture-Related Injuries on Long-Term Psychological Distress in a Punjabi Sikh Sample. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 16(4), 734-740.

Class 13

Tues., Feb. 19

Genocide:

- Weitsman, P. A. (2008). The Politics of Identity and Sexual Violence: A Review of Bosnia and Rwanda. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 30, 561-578.
- Brown, R. (1986). Social Forces in Obedience and Rebellion.

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Class 14
Tues., Feb. 24

Accountability:

- How to Deal with Past Violations in Human Rights: Universality in Practice.
- Rodman, K. A. Compromising Justice: Why the Bush Administration and the NGOs are Both Wrong about the ICC.
- Allan, A., & Allan, M. M. (2000). The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a Therapeutic Tool. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 18, 459-477.

Class 15
Thurs., Feb. 26

Rules of War:

- Wasserstrom, R. A. (1969). On the Morality of War: A Preliminary Inquiry.
- Wessels, M. Armed Conflict and Children's Rights. *American Psychologist*, 52(12), 1385-1386.
- Portion of the Geneva Conventions relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War.
- Brown, R. (1986). Ethnocentrism and Hostility.

Class 16
Tues., Mar. 3

Anti-War:

- Kurlansky, M. The Twenty Five Lessons.
- Brown, R. (1986). Conflict Resolution.

ECONOMICS, HUMANITARIANISM, AND JUSTICE

Class 17
Thurs., Mar. 5

Economic Justice:

- De George, R. T. (1985). Property and Global Justice. *Issues in Applied Ethics*.
- Brown, R. (1986). Altruism and Affection.

Class 18
Tues., Mar. 10

Humanitarianism:

- Myrdal, G. (1960). The Direction of Aid.
- Van Wyk, R. (1988). World Hunger and the Extent of our Positive Duties

Class 19
Thurs. March 12th

Science, Evaluation Methods, and Future of Human Rights (readings to be determined)

FINAL PAPER DUE WED, MARCH 18TH BY 5 PM; DELIVER TO MY MAILBOX or MY OFFICE: ANNENBERG ROOM 216