

Statement for the Piedmont Project

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I came to the Piedmont Project with the goal of incorporating a module on climate change refugees into my course on Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Rights. This course is cross-listed across several units of Emory University, namely the Rollins School of Public Health, the Candler School of Theology, the Laney Graduate School and the School of Law. The course is the core requirement for the graduate certificate in human rights. It is co-taught in rotation by three instructors: myself (public health), David Davis (political science) and Edward Queen (Ethics Center). Edward Queen previously participated in the Piedmont Project and incorporated some elements of sustainability into this course. I believe that by adding a specific unit on climate change refugees I have further strengthened the sustainability focus of the course. Now one third of course sessions are directly related to sustainability issues. These sessions are focused on the impacts of labor on the environment, population displacement due to climate change and the natural resource of water.

In framing the specific conversation related to climate change refugees I intend to focus on the debate on the following contentious questions:

- How are populations who migrate as a result of climate change similar to or different from existing classes of refugees?
- What, if any modifications to human rights law and mechanisms are needed to address the needs of populations displaced as a result of climate change?
- How can scientists contribute to documentation of the linkages between climate change and the movement of populations?

Central to these questions is the issue of whether climate change refugees actually exist. It is challenging to directly prove the relationship between climate change and populations movements—even in the case of natural disasters. The question then becomes are climate change refugees actually refugees or are they simply migrants or displaced persons. This question is akin to the historical debate over economic refugees. I plan to explore this conversation in the classroom drawing on lessons from the economic refugee debates of the past.

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Human Rights
Emory University
Law 819/Pols 585/GH 526/ES 585

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Introduction

This graduate seminar examines the theory and practice of global human rights from an interdisciplinary perspective. In addition to issues of the history, origins and legitimacy of universal human rights, the seminar will discuss standards, institutions and processes of implementation accounting for roughly one half of the course content. The remainder of course sessions will also examine human rights across a variety of substantive areas, including; conflict, development, globalization, climate change, social welfare, and rights of women, religious, racial and ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups. Roughly one third of the class is dedicated the issue of sustainability. We utilize a sustainability lens to examine the impacts of labor on the environment, population displacement due to climate change and the natural resource of water as human rights issues.

Evaluation will be based on seminar participation, discussion leadership, a public scholarship opinion piece, a literature review and major research paper. Students will also make brief video presentations of their final papers.

Goals

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Understand the interdisciplinary nature of human rights;
- Appreciate conceptions of human rights across disciplines;
- Evaluate human rights policies and practices across a variety of disciplines;
- Describe some of the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in human rights; and
- Understand human rights methods and approaches

Course Materials

All course materials are either available on the class's Blackboard site, through the link provided on the syllabus, or will be e-mailed to the students directly.

Grading

Grades will be determined in the following manner:

- A. Class Participation/Discussion Leadership (20%)
- B. Public scholarship opinion piece (30%)
 - First draft (15%)
 - Final version (15%)
- C. Major Project (50%)
 - Literature Review (20%)
 - Final Version (20%)
 - Presentation (10%)

A. Class Participation & Discussion Leadership

The class participation grade will be based on attendance and productive participation in discussion. Students are expected to attend each class session and come prepared to discuss the weekly readings and with questions about content. Observance of religious holidays will be considered an excused absence. Two unexcused absences per semester are permitted; additional absences will affect your grade.

In addition, once during the semester each of you will serve as a discussion leader for a specific article assigned by the instructors. It will be your responsibility to lead discussion of the article. It may prove useful to address some of the following questions: What are the contributions of the article? How the article related to the broad themes of the class and/or the other readings assigned? What are the shortcomings or weakness of the article?

B. Public Scholarship/Thought Leadership Opinion

Students are required to write a short (850 word) opinion piece on a topic of interest to them. Instruction on constructing a public scholarship piece will be provided in class. A draft of the public scholarship opinion piece will be due by the third class. We encourage deeper exploration of the opinion topic via the major project.

