

PubPol 675
1220 Weill Hall
Fall 2007

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**University of Michigan
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy**

SPP 675: Human Rights and International Public Policy

Course Description

This course introduces policy professionals to the field of international human rights. In the first half of the course, students explore the policy universe of human rights, including philosophical debates, normative issues, political dynamics and the practicalities of human rights monitoring and research. At various times in the course, the international framework for protecting human rights is studied, interactively, via case studies of Darfur, East Timor and Rwanda. The second portion of the course focuses on policy issues and analysis of political considerations.

Summary of Requirements

1. complete readings, attend class, participate in class discussions
2. several short assignments (generally related to class discussions)
3. class presentation and policy analysis on a contemporary human rights issue

Readings

- Many of the readings for this course are available on line (ProQuest or Lexis-Nexis), or through the Coursetools site for this course (see <https://ctools.umich.edu/>).
- In addition, a coursepack is available at Dollar Bill Copying, and the following books are available at Ulrich's and other university bookstores.
 - Claude, Richard Pierre and Weston, Burns. Human Rights in the World Community, Third Ed. University of Pennsylvania Press: 2006.
 - (optional) Barnett, Michael. Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda. (Cornell University Press, 2002)
- We will also make use of several readings from an important book that is currently being revised. Three copies are on reserve in the Ford School Reading Room.
 - Steiner, Henry J. and Alton, Philip. International Human Rights in Context. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- To reduce costs to students, I have tried to be judicious about articles included in the coursepack. You will need to be attentive! Here are the main abbreviations for sources of readings below.
 - RR** = Ford School **Reading Room**, 3rd floor Weill Hall
 - CP** = **Coursepack**
 - E** = **electronic resource**, obtain via your web browser
 - E/ER or E/CT** = electronic copy available through the **Electronic Reserves** on PP675 coursetools site, or in the **"readings folder" on the CT site**.

Course Outline

Week 1 (September 4-6). Introduction: Approaching Human Rights

- E Human Rights First, Darfur
http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/international_justice/darfur/video/hope_for_darfur.htm
- E SaveDarfur website <http://www.savedarfur.org/>

Readings:

- C&W, pp 464-468. Universal Declaration of Human Rights..
- CP Beitz, Charles. "What Human Rights Mean." *Daedalus* 132 (2003): 36-46.

Week 2 (Sept 11-13). Conceptual Issues and Debates. *Is there an essential and inherent meaning to the term human rights, or does it lend itself to interpretation? Is human rights a uniquely Western concept? To what extent do religion and philosophy inform our ideas of human rights? What is the source of human rights? Are some "rights" more important than others? [Note: Some of these readings are dense, but the debates are pivotal and anyone wanting to pursue work on human rights should be familiar with them.]*

Readings:

- C&W, pp.17-24. Weston, "Concept and Content" ("generations" of rights; universalist-Relativist debate)
- C&W, pp.39-52. Weston, "Universality of Human Rights" (universalism debate)
- C&W, pp 53-63. Howard, "Second Great Transformation." (globalization & HR standards)
- C&W, pp. 170-177. Eide, "Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as Human Rights"
- C&W 249-259. Sengupta, "The Right to Development" (right to development *and* questions of "duties and obligations"; collective rights v. ind. rights)
- CP Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom* NY: Anchor Books, 2000: 227-248

Week 3 (Sept 18-20) Assessing Human Rights Problems. *How do we recognize a human rights problem? What are the defining characteristics, and what are the boundaries? What is the relationship between power and human rights? What are the essential components of human rights research methodology?*

Readings:

- E Amnesty International, "Maze of Injustice: The Failure to Protect Indigenous Women from Sexual Injustice in the USA," 2007 (AMR51/056/2007)
<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR510562007?open&of=ENG-AMR>
- E Human Rights Watch, Sri Lanka: Return to War, Human Rights Under Siege
<http://hrw.org/reports/2007/srilanka0807/>
- E (optional) Human Rights First, "Assessing the New Normal: Liberty and Security for the Post-September 11 United States," 2003,
<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/pubs/descriptions/Assessing/ExecSumRecs.pdf>

The following 4 selections are intended as the basis of a discussion on human rights research. The first reading is an example of a full-sized human rights report by a major human rights organization. It is followed by a statistically-oriented critique, which in turn is followed by replies from AI and HRW.

