Course Syllabus

Course Description
Taking the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and related international covenants as a point of departure, this course interrogates how civil, political, social and economic rights are constructed, co-opted and contested. How are human rights advanced and denied in the context of global politics and economics, the UN system, and international law? In doing so, the course foregrounds the praxis of global human rights regimes, critically examining disconnects between human rights in theory and practice, as well as instances when human rights doctrine tangibly abets social change.

Thematically, the course begins by critically analyzing the historical context that gave rise to the ‘Human Rights’ establishment; history of the UN, creation of the UDHR, the splitting of the Covenants, and the development of concurrent human rights treaties and instruments. Next, the course examines the ways in which these international human rights doctrines map to the local contexts of Nepal, Jordan, and Chile, as expressed through contemporary human rights struggles in each site. This embeddedness, in the localized experiences of human rights praxis in three different locales, affords fertile opportunity for comparative analysis illuminating the tensions, opportunities, hypocrisies, limitations, and attainments of international human rights norms and instruments. In order to ground this course in the local specificities of human rights in practice, this course is taught by Local Faculty members in each of the four program sites.

Course Objectives
- To familiarize students with the core tenets & instruments of the international human rights framework;
• To embed theoretical arguments and debates about human rights in the concrete historical, political, economic and social circumstances of the field sites;
• To examine how human rights regimes are constructed, endangered, co-opted, defended and extended around the world as well as in specific countries;
• To develop an understanding of the diverse theoretical perspectives that inform critical analyses of international human rights;
• To cultivate skills in analysis, assessment, communications and working collaboratively.

Course Methodology
Local Faculty members in each of the four IHP Human Rights program sites will teach this course. Each of our Local Faculty have unique backgrounds in the scholarship and practice of human rights in their locales. Local Faculty coordinate with each other, and the Program Director, to ensure that the course has ample opportunities for comparative analysis that tied together form the intellectual backbone of the course. Local Faculty identify and choose readings for their class sessions, give lectures and facilitate activities according to the theme of each session, and grade country specific written assignments due before the end of the country program in each site. The course is augmented by additional guest lectures, site visits, and field activities and is thereby wed to the experiential pedagogy of the program.

Learning Outcomes
Through participation in this course, students will be able to:
• Demonstrate familiarity with the key declarations, laws and organizations and other mechanisms that define human rights internationally and nationally;
• Construct cogent arguments with respect to the complex intersections of history, political economy, and human rights challenges;
• Compare the state of human rights violations and available protection/redress in target countries, contextualizing multiple historical and cultural factors;
• Critically engage with interdisciplinary materials on the emancipatory potential of human rights;
• Competently research, describe and analyze specific human rights issues in local and global contexts, mindful of political, social and economic factors.

Local Faculty Bios:

Dimitry Anselme
Local Faculty, NYC
Dimitry Anselme currently works as the Director of Program Staff Development at Facing History & Ourselves. Dimitry received his M.Ed in Education & Social Policy from Harvard University, and BA in International Development from Clark University. Prior to joining Facing History Dimitry served as principal of the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public High School in Boston MA for three years. Since 2007, Dimitry has been the Project Director for the Facing History-China Project, which brings educators from China annually to summer seminars studying Holocaust & Human Behavior at the Facing History and Ourselves headquarters in Boston. He also works to integrate specific historical moments of Chinese history within the larger work of the organization. Dimitry
has served as an advisor to Gay-Straight Alliances in schools, and for the Safe Schools program of the Massachusetts Department of Education.

**Madhurima Bhadra**  
**Local Faculty, Nepal**

Madhurima Bhadra come from a public health & human rights background. Her work experiences range from directing the Bhutanese Refugee Health Care project in Eastern Nepal to working as a consultant on women’s and adolescent health. As director of the refugee health care project, she worked closely with UNHCR, IOM and UNWFP. Her work was based in Damak so she could be close to the refugee camps. She enjoys teaching and interacting with students. She has a keen personal and professional interest in the women’s rights movement in Nepal and has been actively networking with organizations and professionals working for women’s issues. Madhu currently works as a Project Coordinator on disaster relief and health for DanChurchAid.