C. Major Project

A major portion of your grade will be determined by your major project. As a part of your major project you will submit a final version of your earlier opinion piece which will be informed by instructor feedback on your first draft, the content of class discussions and your major project research. A target publications should be identified and we encourage submission of final drafts for publication in popular press.

We envision that your major project will take one of four primary forms (see special requirement for law students below), although we are flexible and willing to consider alternative projects. You will need to get your project approved by the instructor no later than the fourth class, to allow you maximum time for preparation and consultation with instructors, etc. We encourage the submission of final projects for publication and will assist in guiding you

through this process if you are interested in publishing your scholarly work for inclusion in the academic literature.

First, you can design and (time and data permitting) conduct original research on some facet of human rights. Original research generally involves conducting interviews, administering and analyzing surveys, archival/textual analysis, analysis of secondary data, and/or other types of statistical studies. You will need to develop a research question and a set of testable hypotheses that will be set within the context of the existing scholarly debate. You will then propose a research strategy for collecting and examining empirical evidence to assess the validity of the hypotheses. You will need to complete the research design portion of the project and present a tentative analysis of the project. The final version of the project will look quite similar to an academic article/manuscript.

Second, you can design an advocacy/investigation project. A project in this area might include some or all of the following steps: articulate a human rights problem and identify the nature and extent of violations, (e.g., a lack of awareness of individuals of their rights, or a set of biased or discriminatory policies), identify goals, develop alternative strategies for addressing the problem, choose the best strategy, and lay out a plan of action for achieving your goals. This project can be undertaken in conjunction with an actual HR organization (for instance in the Atlanta area you could work with an organization like The Carter Center, Amnesty International, the Atlanta Asylum Network, the IRC, or the Southern Center for Human Rights) or you can design the program for a hypothetical NGO or government agency.

Third, you can conduct a descriptive research project in which you examine some aspect of human rights in greater detail. Projects in this area might include: surveying in detail debates about the nature of specific rights across disciplines or within a discipline over time, examining the philosophical origins and emergence of sets of rights in different disciplines, a detailed comparison of the strategies of several different HR organizations in their advocacy campaigns or investigations, or any of a number of other projects.

Fourth, Students may opt for legal analysis of international human rights law and institutions.

With the exception of law students taking this for writing seminar, any of the options listed above may be selected. If you have any concerns about this, or need further clarification, please contact either instructor.

For Law Students:

“Every student taking a seminar is required to research a topic in depth, to submit drafts of the paper to the faculty member for revision and to produce a substantial paper on the topic. A minimum grade of "C" is required in a seminar in order to satisfy the writing requirement. Attendance and participation in the seminar is required.”

“The deadline for all seminar papers is as follows: SUBSTANTIAL DRAFT DUE NO LATER THAN THE LAST DAY OF CLASSES. FINAL PAPER DUE NO LATER THAN TWO WEEKS

AFTER THE LAST DAY OF EXAMS FOR NON-GRADUATING STUDENTS. Graduating students should note that final papers are due no later than the last day of classes.”

“CONTENT OF THE PAPER - Every paper must demonstrate the following:

Complete and thorough research of the topic with appropriate and accurate citation to sources used. Research must include reference to (a) primary sources such as case and statutory authority, and (b) secondary materials including but not limited to legislative history materials, law review articles and other works of legal scholarship and non-legal materials where appropriate;

- Thorough analysis of the researched materials consistent with the logical development of an overall premise or theme;
Demonstration of original analysis including identification of unresolved issues and suggestions for their resolution, conclusions based upon the analysis of the sources and suggestions for likely future developments where appropriate;
- Clear, well organized discussion of the topic with due regard to the fundamentals of good expository writing including conformance with grammatical rules, accurate spelling and punctuation and proper sentence and paragraph structure.

