Fall Semester, 2011

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:50 in Kauke 137

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Office Hours: Mon., 11-12; Wed., 3-4; Thurs., 1-2; and by appointment

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Office Hours (in Kauke 025): Mon., 4-5; Wed., 2-3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar explores one of the most important issues of our time – human rights. We will examine issues of the rights of individuals and groups around the world, in the United States, and here in Ohio. We will examine the historical, political, legal, social, psychological and scientific aspects of the topic. In order to gain a deeper understanding of why human rights are violated, and the effects of these violations on the victims, we will utilize a variety of texts, including state-of-the-art academic research, reports by non-governmental organizations and governmental agencies, journalistic accounts, interviews, memoirs, blogs, graphic novels, artwork and documentary films. The main purpose of this course, however, is to develop necessary skills that will be required of you throughout your college career and beyond. As we examine human rights issues we will also sharpen our writing and speaking skills, develop our analytical abilities, and begin to engage in academic discourse.
READINGS
We will be using a variety of books, articles, video, music, and other "texts" in this class. Required books are available for purchase at the college's Florence O. Wilson Bookstore, located in Lowry Center. Of course, you are free to purchase them elsewhere, but be sure to get the correct editions. They are:


Finally, you are expected to keep up with news around the world. This will require you to get your news from multiple reputable sources that have substantial global coverage. Two particularly noteworthy and reliable sources that you can access online are *The New York Times* at [http://www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) and the BBC World Service at [http://www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk).

All readings MUST be completed by the class session for which they are assigned. They will be necessary background for lectures and discussion, and you will be held responsible for them, in class and on exams.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS
Students are expected to attend class and participate regularly in class discussions. Students are also required to complete all assignments. Finally, students are expected to conduct themselves in a thoroughly professional manner. The grades for course assignments will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment #1: Short Essay</th>
<th>2.5%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #2a: Letter to the Editor</td>
<td>5.0%: First Draft of Letter to the Editor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2b: Peer Reviews</td>
<td>7.5% (2.5% each x 3 peer reviews)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #2c: Letter to the Editor Revision &amp; Memo</td>
<td>5.0%: Letter to Editor Revision + R&amp;R Memo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #3: Research Paper &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>25.0% (15.0% paper, 10.0% presentation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Process Homework Assignments (#1 &amp; #2)</td>
<td>5.0% (2.5% each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment #4: Group Project &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>25.0% (15.0% materials, 10.0% presentation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation and Professionalism</td>
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As stated in The College of Wooster Catalogue, letter grades are defined as:

- **“A range”** indicates an outstanding performance in which there has been distinguished achievement in all phases of the course.
- **“B range”** indicates a good performance in which there has been a high level of achievement in some phases of the course.
- **“C range”** indicates an adequate performance in which a basic understanding of the subject has been demonstrated.
- **“D range”** indicates a minimal performance in which despite recognizable deficiencies there is enough to merit credit.
- **F or NC** indicates unsatisfactory performance.

**Participation & Professionalism**

As stated earlier, students are expected to attend class and participate regularly in class discussions. Your input and feedback is essential to the smooth and efficient running of the class. To enable interesting and effective discussion, be sure to have read the materials pertaining to that day’s discussion BEFORE that class period! Quality and quantity of class participation will be monitored closely by the instructor and teaching assistant, and is worth 25% of the overall course grade.

Throughout the seminar we will debate some of the most controversial human rights topics of the day, from whether the international community has the right to intervene in the affairs of another country, to whether the death penalty is a human rights abuse or a necessary evil. Students should expect vigorous discussion and debate! My hope is that the classroom will contain an atmosphere in which ideas and opinions will be welcomed and addressed. As such, please note that you will be graded on a number of criteria beyond simple participation, under the rubric of “professionalism”. Professionalism refers to factors such as attendance, promptness, courtesy, constructive contributions to class dialogue, respect for other class members’ contributions, overall improvement, and other intangibles, to be evaluated and assigned at the discretion of the instructor.

**Wooster Forum**

The Wooster Forum is a college-sponsored series of events designed to raise awareness of a variety of issues. This year the theme is *The Americas: Contact and Consequences* ([http://thewoosterforum.scotblogs.wooster.edu](http://iewoosterforum.scotblogs.wooster.edu)).

The Forum series will be of particular interest to us, as many of the cases we address will deal with human rights issues in the Americas. You are, of course, encouraged to attend all events in the series, but are particularly encouraged to attend the talk by Edwidge Danticat (Tuesday, October 4th at 7:30pm in McGaw) as we will be drawing upon her book during the semester.