- E Human Rights Watch, "Colombia: Colombia: Displaced and Discarded The Plight of Internally Displaced Persons in Bogotá and Cartagena <http://hrw.org/reports/2005/colombia1005/> (read sections I-III)
- E Ballesteros, REstrepo and Spagat, "The Work of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch: Evidence from Colombia," CERAC, February 2007 http://www.cerac.org.co/pdf/CERAC_WP_4.pdf (scan first 10 pages at least)
- E HRW Response to CERAC Charges About our Colombia Work, http://hrw.org/doc/?t=americas&document_limit=20,20
- E Amnesty International, "Colombia: Amnesty International response to Andrés Ballesteros, Jorge A. Restrepo, Michael Spagat, Juan F. Vargas, *The Work of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch: Evidence from Colombia*, CERAC, Colombia, February 2007 (AMR 23/006/2007) <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR230062007?open&of=ENG-COL>
- RR Steiner & Alston, 160-163. On women's rights in Guatemala, from CEDAW - **handout in class**
- E OHCHR Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/monitoring/> For class on Sept 20, please spend at least 1 hour reviewing chapters I, II, V, VI, VII and VIII of this manual. Take notes on elements that strike you as particularly important, and/or you hadn't previously considered. It's a good idea to print out and bring to class.

Additional resources

See other sources on C-Tools, under the Resources Tab, Folder "Researching Human Rights."

Week 4 (Sept 25-27) Human Rights Norms, Standards, and International Law *What are the main human rights standards and where do they come from? How do international norms emerge? When do they become "international law"? What is the relationship between customary and treaty law with regard to human rights? What is the difference between humanitarian law and human rights law? What is meant by "hard" and "soft" law, and what is the relative importance of each? To what extent can reservations modify treaty provisions? What does it mean for a treaty to be self-executing? How meaningful is the concept of jus cogens? What is the practical effect of international law?*

- CP Waltz, Susan. "Reclaiming and Rebuilding the History of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights," Third World Quarterly 23 (No. 3 2002): 437-448
- CP Carol Anderson, Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955 (2003), pp. 271-276.
C&W, pp. 287-294. "Intl HR: Action Overviews"
- CP S&A, 67-72 "Comment on IHL" and "Comment on the Role of Custom"
- CP S&A, 103-111 "Comment on Treaties"
- E OHCHR Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/monitoring/> Chapters III and IV
C&W, pp 294-304. Weston, "Prescription and Enforcement"
C&W, pp. 305-314. Koh, "How is International HR Law Enforced?"
C&W, pp. 315-321. Bayefsky, "Making the HR Treaties Work."

Week 5 (Oct 2-4) HR NGO's and How They Work *What is a HR NGO? What is the difference between an NGO and an INGO? Who makes up an NGO and what do they represent? How do HR-NGO's work and where do they fit in the policy universe of human rights?*

Readings:

- E "About Amnesty" <http://web.amnesty.org/pages/aboutai-index-eng>
- E AIUSA, "Volunteer leadership"
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/Employment/Volunteers/page.do?id=1121002&n1=2&n2=20&n3=1297>
- C&W, pp. 424-433. Claude, "What do HR NGO's Do?"
- CP Clark, Ann Marie. Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001: 3-20; 130.
- CP Keck, Margaret E. and Sikkink, Kathryn. Activists Beyond Borders. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998: 1-29 (CP)
- Case study (see Assignment Sheet). Assignment on Brysk due Oct 4, for discussion in class**
- CP Brysk, Alison. "From Above and Below: Social Movements, the International System, and Human Rights in Argentina." Comparative Political Studies 26 (October 1993): 259-285

ALSO ON OCT 4: Discussion of policy projects and plans for weeks 10-14.

Week 6 (Oct 9-11) Human Rights as a Foreign Policy Issue. *Many states make human rights an issue of their foreign policy. Relatively speaking, how important are human rights considerations in the foreign policy of any state? What is the relationship between human rights and other foreign policy objectives? Why do states include human rights in their foreign policy doctrines? How can the foreign policy approaches of the G-8 countries be compared and contrasted? What are the essential elements of human rights in US foreign policy, and how has that policy evolved in recent years?*

Readings

- C&W, pp. 373-377, "Foreign Policy and Human Rights"
- C&W, pp. 383-387. Ignatieff, "No Exceptions? The US Pick-and-Choose Approach to HR"
- CP Mertus, Julie. "The *Lingua Franca* of Diplomacy: Human Rights and the Post-Cold War Presidencies," excerpt from Bait and Switch: Human Rights and US Foreign Policy (Routledge, 2004): 39-74
- CP Sikkink, Kathryn. "The Power of Principled Ideas: Human Rights Policies in the United States and Western Europe." In Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change, edited by Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- CP Okuizumi, Kaora. "Implementing the ODA Charter: Prospects for Linking Japanese Economic Assistance and Human Rights." NYU Journal of International Law and Politics 27 (Winter 1995): 367-408. *[this article is somewhat dated, but it may nevertheless provide some insights in to the "bureaucratic politics of human rights" in Japan. Read it to get a sense of political dynamics, rather than for details.]*
- E Japan Foreign Ministry, "Arc of Freedom and Prosperity: Japan's Expanding Diplomatic