MECHANICAL REQUIREMENTS

Papers must be a minimum of 30 pages in length, exclusive of footnotes and bibliography. Papers must be typed double-spaced on 8 ½ x 11" paper with one-inch margins, and font no larger than 12 points.

Footnotes must conform to the rules of citation found in the Uniform System of Citation. Footnotes must be attached to the end of the paper.

A bibliography of sources must be attached to the paper.”

Regardless of the form your project

Because of the relatively large size of the class, we are going to try something new. We want each of you to post a 10 minute video presentation about your final project. You will need to post your video by the penultimate class. All students will need to view and post comments about at least three other video presentations. The presentation does not assume a finished product. In fact, students are encouraged to use the comments on and questions about their presentation as a way to improve their final paper. We will discuss this in greater detail as the due date approaches.

The final version of the major paper/project will be due on **December 10** (Human Rights Day) with the exception of law seminar students.

Student Conduct:

At all times students shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the norms of Emory College, or their appropriate professional or graduate division, and with their applicable

professional standards. Students will be expected to follow all formal university policies. Additionally, by submitting individual work for evaluation by the professors, students assert that the work is their own. Neither plagiarism nor dishonesty will be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the standards of the appropriate division of the University. With this publication students are on notice, both actual and constructive, that all policies of the University apply to every component of this seminar, including but not limited to those relating to academic misconduct.

Emory College

<http://www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/students/honor.html>

School of Law

http://www.law.emory.edu/cms/site/fileadmin/current_students/conduct-code.pdf

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

http://www.emory.edu/GSOAS/current/student_handbook/honor_code/

Candler School of Theology

<http://www.candler.emory.edu/admissions/pdfs/candler-catalog-2011-2012.pdf>

Rollins School of Public Health

http://www.sph.emory.edu/enrollment_conductcode.php

Course Topics, Schedule, and Readings (Subject to change with appropriate notice.)

Class 1 – Introduction to the Course

Topics to be addressed:

1. Introduction to the Course

- Content
- Expectations
- Requirements

2. Introduction to Human Rights.

3. What are the major HR challenges today?

4. How might different disciplines address human rights issues and challenges?

Readings:

“The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b1udhr.htm>

“Human Rights.” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights-human>

Class 2 —The Philosophy of HR and Thought Leadership

1. Where do notions of human rights come from?
2. What philosophical traditions does HR draw on?
3. Are human rights universal?
4. Thought Leadership for human rights

Readings:

Jerome J. Shestack, "The Philosophical Foundations of Human Rights," *Human Rights Quarterly* 20 (May 1998): 200-234. **Just read through page 215**

Amartya Sen, "Human Rights and Asian Values." Sixteenth Morgenthau Memorial Lecture on Ethics and Foreign Policy. Carnegie Council on Ethics and Foreign Affairs. On Blackboard site

George Weigel, "Are Human Rights Still Universal." On Blackboard site.

Class 3 —Historical Evolution of Human Rights. Treaties and the Law

Topics to be addressed:

1. How have human rights understandings evolved over the last 60 years?
2. Currently what are some of the most pressing and emerging HR issues?

Readings:

Buergenthal, Thomas. *The Concept of Human Rights: International human rights in an historical perspective.*

ICCPR <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/b3ccpr.htm>

ICESCR <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/b2esc.htm>

CEDAW <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/e1cedaw.htm>

Convention on Rights of the Child <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/k2crc.htm>

CERD <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/d1cerd.htm>

Additional Human Rights documents by topic locatable here:

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instreetree/ainstlsa2.html>

Class 4 — Implementation I—NGOs, Domestic law, and Politics

Topics to be addressed:

1. Who is responsible for implementing HR?
2. What factors encourage or discourage states from respecting and protecting HR?
3. What roles do domestic actors play in the implementation of human rights?

