Human Rights Education:  
Concepts & Pedagogies

Special Topics:  0705-698/798-05  
Spring 2007

INTERNATIONAL & MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Course Syllabus

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Times:  
1-5:15 PM, Saturdays, Doctoral Teaching Week-ends

Credit Hours: 3

Place:  
Lone Mountain, Room 303

Website:  
blackboard.usfca.edu

Course Description:  
This course will explore the essential concepts of "human rights," as originally developed in key documents of the United Nations (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). We will investigate current violations of human rights worldwide and discuss the strengths and limitations of the UN framework to address these violations. In that light, we will consider the role of non-governmental organizations (such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch), activism and other means of defending human rights.

We will focus on four case studies of urgent human rights issues post-9/11: 1) "war on terror" and its implications in such practices as unlawful detentions, extraordinary renditions, and use of torture to obtain information; 2) immigration rights and
militarization of the US-Mexico border; 3) injustice against African Americans as manifested in neglect and displacement after Hurricane Katrina, and 4) genocide in Darfur.

All of these case studies are intertwined with racism, discrimination against women and children, and poverty. We will analyze each from the perspective of international human rights and consider how this framework could lead to effective action. Students will develop either curriculum or further research studies to educate others about these case studies or other examples of your choice.

Course Requirements:

10% 1. **Blackboard.com Discussion Groups.**
   a. Participate in blackboard website by checking Announcements regularly. Use External Links and suggest additions.
   b. Participate in Discussion Board regularly, responding to postings by instructors or students as assigned.
   c. Use Group Pages to plan group presentation.

20% 2. **Group Presentations: Human Rights Education and Activism**
Working in teams of 3-4, students have a choice of presenting on either curriculum or activism related to the specific case studies for the assigned class session. Please restrict presentation to 30 minutes.
   Class #3: 1 presentation
   Class #4: 1 presentation
   Class #5: 3 presentations

40% 4. **Final Project: Pedagogy into Praxis.**
(See Guidelines, page 9)

20% 5. **Class Participation.**
   a. Participate in class discussions, groups, and activities. Be prepared by reading assignments thoroughly, taking notes, and writing reflections.
   b. Attendance is mandatory given the interactive nature of the class. Please be prompt to all sessions. Also please notify your instructor (via phone or email) if you must miss a class for illness or an emergency. (See guidelines for participation on page 8).

10% 6. **Film Reviews**
Observe a film either at the Human Rights Film Festival at USF on Monday-Wednesday, March 19-21, or if necessary, on your own. (See instructor for recommendations.) Prepare a 2-3 page film review to present to class on April 14.

10% 7. **Scholars at Risk Conference Reports – Doctoral Students Only**
Attend a session of the Scholars at Risk conference, to be held at USF
during the weekend of April 13-14. Prepare a brief oral report to class.

Required Textbooks:
4. Additional readings will be posted on blackboard.usfca.edu.

Recommended Textbooks:
2. United Nations agreements on human rights. (Some but not all are included in this website, but the Weissbrodt book has more.) http://www.hrweb.org/legal/undocs.html.

Amazing Websites: (all on blackboard External Links)

Course Schedule:

Class One: January 20, 2007
Themes: Introduction to course, students, and instructor. What are “human rights”? Personal experiences with human rights violations. Why use a human rights framework?

Reading Assignment:

Class Two: February 3, 2007

Reading Assignments:

All Read:


- Chapter 1: HRE in the post-Cold War context. 9-20.
- Chapter 2: HRE as education for peace. 21-34.
- Chapter 3: HRE in UN peace building. 35-50.
- Chapter 4: HRE as a strategy for development. 51-63.
- Chapter 5: HRE as empowerment. 64-79.
- Chapter 6: Conflict resolution and HRE. 80-95.
- Chapter 7: Education on the HR of women. 96-118.
- Chapter 8: Charter marking and participatory research. 119-141.

**Assignment:**
You will be assigned in pairs to present on a chapter from Part 1, *Human Rights Education for the 21st Century.* Present highlights of this chapter with visuals if possible. Also select three or four articles from the Universal Declaration which most resonate with you (and perhaps fit the example you brought to Class #1).

**Class Three: February 17, 2007**


**Reading Assignments:**

**UN Documents:** ([www.hreb.org/legal/undocs.html](http://www.hreb.org/legal/undocs.html) or Selected instruments)
1) Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
2) Convention Against Torture  
3) Convention Against Genocide  
4) The Geneva Conventions  

Class Activities:  
1) Guest Speaker: Olga Talamante.  
3) Student presentation.  

Class Four: March 3, 2007  

Reading Assignments:  

UN Documents:  
1) Covenant on Civil and Political Rights  
2) Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
3) Convention on Relating to the Status of Refugees  
4) Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women  

Class Activities:  
1) Jigsaw on readings.  
2) Film, La senorita extraviada (Missing young woman), Lourdes Portillo 2001.  
3) Student presentation.  