- Horizons" <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/fm/aso/speech0611.html> (also see program for MOFA symposium, 2007, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policyillar/symposium0702.html>)
- E “China Issues Human Rights Record of the US” March 2007, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/zgrq/t302225.htm>

Additional Readings

- US Institute of Peace, “US Human Rights Policy: A Twenty-Year Assessment” (1999) <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr990616.html>
- US Government, “National Security Strategy of the US” (Chapter II) <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss2.html>
- US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Visit human rights page <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>
- “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices” (2006) <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/index.htm>

**Weeks 7-8 (Oct 18-23-25) Exploring the International Politics of Human Rights:
The Case of East Timor**

Case Study Readings (for Oct 7):

- Simon Chesterman, “East Timor” in United Nations Interventionism, 1991–2004, ed. By Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides (Cambridge University Press, 2007).
S&A 672-694 Selections on E. Timor

Readings on UN Structures

- C&W, pp. 341-352. Marks, “The UN and Human Rights”
C&W, various notes on UN – see pp. 298 (UNHCHR); 325-334 (including section on 1503 procedure)
- E UN Human Rights Council (created 2006 to replace Commission) <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/>
- E Shaefer, Brett “The U.N. Human Rights Council Is Not Enough: Time for a New Approach to Human Rights” Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1910, Feb 2006 <http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalOrganizations/bg1910.cfm?renderforprint=1>
- E/ER Rahmani-Ocra “Giving the Emperor Real Clothes: The UN Human Rights Council” *Global Governance*, 12 (Jan 2006), 15-20.

Short Assignment due electronically by COB, Wed. Oct 17. See Assignment Sheet.

**Weeks 9-10. (Oct 30-Nov 1-6- 8) Exploring the International Politics of Human Rights II.
Response to genocide in Rwanda and Sudan (Intervention and Transitional Justice)**

Readings on Rwanda (Oct 30):

- Hotel Rwanda (film)*
- CP Barnett and Finnemore, "Genocide and the Peacekeeping Culture at the UN" in Rules for the World (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 2004), 121-155. **OR...**
- RR Barnett, Michael. Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda. (Cornell University Press, 2002) **AND/OR**
- CP Samantha Powers, excerpt from A Problem from Hell , pp. 329-390.

Short Assignment due COB Oct 29 (for discussion in class Oct 30). See Assignment Sheet.

Readings on Intervention (Nov 1)

- CP Kuperman, Alan J. The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda. Washington, DC: Brookings, 2001: 63-99.
C&W, pp.401-410. Falk, "Humanitarian Intervention: Imperatives and Problematics"

International Efforts on Darfur-Sudan (Nov 6)

- E International Crisis Group, "Sudan: Getting the UN into Darfur" Oct 12, 2006.
- E Lexis-Nexis (available through UMich library, lib.umich.edu) – search "UN Darfur" for past two years. Review headlines in reverse chronological order; read as you wish!
- E July 2007 UN Security Council action and updates
<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23379&Cr=sudan&Cr1>
- E African Union mission in Darfur <http://www.amis-sudan.org/index.html>
- E Timeline (note Darfur crisis starts c. 2004)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/827425.stm
- E Reuters "Alert-Net," Darfur Conflict (multiple webpages, including timeline and background
http://www.alertnet.org/db/crisisprofiles/SD_DAR.htm

Readings on Transitional Justice (Nov 8)

- RR S&A: pp 1131-1247. *Suggested approach: read 1131-1132, then take note all outline headings that begin with capital letter A, B, C, etc. – What topics are collected in this chapter? Read introductory paragraphs for all of the lettered sections. Take note of materials provided in remaining pages.*
- E International Center for Transitional Justice, "What is Transitional Justice?" <http://ictj.org/en/tj>
- E "Naming Names" Economist, Feb 27, 2007
http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8762683&top_story=1
- E Webcast of Ocampo testimony, Dec 2006 (24 minutes)
<http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/monitor/2006/12/icc-darfur-investigation-briefing-un.php>
- E ICC website <http://www.icc-cpi.int/home.html&l=en>
- E Cobban, Helena. "Think Again: International Courts," Foreign Policy," Mar/April 2006
- CP Elston, Jon. Closing the Books: Transitional Justice in Historical Perspective (Cambridge Univ Press, 2004): 79-135 (*Bring to class for in-class exercise*)

Weeks 11-15. (Nov 13-Dec 11)

Human Rights and Contemporary Policy Issues

This section of the course will be developed along the lines of student interests. Together we will consider policy-relevant skills and explore one or two policy issues that have engaged NGO's, governments, and international IGO's. Most of the remaining sessions will be devoted to topics chosen for policy papers. Student responsibilities are described in the course Assignment Sheet. Readings TBA. Possible topics include:

Plans for the Course, Nov 13-Dec 11

General Plan.