Readings:

Jeffrey K. Staton and Will H. Moore. 2011. "Judicial Power in Domestic and International Politics." *International Organization*, 65: 553-587

Linda C. Keith, C. Neal Tate and Steven C. Poe. 2009. "Is the Law a Mere Parchment Barrier to Human Rights Abuse?" *Journal of Politics* (April 2009) 71(2):644-660. (read through the literature review and then skim the findings.

Thomas Risse and Kathryn Sikkink, "The Socialization of International Human Rights Norms into Domestic Practices: Introduction," in Thomas Risse, Stephen Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds., *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 1-39.

Class 5 —Implementation II—Regional Mechanisms, and the U.N.

Topics to be addressed:

1. What role can and should international actors play in HR implementation?
2. What role do regional mechanisms play in the implementation of HR?

Readings:

Philip Alston "Assessing the UN Human Rights Regime" (just read through page 12)

David Forsythe. 2006. "Chapter 5: Regional Application of Human Rights Norms" in *Human Rights in International Relations*. Cambridge University Press.

Class 6 — Health and Human Rights

Topics to be addressed:

1. How is health understood to be a human right?
2. What is the relationship between public health and human rights? Where do they converge? Conflict?
3. How does medical treatment and research serve or impinge on human rights?
4. What role should the health fields play in the furtherance of human rights?
5. Where have and do they fail in advancing human rights?

Readings:

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Factsheet 31: The Right to Health.

Committee on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights. "General Comment 14 The Right To The Highest Attainable Standard Of Health.

Asha George, Mickey Chopra, Daniel Seymour, Paolo Marchi. "Making Rights More Relevant for Health Professionals" *The Lancet*, Volume 375, Issue 9728, 22 May 2010-28 May 2010, Pages 1764-1765.

Paul Hunt, "Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health." *The Lancet*, Volume 370, Issue 9585, 4 August 2007-10 August 2007, Pages 369-371.

Amartya Sen, "Why and How is Health a Human Right?" *The Lancet*, Volume 372, Issue 9655, 13 December 2008-19 December 2008, Page 2010.

World Medical Association, "Declaration of Helsinki."
<http://www.wma.net/en/30publications/10policies/b3/>

Class 7 — International Humanitarian Law

Guest Lecturer, Professor Laurie Blank, Director, International Humanitarian Law Clinic, Emory Law School.

Topics to be addressed:

1. What is International Humanitarian Law/the Law of Armed Conflict?
2. How and to whom is it applied and how is it enforced?
3. What is its relationship to human rights law?

Readings:

International Humanitarian Law <http://www.icrc.org/eng/ihl>

Class 8 — Globalization and Human Rights: Labor, the Environment and NGOs

Guest Lecturer, Professor Wes Longhoffer, GSB, Emory

Topics to be addressed:

1. What is the relationship between labor rights and human rights?
2. How and under what conditions does the scarcity or abundance of natural resources give rise to situations or regimes that are violative of human rights?
3. How does the control of resources support and fund human rights violation?
4. What role do NGOs play in the promoting human rights possible responses to such situations?

Readings:

Locke, Richard, Matthew Amengual and Akshay Mangla. 2009. "Virtue out of Necessity? Compliance, Commitment, and the Improvement of Labor Conditions in Global Supply Chains." *Politics and Society* 37: 319-351.

Hsiang, S. M., Burke, M., Miguel, E. (2013) "Quantifying the Influence of Climate Change on Human Conflict." *Science*, 1-21.

<https://www.sciencemag.org/content/341/6151/1235367.full>

“Mission 2016: The Future of Strategic Natural Resources: Human Rights & Developing Countries.”

<http://web.mit.edu/12.000/www/m2016/finalwebsite/problems/humanrights.html>

Class 9 — War, Disasters, and refugees

Guest lecturer—Basia Tomczyk, Health Scientist, CDC Center for Global Health.

Topics to be addressed:

1. What is a refugee? An asylum seeker?
2. What status do they have under international human rights law?

Readings:

“Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees.”