Class Five: March 10, 2007
Displacement after Hurricane Katrina. Genocide in Darfur.

Reading Assignments:

Criminal Injustice
2) Wacquant, L. (2002). From slavery to mass incarceration: Rethinking the ‘race question’ in the US. *New Left Review*, 13. 41-60. **Blackboard, Class #5.**

Hurricane Katrina
5) [http://www.ushrnnetwork.org/](http://www.ushrnnetwork.org/)

Darfur

UN Documents:
1) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
2) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
3) International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
4) Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (http://www.ushrnnetwork.org)

Class Activities:
1) Student presentation on each issue.
2) Film: “When the levees broke.” Spike Lee’s documentary on Katrina (2006).

Class Six: March 31, 2007
Theme: Human rights pedagogies: Curriculum development.

Reading Assignments:
5) Hamilton, B. Chapter 14: Human rights awareness and skill games in political science. 221-235.

All read

Class Activities:
Field trip to Amnesty International.

Assignment Due: Proposal for Final Paper

Class Seven: April 14, 2007
Theme: Human rights pedagogies: Arts as a tool for change.

Reading Assignments:

Class Activity:
1) Performance by Quique on Villa Grimaldi in Chile.
2) Film reviews.

Class Eight: April 28, 2007
Theme: Human rights pedagogies: Activism.
Reading Assignment:
3) Human Rights Watch. http://www.hrw.org/about/whoweare/html (who we are) and http://www.hrw.org/about/faq (frequently asked questions)

Class Activity
1) Reports on Scholars at Risk conference.
2) Guest Speaker: Ella Baker Human Rights Center.

Assignment Due: Draft of Final Project

Class Nine: May 12, 2007
Theme: ORAL PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PROJECTS.
Evaluating Class Participation

Outstanding Contributor: Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas offered are always substantive, provide one or more major insights as well as direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and persuasively presented. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished markedly.

Good Contributor: Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive, provide good insights and sometimes direction for the class. Challenges are well substantiated and often persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished.

Adequate Contributor: Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas offered are sometimes substantive, provide generally useful insights but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Challenges are sometimes presented, fairly well substantiated, and are sometimes persuasive. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would be diminished somewhat.

Non-Participant: This person says little or nothing in class. Hence, there is not an adequate basis for evaluation. If this person were not a member of the class, the quality of discussion would not be changed.

Unsatisfactory Contributor: Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide few if any insights and never a constructive direction for the class. Integrative comments and effective challenges are absent. If this person were not a member of the class, valuable air time would be saved.

(These guidelines were adopted from the web site of Prof. John Tyler of Brown University's Department of Education.)
**Final Course Project: Guidelines**

**Deadlines**

* Proposal Due: Class #6, March 31  
* Draft Due: Class #8, April 28  
* Final Due: Class #9, May 12  

**Proposal:**

This should be an outline or plan for your final project. For the paper component, this should include a description of the human rights issue you are addressing, importance of this issue, relevant international laws or treaties, audience, and at least 5 tentative research references. For the pedagogical component, provide a sketch of the pedagogical approach you will use: curriculum unit, PowerPoint presentation, training guide, I-movie, play, research paper, etc. Remember that this should be a tool for education or activism.

**Final Project: Research Paper + Pedagogical Tool:**

**Paper:** The paper component should be at least 10 pages (plus references) and must include the following:

I. **Introduction:** Clearly describe the human rights issue you are addressing and its significance. This is where you state your rationale for selecting this topic, including your personal, professional and/or political reasons (if appropriate).

II. **Research:** Provide a brief review of the literature on this human rights issue, including its historical development. Discuss what international laws/treaties are involved in this issue, how they have or have not been applied, and the actions that have been taken by UN bodies, NGOs or activist organizations to address this issue. Make sure to analyze the causes and effects of the human rights violations involved.

You should cite approximately 10 references, which can include some but not all assigned readings. Use APA style and include a reference list at the end.

**Pedagogical Tool:** This is the creative part of the project! Select the pedagogical approach and content that is most appropriate for your intended audience and setting. The objective is to translate your research in a form that makes its content meaningful for your population.

For example, choose a curriculum unit if you are an elementary school teacher. Develop a workshop training session if you are working with adults in a community-based organization, create an I-movie if you are involved in urban youth development, or
write a play if you teach drama in an after-school program for teens. I encourage you to integrate the arts into this project!

Bill Bigelow’s guide on Immigration is a great model for the pedagogical tool.

Think about a project that would provide about a week’s worth of material if you are teaching, or a full day’s worth if you are conducting a workshop. If you are developing curriculum, provide about 5 lessons.

Remember the dual purpose is to EDUCATE and ACTIVATE!