In the first half of the course we considered many of the issues and debates that have shaped the (international) politics of human rights.

From Nov 13-December 11, we will generally be focusing on policy relevant skills and issues that surround topics you have chosen for your policy projects. Beginning Nov 15, most classes will be student-led, with responsibilities allocated to teams of students who are working on projects related to the issues. Students should plan to introduce the topic with a 10-20 minute presentation and prepare for a class discussion. (This is not a presentation on your project—it is a presentation on the broader human rights issue associated with your project. Your project work should help you with examples—and the discussion in class should help you with your projects.) **For each class there will be 2-3 manageable readings, for all members of the class.** In most cases I will choose one, and students leading discussion are responsible for choosing other readings along the lines noted for each class period.

Every group's choice of readings is due on **Nov. 13** – irrespective of the date of your class presentation. Why? Because the readings are intended to provide conceptual underpinnings for your projects. If you wait until the time of a class presentation to choose them, you risk jeopardizing the quality of your policy project.

Student-led class sessions.

Student discussion leaders should aim to help the class engage with the intellectual and conceptual debates that surround an issue. In some cases that may be as basic a question as whether some social injustice should or should not be considered a violation of “rights.” In other cases, it may involve an analysis or exploration of power relations, or consideration of strategic choices about how effective action might be undertaken. You have considerable freedom in planning your session. Please try to challenge us!

Readings, Nov 13-Dec 11.

Readings for the second half of the course will all be available through the ctools site. Each group should forward pdf files or url's for their chosen readings by Nov. 13. (More on this as the semester progresses.)

Assignment Sheet – PubPol 675, Fall 2007 (Waltz)

Grades for this course depend heavily on the following written assignments. Each of the 4 short assignments is worth 10% of your final grade. The policy paper is worth 55%, and class participation counts for 5%.

Assignment Due Dates

Please note that most assignments are NOT due on a class day. In setting due dates, I have been mindful of the purpose of the assignment (consolidate learning, or prepare for class); students' need for flexibility to manage assignments from all their various classes; instructor need to review assignments before class; and instructor time to grade and return papers.

For this class, most assignments are due at "COB" (close of business) on a specified day. In the professional world, COB generally means 5 PM. For this class I don't need to cut things off that early -- "COB" in this context can mean anytime before 7 AM the next morning! Please don't go beyond that limit.

All assignments for this course should be submitted to Ctools.
(Dues dates on the ctools assignment tab will be set to reflect the 7AM COB cut off.)

Assignment #1. Human Rights and International Law. Develop a one-page handout on human rights and international law. This can be a general purpose document, or you can tailor it to an imaginary situation. (For example, you might imagine yourself as one member of a small development NGO concerned about, say, Haiti, and you turn out to be the best resource at hand on international law and human rights. You develop this handout for your colleagues. Etc. If you have a specific audience in mind, please attach a cover page with a brief description of the scenario.) Please pay attention to formatting. A straight "essay format" is acceptable, but probably will not earn the highest grade.

Post to Ctools by COB Sunday, Sept. 30. [Note: this assignment "tests" your comprehension of materials reviewed in class on Sept 25-27. It is to your advantage to complete the paper soon after class, but on this particular assignment, I can grant a week's extension without inconvenience. Just let me know.]

Assignment #2. Boomerang Pattern. Review the boomerang diagram on page 13 of Keck and Sikkink. Use examples from Brysk to illustrate any three elements in the diagram (your choice –but please, only three!) Aim for 1 page, single space (with breaks between paragraphs)
Due October 4 (bring to class, for in-class discussion. Sorry, cannot accept late papers)

Assignment #3. East Timor FAQ. This assignment is intended to help the whole class develop an understanding of the international human rights regime—which encompasses the UN, member states, and NGO's. Students will be randomly assigned to one of 5 groups—UNSC and GA; ECOSOC and HR Commission; Sub-Commission, Working Groups, and Thematic Mechanisms; UN senior staff (SG and UNHCHR); and NGO's (international and domestic). Working individually, students in each group will produce their own FAQ's on the role of their particular part of the human rights regime in the East Timor case, based on the case study materials. Each student should come up with between 5-10 questions, and the first 2 questions should be answered by the student. Remaining Q's should raise issues about the workings of the human rights regime. (I will then use these questions to develop readings and class topics for the following 2 class periods.) If you have never prepared a FAQ, see FAQ on FAQ's, under "resource tab" in ctools, and see next page for examples.

Post assignment to c-tools by COB, Wednesday Oct 17.

Example of an “answered” Q

- Q. To what extent was the General Assembly active in resolving the E Timor crisis?
A. The GA was (a key actor/irrelevant). Its principal effect was... (complete).

Example of an “unanswered Q”

- Q. To what extent is the General Assembly normally involved in human rights issues?
A. (blank)

Assignment #4. Rwanda. Prepare your own analysis comparing international response on East Timor and Rwanda. Use assigned materials – including Barnett and Powers. Paper should be 3-4 pages single spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs, footnoted with reference to texts. Careful formatting is always a good idea.
Post to Ctools by COB Oct 29 so that I may review before class and bring hard copy to class.

COURSE POLICY PROJECT

In this project, students will prepare either an internal policy paper or an external policy analysis on a current policy issue related to human rights. The project will have several components, and each of them is designed to help you build skills of analysis, refine your understanding of the policy process, and practice oral presentation.

Please pay careful attention to due dates. It is your responsibility to submit project materials on time, including updates about any changes you make in your plans as you go along.

1. Identify the general topic you want to work on. Either choose a topic from the list assembled by Prof. Waltz or propose a topic of your own. Submit to Ctools by COB on **Tuesday, September 18**. No changes in topics after September 25.

2. Develop a scenario for this assignment. Who do you work for, what is your position? What have you been asked to do, and in what context? The scenario must identify the policy question and who is interested in it (ie, who are you writing for—insiders to your organization, or outsiders, in the public?). It should point toward *either* an external policy analysis (culminating in recommendations for policy makers external to your organization) or an internal policy memo (offering alternative paths for your organization to pursue.) For example, you might write:

“I am the researcher on women’s rights at a major international human rights organization. I have been asked to prepare a background paper on trafficking in women in preparation for a decisions about whether the organization should develop (and invest in) a public campaign on this issue. I am thus writing an internal policy memo. It will be submitted to the senior management team of my organization, for discussion and decision.”

Initial scenario is due COB, Monday September 24, posted to Coursetools. Please feel free to discuss your ideas in advance of this date. I will review all the scenarios with an eye to feasibility and may require revisions before the scenario is approved. In addition, you may propose to change the scenario somewhat as you delve into the topic, through November 13. The approved scenario, though, is a sort of “contract,” and you are responsible for keeping me updated on any changes you want to make. (I will hold you accountable to the latest scenario description I have on hand, as of November 13.)

3. Backgrounder. To familiarize yourself with this topic, prepare an initial 1-2 page, tightly footnoted background paper. This will serve as an essential resource for your analysis. Feel free to consult on-line

sources, but include at least one academic source (from a journal or scholarly book) among your references. Include a “works consulted” list in lieu of a bibliography, and include complete bibliographic information, including full url’s and date visited for websites. Please use a standard bibliographic format – eg, Chicago style, MLA, etc.

Due COB Nov 9 (so that I can begin grading over the weekend).

4. Final paper. Depending on choices you have made above, you will be developing either an internal policy memo or an external policy briefing. In either case, your paper should include an introduction and a background analysis. An internal policy memo should end with a series of choices (with pro’s and con’s); the policy briefing should end with feasible, justified recommendations.

The final paper should range between 7-10 pages single spaced (11-12 font) with ample white space. If you are preparing an external policy briefing, there should also be an executive summary in 1-2 paragraphs. (Write this last! It is a *summary*.) Please do not include any lengthy appendices, etc—ie, include all the important info in your main paper.

First draft of your paper is due to ctools on COB Monday November 26. (Please submit a hard copy in class on Nov 27 as well. Extensions are possible for students making presentations on Nov. 27). Please expect to make substantial revisions, including additional research. The draft and final paper will be graded separately.

Final paper is due Monday, December 17, 5 PM in hard copy. *Please submit all papers associated with this project in a packet.*

5. Class presentations. Student-led classes will begin approximately November 15. Plans for these sessions will be developed after you have submitted information on topics of interest. Students working on similar topics (or different aspects of the same topic) will be asked to plan class sessions together. More information will be available on October 4.