**Sara Ababneh**  
**Local Faculty, Jordan**

Sara Ababneh is an assistant professor and researcher at the Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan, the coordinator of the internship program and the coordinator of the Arab Barometer. She is also the academic coordinator for the AMIDEAST study abroad program in Jordan. Dr. Ababneh taught courses on Middle Eastern politics, gender and IR theories at the University of Jordan, Counseling International (CIEE) and at various colleges at the University of Oxford. In the summers of 2013 and 2014 Ababneh was the faculty host of the CIEE Interdisciplinary Faculty Development Seminar in which American professors visited Jordan to learn about the complex landscape of the struggle for gender justice. After receiving a BSc in Politics and Economic from Earlham College and an MScEcon in International Politics, at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Sara Ababneh obtained her DPhil in Politics and International Relations at St. Antony’s College, University of Oxford in 2009. She wrote her dissertation on female Islamists in Hamas in occupied Palestine and the Islamic Action Front in Jordan. Currently Dr. Ababneh is studying the popular Jordanian protest movement (*al birak al sha‘bi al urduni*), the Jordanian Personal Status Law reform in terms of gender and class and EU-Jordanian Relations.

**Ignacio Mujica Torres**  
**Local Faculty, Chile**

Ignacio Mujica Torres is a Chilean attorney specialized in human rights law and transitional justice. He studied law at the University of Chile, where he obtained his LL.B. After graduating *summa cum laude*, he worked as a researcher at the University of Chile’s Human Rights Center between 2008 and 2011. Ignacio also worked as an attorney for the Human Rights Program at Chilean Ministry of the Interior –the program in charge of pursuing criminal charges against former state officials for crimes against humanity perpetrated during the Chilean dictatorship. On 2012 he was awarded the Fulbright scholarship to pursue an LL.M. degree at Yale University. His studies at Yale focused on International Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law and International Criminal Law. Upon graduation, he was awarded the Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship by the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights at Yale Law School to work with Human Rights First. His work at Human Rights First was centered on fostering compliance with international law in U.S. courts, by intervening as *amicus curiae* in domestic litigation. Ignacio has taught classes in clinical courses in Chile, as well as postgraduate courses on human rights law imparted by the Human Rights Center at the University of Chile.
Course Requirements

Required readings will be available electronically by the launch of the program. Students are expected to complete the required readings before each class unit and to use them in fulfilling assignments. Students should explore local resources, such as newspapers, radio, and television, and take the initiative in seeking out other material.

Pre-Departure Assignment  
- Due August 25th  
10 Points

Nepal Written Assignment  
- Details attached at end of syllabus  
- Due September 28th  
30 Points

Jordan Written Assignment  
- Details attached at end of syllabus  
- Due November 2nd  
30 Points

Chile Written Assignment  
- Details attached at end of syllabus  
- Due November 30th  
30 Points

Course Organization and Required Reading

In addition to the required readings, each unit of the course will draw upon guest speakers, site visits and other activities. The order of the sessions may be rearranged depending upon the specific opportunities and activities offered in each country.

Course Links to Bookmark:

A working definition of human rights:

The UN Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights:

Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights:
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx

Human rights instruments by topic:
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/UniversalHumanRightsInstruments.aspx
I. New York City, USA

Session 1: Strong at the Broken Places: The Drafting of the UDHR, The UN & The Modern Human Rights Movement


Session 2: From Vision to Accountability: Establishing Covenants & Treaty Bodies


II. Nepal

Session 3: The Political Economy of Nepal


Session 4: Lhotsampas: Bhutanese Refugees in Nepal


Session 5: Women’s Rights in Nepal


III. Jordan

Session 6: Jordan: A Brief Introduction


Session 7: The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict from the Mandate to 1948

Balfour Declaration (1917) http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/balfour.asp

The Palestine Mandate http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/brwh1939.asp

““The Resolution of the General Syrian Congress at Damascus Proclaims Arab Sovereignty over Greater Syria, July 2, 1919,” in Khater, Sources: pp. 200-203


Watch Ziadah, Rafeef, ‘Anger’ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdPGOwWGQHo

See additional recommended reading on this topic at the end of the syllabus.

Session 8: Orientalism & Discourse


Foucault, Michael (1978), History of Sexuality 1, Penguin (p.81-102)

Chakrabarty, Dipesh (2007) Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference, Princeton Studies and Culture, Power, History (the introduction, chapter 1)
Session 9: At the Forefront of the Struggle for Gender Justice? The Case of the Jordanian Women’s Movement


IV. Chile

Session 10: Transitional Justice in Chile: From Impunity to Accountability


--Required Film: Watch ‘The Battle of Chile’, by Patricio Guzmán, (vol. 1 “Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie”). This film is available on YouTube with subtitles in English.

Session 11: The Inter-American Human Rights System—Achievements and Challenges in the Chilean case

Diego Garcia-Sayán, The Role of The Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the Americas, 19 U.C. Davis J. Int'l L. & Pol'y, 2012-2013, 103-111.