<http://www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10.html>

Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. Commentary - Art. 44. Part III : Status and treatment of protected persons #Section II : Aliens in the territory of a party to the conflict--Refugees
<http://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Comment.xsp?key=refugees&action=openDocument&documentId=ECCFBF83D7C4D815C12563CD0042C1E9>

“Lifeline to ‘Climate Refugees’.” <http://www.irinnews.org/report/97862/lifeline-to-climate-refugees%20>

“Climate Refugees Suffer in Obscurity.”

<http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2013/11/21/after-typhoon-haiyan-international-law-needs-to-acknowledge-climate-refugees>

Class 10 — Climate change and population displacement

Topics to be addressed:

1. What role do war, natural disasters, and climate change produce in creating refugees?

Readings:

Kelly CP, Mohtadi S, Cane MA, Seager R and Kushnir Y. Climate change in the Fertile Crescent and implications of the recent Syrian drought. PNAS 112 (11) 3241-3246

Biermann F and Boas I. [Protecting Climate Refugees: The case for a global protocol.](#) Environment magazine 50(6) 8-17.

[Global Report of Internal Displacement](#) (pages 1-24)

Global Migration Data Analysis Centre. [Data on environmental migration: How much do we know?](#)

Recommended: United Nations General Assembly. [In safety and dignity: addressing large movements of refugees and migrants.](#) A/70/59

Class 11— Corporations, Water and Human Rights

Guest lecturer— Brent Wilton, Director, Global Workplace Rights, Coca-Cola Company.

Guest lecturer—Christine Moe, Professor, Director, Center for Global Safe Water

Topics to be addressed:

1. When and under what conditions do or should corporations bear responsibility for human rights abuses committed by suppliers or contractors?
2. What roles can and do corporations play in furthering human rights?

Readings:

Review *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework* and other materials viewable at: <http://www.business-humanrights.org/SpecialRepPortal/Home/Protect-Respect-Remedy-Framework/GuidingPrinciples>

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque. Sustainability and non-retrogression in the realisation of the rights to water and sanitation. Available at http://www.zaragoza.es/ciudad/medioambiente/onu/en/detallePer_Onu?id=735

Class 12 —Religious, Ethnic, and Linguistic Minorities

1. What is the relationship between religion and human rights?
2. How is religion viewed in human rights law?
3. What are human rights of ethnic and linguistic minorities?

Readings:

Abdullahi An'Naim. "[The Interdependence of Religion, Secularism, and Human Rights](#)".

Hilary Charlesworth. "The Challenges of Human Rights Law for Religious Traditions"

[Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.](#)

[Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities.](#)

[Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, 2006](#)

Class 13 -- Enforcement and Adjudication

Topics to be addressed:

1. What mechanisms exist at the domestic, regional, and international levels to enforce or adjudicate HR obligations?
2. Why are states hesitant to create strong enforcement mechanisms?
3. What role should HR considerations play in a state's foreign policy?
4. How do the Ad Hoc and Permanent tribunals function?
5. When should states/the international community intervene with force to stop human rights abuses?

Readings:

Terry Collingsworth. 2002. "The Key Human Rights Challenge: Developing Enforcement Mechanisms" Harvard Human Rights Journal 15: 183-205.

Melissa Nobles. 2010. "The Prosecution of Human Rights Violations" Annual Review of Political Science. 2010. 13:165

Statute of the International Community Court.

<http://untreaty.un.org/cod/icc/statute/romefra.htm>

Focus on Preamble and Parts 1-3.

Read the summary of the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. 2001. "[The Responsibility to Protect](#)"

Website of the International Criminal Court <http://www.icc-cpi.int/Menus/ICC?lan=en-GB>

Website of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

<http://liveunictr.altmansolutions.com/>

Website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

<http://www.icty.org/>

Class 14 — Trip to National Center for Civil and Human Rights