**Writing Assignments**

One of the main goals of First Year Seminar is to provide students with the opportunity to improve their writing skills, presentation skills, and critical thinking abilities. To that end, over the course of this semester you will write and rewrite a variety of papers. Each type of assignment will focus on different skills, including writing style and abilities, organization, argumentation, logic, form, and research and citation skills.

As each assignment approaches I will present the class with detailed instructions. In the meantime, here is a brief description of each paper (with due dates in parentheses):

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As each assignment approaches I will present the class with detailed instructions. In the meantime, here is a brief description of each paper (with due dates in parentheses):
• **Assignment #1 (due September 1st) – Short Essay (2.5%)**: We will spend part of our first class session participating in a group exercise in which we will try to develop a universal declaration of human rights. Following this exercise, you will be expected to compose a short (1-2 page) essay on the following topic: Pick one "right" that you thought was crucial to any Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Why do you think that this particular right is of paramount importance?

• **Assignment #2 – Letter to the Editor (17.5% total – see below for breakdown per component):**

  o **Assignment #2a (due October 13th) – Letter to the Editor (5.0%)**: Each student will compose a well-crafted but brief (250 words or less) letter to the editor on the issue of whether or not capital punishment is a human rights issue. After a rewrite, students will be encouraged to submit their letters to a previously approved periodical, on-line newsgroup, or other appropriate public forum.

  o **Assignment #2b: (due October 20th) – Peer Reviews (7.5% = 2.5% x 3)**: Students will workshop the original versions of their Letter to the Editor Assignments within a pre-selected peer group. Copies of the paper to be reviewed will be made available to each member of the peer review group (and to the Professor) on October 13th, in advance of the in-class workshop. This will allow peer group members to read and critically analyze the paper, and to respond in writing with a peer review. Each student will be responsible for a peer review (1-2 pages in length) of each paper workshopped, due on October 20th. If there are four members of a peer review group, then each student will be responsible for three peer reviews, one per paper (not counting their own, of course). The instructor will discuss further details in class.

  o **Assignment #2c (due October 27th) – Revision of Letter to the Editor + R&R Memo (5.0%)**: This assignment is a REVISED VERSION of the Letter to the Editor paper (in line with instructor and peer review comments [see section on “Peer Review” above], and with new work done). Students must submit the revised paper, along with the original version containing instructor comments, and (marked up) copies of the previous set of peer comments. Each student will also be required to submit a detailed cover letter to the instructor (R&R [Revise & Resubmit] Memo) explaining how the student responded to each of the peer reviewers’ comments. The instructor will then grade this revised paper anew both on quality and on the degree to which critiques were addressed and incorporated into the paper, as well as the amount and quality of effort put into revision of the assignment.

• **Assignment #3 (due on date of in-class presentation [Oct. 25th – Nov. 22nd]) – Research Paper & Presentation (25.0% = 15% Research Paper, 10% Presentation)**: Early on in the semester each student will choose a country of interest, and a date on which to present their research about that country's human rights record to the class. Two associated homework assignments (see below) will help guide students through the early stages of the writing process. After feedback on these assignments, students must submit a revised paper with instructor comments, and (marked up) copies of the previous set of peer comments. Each student will also be required to submit a detailed cover letter to the instructor (R&R [Revise & Resubmit] Memo) explaining how the student responded to each of the peer reviewers’ comments. The instructor will then grade this revised paper anew both on quality and on the degree to which critiques were addressed and incorporated into the paper, as well as the amount and quality of effort put into revision of the assignment.

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1. Victoria L. Romero (2002) provides a good discussion of how to respond to reviewers’ comments (“Getting Published: Revise and Resubmit.” *Observer*, 15 (7), at: [http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2002/september-02/getting-published.html](http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/2002/september-02/getting-published.html): “Try your best to address the concerns of all the reviewers. Be flexible about making changes that don't significantly alter the thrust of your paper. Although it may not feel like it at the time, the suggested changes generally do improve your paper... If you choose not to make a specific revision you should acknowledge and support this decision in the cover letter. In this way, you can respectfully disagree with the reviewer and plead your case.” (Romero 2002, 1).
students will write a medium-sized (approximately 8-10 pages) research paper on the human rights environment in that country. The paper must include background information, a discussion of how human rights have changed over time, how they compare to other countries, and which rights issues are most pressing in that country today. Each student will present their findings at the start of class on their appointed day. Presentations will be graded as a component of the research paper.

