“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948

“To what extent do the institutions and languages of humanitarianism help provide a vocabulary to address the needs of populations at risk and under siege? In what ways do they undermine, sanitize, dehumanize or even further endanger the lives of those very human beings they are purportedly dedicated to helping?”

Apsel, *Humanism and Humanitarianism*

This course provides an introduction to the international system for the protection of human rights. Analysis of the modern human rights revolution includes international law and institutions such as the United Nations, work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and a range of justice mechanisms. In-class and student projects will focus on such human rights issues as state sovereignty and international norms, women’s rights and development, global slavery, internally displaced persons and justice. Case studies range from the Southern Cone to Sudan. Finally, the class will explore the complex challenges of humanitarianism, of doing good and not doing harm.


Sept. 13 Structures of Human Rights; What is the nature and status of the international human rights system? What are the implementation mechanisms and how effective are they? Are human rights universal? Read: Donnelly, chs. 3, 5 and 6; and *European Convention on Human Rights* (bring to class and be prepared to compare/contrast with UDHR). http://www.echr.coe.int/ and write up and bring to class one page information of interest on European Court web-site

Sept. 15 read: Jolly, etc. al. *UN Ideas that Changed the World*, 1-67.

Sept. 20  Dignity and Human Rights: read *Life & Times of Michael K*.

Sept. 22 read *Life & Times of Michael K*. 3-4 page essay on novel & museum due in class.


**Challenges of Humanitarianism: Do No Harm**

Sept. 29 read: Calhoun and Anderson on NGOs and Humanitarianism (Blackboard) read Donnelly, ch. 4 Domestic Politics of Human Rights  Unusual Act of Kindness Assignment

Oct. 4 NGO Student Group Reports and Essay

**Group Rights and Global Rights**

Oct. 6 Women’s rights as human rights, read: Abusharraf, Intro-79

Oct. 11 read: Abusharraf, What are gendered rituals? What do they signify? La Pietra Dialogues  Oct. 11 2 page write up on session attended


**Oct. 18 Midterm Exam**

Oct. 20 Bales, Global Slavery chs. 1-3

Oct. 25 Bales, Global Slavery chs. 4-6 Written Essay on Slavery

Oct. 26-Nov. 1 Break/No Classes


**Case Studies Cambodia, Iraq, Rwanda and Darfur**

Nov. 8 Cambodia, read: Power, ch. 6; Donnelly, ch. 6: Human Rights Foreign Policy. Bring in Article on Cambodia

Nov. 10 Iraq, read Power, ch. 8 and Donnelly, ch. 7 Tiananmen: compare/contrast US policy

Nov. 15 Rwanda, Power, ch. 10, Ian Martin Essay

Justice and Accountability: International Criminal Courts
Nov. 24  Drumbl ch 1-3 Extraordinary Crime and Ordinary Punishment; Conformity and Deviance

Nov. 29  Drumbl ch 4 and on Rwanda 68-99; 110-121; video  Drumbl 149-169 Quest for Purpose; ch. 7,8 & 14 From Law to Justice; Conclusions

Nov. 29  Sudan and Darfur: the Persistence of Human Wrongs, Apsel readings(Blackboard)


Dec. 6  Final Exam Essay in Class

Required Texts: Available at Paperback Exchange and on Reserve in Library.


Bales, Kevin, Global Slavery. Univ of Ca Press (e-book, NYU Bobst Library)


Jolly, Emmerij, and Weiss, eds. UN Ideas that Changed the World. Indiana Univ Press 2008

Power, Samantha, 'A Problem from Hell': America and the Age of Genocide, HarperPerennial


Additional Essays on Blackboard: Calhoun, Anderson, Martin and materials on Darfur.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation: All students are expected to attend class with readings done ahead of time and to bring the text, print-outs of Declarations, etc. as well as other work due to class. Class participation is an essential part of learning to critically analyze the texts and to foster a community of learning.

Attendance: Your final grade will be affected by absences or lateness. Grades will be minused after every three absences and two late arrivals will be the equivalent of one unexcused absence.
Grading will be as follows:

Class participation, group assignments       15%
Mid-Term          Oct. 18                  25%
Written Assignments 20%
Human Rights Notebook Dec. 1                                10%
In-Class Final Exam Essay  Dec. 6       30%

Classroom Learning Environment: Please do not bring technology to class (no laptops); that includes computers and cell phones. If a phone goes off or text messaging occurs during class, student will be asked to leave and will be counted as an absence.

Written Assignments: Please bring your written assignments to class as they will be used for class discussion. Papers not handed in on the date due will be minused for each late day. NYU has strict policies on plagiarism; please consult your NYU handbook for further information. Any paper without citations or that copies phrases from another writer including internet sources will receive an F. Footnote all direct and indirect sources. Please do not email papers. Students will receive additional guidelines on essays. Grammar counts as does cogency of argument. Written assignments must be typed, double-spaced in black ink.

Office hours are Monday & Wednesday 3:30-4:30 or by appointment. Please e-mail ahead at jaa5@nyu.edu to make an appointment to meet.