Press excerpts regarding the Norín Catrimán Case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

Session 12: Evaluating Human Rights Law and Its Impact


**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

It is useful for faculty and students to view final grades in this way. An “A” represents truly outstanding work, exemplifying rigorous analysis, superior insights, and precise presentation. A “B” signifies highly competent work that completes the assignment very well, with considerable thought, reasonable analytical results and an effective presentation. A “C” represents acceptable, work, satisfying the basic requirements, but lacking distinction, original analytical insights or organization. A “D” grade indicates poorly or partially completed work, reflecting a lack of initiative, inconsistent analytical conclusions and/or a disorganized presentation. Pluses and minuses for the four letter grades indicate better or poorer work. There is no “A+” grade.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-93%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-86%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-83%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-76%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73%</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>67-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Below Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-66%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>below 64</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expectations and Policies**

- **Show up prepared.** Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- **Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements.** This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- **Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer.** These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak….
- **Comply with academic integrity policies** (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- **Respect differences of opinion** (classmates’, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

**Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook** for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.
Foundations and Frameworks of Human Rights (FFHR)
Spring 2015
Nepal Assignment:

Course Evaluation
Class Participation  (20%)
Written Assignments  (80%)

Informed Preparation
Participation is understood as:
1) Active and thoughtful contribution to class discussions
2) The ability to integrate information from lectures and synthesize lived experiences and field visits, and your observations
3) You will not be graded on how many times you make a comment, but rather how thoughtful your contributions are.
4) Your ability to listen and respect your fellow students

Assignments

Please pick one of the two assignments mentioned below.

Assignment I: (combination of class on Political Economy & Women’s Rights Issues)
Inequality and deprivation are disproportionately widespread in Nepal. The democratic process has also been a bumpy ride. Women often bear the brunt of marginalization due to their gender and due to their socio-economic status. The pursuit of socio-economic development has been a challenge to the government in Nepal. Development has been further affected by the recent earthquake.

Please write a letter to your family describing your understanding of the political economy of Nepal and issues regarding women’s rights, speaking especially about the effects of the recent earthquake on the lives of the women in Nepal.

Put forward your description and experiences in less than 1500 words (not including references). You are welcome to use photographs to illustrate your points. Use the APA style for the bibliography. (30 points)

Assignment II
In your opinion what were some of the contributing factors to the exodus of the Lhotsampas from Bhutan? What challenges types of challenges can one expect from protracted refugee situations and what can be done to mitigate or minimize them?

Please provide your answers in no more than 1500 words. Use the APA style for in text citations and bibliography. (30 points)

I would like your assignments to show that you have understood the materials taught in class, that you have read the reading materials assigned, and that you are able to synthesize and demonstrate your understanding of the topic. Please do independent research beyond the assigned readings. You can always come to me if you have any questions or issues you would like to discuss.
You are to submit your assignment to me via email. My email ID is bhadra.madhumita@gmail.com. I will be providing you your grade and feedback on your assignment via email. Your assignment will be graded according to the full points allocated.

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

- Strength and effective development of arguments supporting your answer
- Clear analytical connections to human rights concepts we have studied
- Effective use of primary and secondary information
- Ability to skillfully synthesize information from sources
- Clarity and conciseness in communication

**Due Date:** September 28th 2015
Assignment Title: Reading and Self-Reflection Journal

Over the course of the four lectures the issue of voice has come up time and again. Who can speak? Who is being heard? Why can we not hear some voices but are able to hear others? What does this tell us about ourselves? More importantly, how is this related to hegemonic discourses and power structures? Where do we fit in in this power grid? How do we want to fit in? How can we use academia to change/reproduce dominant power structures?

We also discussed how establishment Human Rights discourse can often be complicit in silencing some voices and strengthening others. It is not only the outside world, however, in which some voices are louder than others, we as students, citizens, educators, aid workers, practitioners also relate more to some groups of people and sometimes find ourselves unable to understand or even hear others. In this assignment I want you to use the material we have covered to look inward. During your semester so far, which group of people, idea, or concept has been hardest for you to understand (hear)? How do you explain this difficulty based on your own upbringing, belief system, and socialization? How might this play itself out if you had to work in a project or with people who were related to this idea?

Address the questions raised above in a 1,500-2,500 word journal. This journal should include five sections (in addition to the bibliography): one section for each lecture and a conclusion. In this journal I would like you to reflect on one of the topics raised in each lectures and –at least– one of the readings you had to do for this lecture. Briefly (in one or two sentences) describe the author’s main argument or one of the author’s argument that you found especially intriguing. Relate this to the lecture and then discuss your reaction to the reading/lecture. Do you agree with the author? Why do you think you reacted this way? Have you ever encountered anything similar? Does your personal experience confirm or contradict what the author argues. Can you think of wider discourses which confirm/negate your own opinion? How might your reaction impact you as a future practitioner? You might also want to reflect on an event that happened outside class (in your host families for example), which touches upon one of the themes that we discussed in class.

Just as you dissect and analyze the literature before you I want you to brutally scrutinize your reactions, beliefs and self-perception as a result of the readings and your stay here. Open yourself up to the readings, not just on the level of your mind but also on the level of your soul and emotions. Have your ideas changed? Why? Why not? In a world in which human rights are deeply personal for many, how does your reaction to certain topics underlay your personal connection to them? What do your reactions or lack of reactions tell you about yourself and your relationship to the topic? Can you emotionally detach yourself? Should you? What is the role of emotions and passion in Human Rights work? If you find yourself unable to connect emotionally, think about what issues make you emotional. What is personal for you? How would working on something personal change your reaction to it?

Please feel free to think through and describe your emotions freely in this exercise. One of the main aims of this assignment is for you to work through your emotions. Don’t be afraid to address these emotions.
While this is not a diary, one of the main aims of the journal is to connect the reading to your personal life, both in your home country and in Jordan. The journal is thus a critical reflection both on the reading, but also on yourself in relation to the reading. Over the four journal entries please think centrally about your own limits of hearing (understanding). What have you learned about yourself through this trip, its lectures and activities? How does this impact who you are and how you might act as a practitioner?

The aim of the reading and self-reflection journal is twofold. On the one hand, it is an exercise in developing your critical understanding and analysis of the texts covered and fieldtrips attended. One the other hand, the journal aims to help you raise self-awareness of your subject position in relation to your reading and stay in Jordan. Thus this journal will help you develop the skills necessary to become a self-reflexive researcher and practitioner, in addition to someone who can use emotions and feelings and connect them to academia.

**Format**

The journal should include four separate entries (for each lecture and related activity) and a 500 word conclusion which ties together the theme that you develop over the four journal entries. Please make sure that you email me your four journal entries and the conclusion in one document. My email address is ababnehs22@yahoo.com

**Assessment Criteria**

Each paper should be 1,500—2,500 (including the 500 word conclusion) words, double spaced, use appropriate citation format, including a bibliography at the end. Please also make sure that all your pages are numbered and that you chose a title for your journal. The paper is worth 40% of your grade.

Assessment criteria include:
- Clear and well written argument.
- Clear analytical connections to theoretical concepts we have discussed in class.
- Ability to demonstrate understanding of the reading material and field visits.
- Connecting intellectual discussion to emotions and feelings and discussing these feelings self-reflectively.
- The use of proper citation when discussing the ideas of others (be they the authors you read, the lecturers you heard or your fellow students).
- Clarity and concise communication

**Due Date:** November 2\(^{nd}\) 2015
Foundations and Frameworks of Human Rights (FFHR)
Spring 2015
Chile Country Assignment (30 points)

During your course you have studied a number of human rights struggles in the different countries you visited. We began our classes in Chile by examining the fairly successful fight for accountability in the context of the country’s transition to democracy and the role that international human rights law and its institutions have played in it. We also studied the Inter-American Human Rights system as a regional oversight body that has contributed to tackle this and other human rights abuses.

For this assignment you will develop an essay comparing the Chilean transitional justice efforts and one other human rights conflict you have encountered during your semester. You are expected to examine if the types of grievances put forward in these two struggles are similar or not (and why). What kind of response do these two contexts require from the state? Has international human rights law proven to be a useful tool for addressing these issues? Is there one of the two conflicts where international oversight bodies are having a more positive impact and why? (If you believe international bodies might be having a negative impact, feel free to also state it so)

Your essay should be no more than 1,200 words. Remember to include bibliographic references to the assigned readings and to any other materials you deem necessary to support you answer. Please make sure to describe the human rights issue of your choosing in an adequate manner.

You should submit your essay to my email address (Ignacio.mujica@gmail.com) in 12-point font, double-spaced format.

Due Date: November 30th 2015
Recommended reading on Palestinian—Israeli Conflict from Professor Ababneh:


Walid Khalidi, Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians, 1876-1948, 1984: peruse the photographs in all five chapters. Try to incorporate the photographs as primary sources in your essay. (See pages 41, 49, 74, 78, 83-87, 97-113, 125, 131, 163-166, 189-191)


Alternative Tourism Group, Sabri, Giroud, Scheller-Doyle, Carol (trans) (2005), Palestine and the Palestinians: A Guidebook (Alternative Tourism Group). Read the historical section


Cleveland, William (2004) A History of the Modern Middle East (pp. 239-271)


The Nationalism Project [http://www.nationalismproject.org/index.htm](http://www.nationalismproject.org/index.htm)