- Writing Process Homework Assignments (5.0% = 2.5% × 2): These two short writing assignments help move students along in the writing process, and build toward the larger research paper described above. They include: a statement of the country of choice and brief annotated bibliography of six to ten sources related to the topic (HW#1, due September 22nd); and an outline of the initial version of the research paper (HW#2, due October 4th).

- Assignment #4 (due December 8th) – Group Project & Presentation – Human Rights Advocacy Materials (25.0% = 15% Advocacy Materials, 10% Presentation): Each student in the course will work on a group project in the second half of the semester. Team assignments will be made midway through the semester to facilitate time to work on the project as a group. For this assignment, your group will select a current human rights issue to focus on. Each group will create advocacy materials that can be used as part of a real human right information or advocacy campaign. These materials can be in the form of pamphlets or written materials, web-based materials, multimedia presentations, or some other creative but informative outlet. The culmination of this project will be a brief presentation of the materials in class on the final class session of the semester. Both the materials produced and the presentations will be graded as components of the overall assignment. Each student co-author in the group project will receive the same grade for the group's project.

NOTES
Note #1: Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices before class begins as a courtesy to others. If you bring a laptop computer, tablet, or other such device to class, it should be used for note-taking only. Please also refrain from recording any part of the course in any manner other than via written or typed class notes, unless explicitly approved by the instructor.

Note #2: Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any missed assignment or unexcused exam absence is subject to an automatic failing grade for the course (in other words, you cannot pass the class unless you do all of the work!). Late written assignments will be graded down one full letter grade for each day late. A paper handed in five minutes after the deadline is considered a day late. If you anticipate missing an exam or a paper deadline, consult with the instructor as soon as possible.

Note #3: Students are encouraged to study together and assist one another in learning the material. It is assumed that you have done your own work, and that you conduct yourself according to the expectations

2. "What if your coauthor doesn't carry his or her weight?" asks Gary King (2006: 120) in a recent article [King, Gary. 2006. PS: Political Science and Politics, 39, 1: 119-125]. His very practical suggestion is as follows:

Deal with it somehow, and make your best individual effort even if it is asymmetric. You will have to deal with this when you graduate too. Your goal (and given task) is to make your paper as good as possible, and you have at your disposal your effort and whatever effort you can marshal from your coauthor. In most of the social sciences, credit is not divided among the coauthors: each coauthor gets almost full credit for the entire paper. As long as you're getting credit for what you're doing, it doesn't hurt you for someone else to have more credit than he or she deserves.
laid out in the Wooster Ethic and the Code of Academic Integrity, as enumerated in the Scot’s Key (http://www.wooster.edu/Student-Life/Dean-of-Students/The-Scots-Key). Students are reminded that they are obliged to understand, to uphold, and to comply with the Code of Academic Integrity and the Wooster Ethic at the College of Wooster. Students who have questions or concerns about these policies (after having read them again) should make an appointment to see me to discuss them; indeed, I welcome this discussion and encourage students to see me in advance of any assignment about which they have doubts or questions. Any violation of the Wooster Ethic and/or the Code of Academic Integrity means the student's immediate failure in the course, as well as possible subsequent academic disciplinary action.

Note #4: Students are encouraged to discuss assignments with me during office hours. However, students seeking to change their grade on an assignment or essay portion of an exam should be advised that I reserve the right to alter your grade in either direction (i.e.- if new problems are found during the re-grade the grade would go down).

Note #5: I am happy to assist you in any way, but cannot do so retroactively. Thus, it is your responsibility to inform me ahead of time about factors that are likely to interfere with your performance in the class. Measures for students with disabilities, non-native writers of English and other special issues will be taken in compliance with the college’s policies.

**SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS**

**I. Understanding Human Rights — Developing a Basic Toolkit**

**Aug. 30 – What Are Human Rights?**

**Sept. 1 – A (Very Western) History of Human Rights**
SHORT ESSAY DUE

**Sept. 6 – Assessing Arguments About Human Rights: Are Human Rights Universal?**
Sept. 8 – Gender-Based Violations: Human Rights and Sexual Orientation

  http://www.jstor.org/stable/1600536
  http://www.du.edu/korbel/brhw/researchdigest/mena/index.html

Sept. 13 – Measuring Human Rights

- Weston, A Rulebook for Arguments. pp. 81-86.
- EXPLORE: Examine these sources for information on HAITI and LIBYA.
  - OR search this way: (http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights)
  - U.S. State Department Country-Based Human Rights Reports. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt
  - Political Terror Scale (PTS). http://www.politicalterrorscale.org/

Sept. 15 – Transforming Ordinary People into Perpetrators of Evil

VIEW & DISCUSS: "Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment"

  http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/bck_violence.pdf

Sept. 20 – Presentation and Public Speaking

GUEST INSTRUCTOR: Denise Bostdorff, Department of Communication

- Additional Readings To Be Announced
II. Human Rights Economic Issues

Sept. 22 – Slavery & Human Trafficking (I)
HW#1 (ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY) DUE

- Archer and Trusova. 2010. Borderland: Seven Stories as told by Victims of Human Trafficking.
- Fein. “Twentieth-Century Slavery within the State.” pp. 23-42 (Ch. 2) and “Slavery, Trafficking, and Globalization.” pp. 43-59 (Ch. 3).

Sept. 27 – Slavery & Human Trafficking (II)

  [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/06/06/110606fa_fact_stillman](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/06/06/110606fa_fact_stillman)
  - Section II: The Context for Human Trafficking in Ohio, pp. 9-17.
  - Section IV: A Snapshot of Identified Cases in Ohio, pp. 24-28.
  - Section VI: Points for Further Deliberation and Recommendations, pp. 45-52.

Sept. 29 – Human Rights & Corporate Social Responsibility


Oct. 4 – Basic Human Needs? Food, Education, Health, Housing, and Work
HW#2 (OUTLINE) DUE

III. Human Rights and Detention, Torture and Death

Oct. 6 – The Death Penalty
- Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. 2011:
  - "Current Death Row Inmates" http://www.drc.state.oh.us/public/deathrow.htm

Oct. 13 – Detention and Disappearance
LETTER TO THE EDITOR ASSIGNMENT DUE
- Bahari and Molloy. 2011. Then They Came For Me. (Prologue and Chapters 1-8; pp. xi-139)

**Oct. 18**th (FALL BREAK): No Class ****

Oct. 20 – Peer Review Session: In Class Workshop of Letter to the Editor Assignment
PEER REVIEWS DUE
Read and Comment on Papers to be Workshopped

Oct. 25 – Torture
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 1 & 2
- Bahari and Molloy. 2011. Then They Came For Me. (Chapters 9-18 and Epilogue) pp. 140-328.

Oct. 27 – Why Do States Terrorize, Torture and Kill Their Own Civilians?
REVISED LETTER TO THE EDITOR + R&R MEMO DUE
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 3 & 4
- Fein, “States of Terror in the Late Twentieth Century: Algeria and Argentina.” (Ch. 4, pp. 60-89).
- Fein, “States of Terror Turn to Genocide: Guatemala and Iraq.” (Ch. 5, pp. 90-124).

Nov. 1 & 3 – Genocide and Political Mass Murder
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 5 & 6 (11/1)
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 7 & 8 (11/3)
- Gourevitch. 1998. We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families. pp. 5-171.
IV. Reacting to Human Rights Issues

Nov. 8 – The Role of Human Rights-Based Non-Governmental Organizations
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 9 & 10


• Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics” and “Human Rights Advocacy Networks in Latin America” in Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. Ch. 1 (pp. 1-38) & Ch. 3 (pp. 79-120). [E-Reserve]

Nov. 10 – Forensic Science as a Tool to Uncover and Understand Atrocities
GUEST INSTRUCTOR: Paul Edmiston, Department of Chemistry
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 11 & 12


• Other Readings To Be Announced

Nov. 15 – Medicine, Science and Human Rights
JOINT CLASS WITH FYS ON “CONTROVERSIES IN SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY”


Nov. 17 – Human Rights Foreign Policy, International Law, and the United Nations
RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 13 & 14


Nov. 22 – How States Handle Victims – A Case Study of Asylum and Refugees

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS 15 & 16


* * * Nov. 24th (THANKSGIVING BREAK): No Class * * *

Nov. 29 – The Move Toward Pre-Empting Human Rights Abuses


Dec. 1 & 6 – Truth, Justice, or Revenge?

• Gourevitch. 1998. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families*. pp. 177-353.

Dec. 8 – Presentations of Advocacy Materials; Class Wrap-Up

GROUP PROJECT (ADVOCACY MATERIALS ASSIGNMENT) DUE
GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS