ID 381 The Institute on Human Rights and Capacity Building in East Africa

6 credits
Arusha, Tanzania
Instructors: Dr. Jennifer Riggan, Alex Otieno

Course Description:
The Institute on Human Rights and Capacity Building in East Africa offers students a unique learning experience by working directly with international organizations and professionals in East Africa. This four week, six credit undergraduate symposium examines capacity building and human rights in East Africa by exploring legal and development approaches to addressing human rights issues. Central to this exploration is the question of what constitutes human rights. The right to safety and security? The right to food, shelter, education and health? The right to development? Furthermore, we will explore the relationship between these rights and special consideration needed for particular groups such as women, children and indigenous populations. In order to explore a variety of approaches to addressing human rights, students will meet with representatives from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the East African Law Society, Heifer International, and representatives of other organizations. Students will participate in field trips to a number of projects in the Arusha area.

Goals and objectives:
The overarching goals of the course are for students to understand the integral relationship between poverty alleviation, development and human rights and to begin to think about how to develop the capacity of organizations working to support this relationship. Unlike a classroom based course in which students learn “about” issues related to human rights and capacity building, students will learn not only from readings and lectures but will be required to actively reflect on everything they are seeing, hearing and experiencing in and out of the classroom in order to develop a more sophisticated understanding of the challenges and potential of efforts geared towards promoting universal human rights. With this goal in mind, the following objectives will be met during the course of the symposium.

- Students will develop cross-cultural communication skills to enable them to learn from their experiences in Arusha (this includes basic language skills, reflection on experiences, and ongoing deepening of students understanding of what they are experiencing and learning.)
- Students will develop a foundational knowledge about human rights (particularly definitions of human rights as outlined in the UN charter), violations of human rights, approaches to addressing human rights violations, and approaches to promoting human rights.
- Students will understand what the the goals of various organizations—what they were set up to do, what their approach to human rights is and their effectiveness.
- Students will understand linkages between development, poverty and human rights.
• Students will understand the components of ‘capacity building’ and will begin to think about what is needed for organizations to develop the capacity to address human rights issues.
• Students will develop basic evaluation planning skills and will apply these skills in their final projects.

Structure of the course.
Students will meet at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution four and a half days a week. A typical day will utilize the following schedule, although the schedule will vary on days when there are field trips or additional speakers. Weekend trips are also scheduled on some weekends.

**AM**
• A meeting with course instructors to debrief and reflect on the previous day’s topic. Course instructors will also utilize this time to discuss readings or provide background information to prepare students for the day’s events.
• Morning speaker

**PM**
• Lunch break.
• Afternoon speaker or debriefing with instructors.

**Topic: General introduction**
This week students will be provided with an orientation to Arusha, will develop basic language skills and will engage in cross cultural interactions and guided reflections on these experiences.

**Activities:**
• Introduction to the Nyerere Centre and the course.
• Arusha orientation with Global Service Corps’ cultural ambassador program.
• Language classes.
• Field trip to Ilkorot and orientation with Donna Dugan.
• Reflection exercises.

**Unit 1**

**Topic: Introduction to Human Rights and Capacity Building.**
Students will gain a concrete understanding of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the various types of rights (the right to health, the right to education, women’s rights, children’s rights, indigenous populations’ rights) and strategies to achieve universal human rights. In this introductory unit we will focus on the indivisibility of rights in order to understand the relationship between human rights and development.

**Readings:**
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
Convention on the Rights of the Child
Convention on Civil and Political Rights
Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights


Activities:

- Lecture and discussion on readings on types of human rights, strategies to achieve universal human rights, and the indivisibility of rights.
- Reflections on cross cultural experiences during previous weeks activities and students emerging assumptions about development and human rights.

Unit 2

Topic: Legal Aspects of Human Rights.

Students will build on what they learned in the previous week about the universal declaration and will look this week at how human rights is addressed from the legal standpoint. Students will develop an understanding of the legal mechanisms present to address human rights violations and prevent future human rights violations in East Africa. Central questions raised will be: what institutional capacity is needed to address/prevent human rights violations? What are the challenges to building this capacity? How and why are development efforts central to building the capacity to address and prevent rights violations? How is the question of capacity addressed by these organizations? (What do these types of organizations have the capacity to do? What do they lack the capacity to do?) In what ways do these organizations address or not address the indivisibility of human rights?

Readings:


UN Convention on Genocide


Activities:
- Background information on the Rwandan genocide and the ICTR.
- Speakers from and tour of ICTR.
- ICTR exhibit at the centre (ongoing).
- Reception with representatives of the ICTR.
- Background on the East African Law Society.
- Guest speakers from the East African Law Society.

Unit 3
Students will continue to explore the question of what kinds of capacity are needed in order to promote various kinds of rights—financial capacity, organizational capacity, cultural capacity, political capacity, etc. Why should development be considered a human right? How is an approach to human rights that focuses on development different from the legal approach to human rights? How do the approaches complement each other? What kinds of capacity are needed for effective development?

Readings:

Globalization

Education
ICESCR, Articles 13, 14; ICCPR, Article 18(4); CRC, Articles 28,29; CEDAW, Article 10; UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education;

Human Rights Watch, Failing our Children: Barriers to the Right to Education
(HRW, New York: 2005), Part II, School Fees, pp 6-12.


UN Committee on ESC Rights, General Comments Nos. 11 and 13,

**Institutions and systems**


**Gender (including health)**


Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women


General Comment 16 of CESCR – on article 3: the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights (2005)

General Recommendation 24 of CEDAW - on women and health (1999)

ICESCR, articles 2(3) and 3


Development


Approaches to Human Rights


UN Human Rights Instruments


UDHR Article 27; ICESCR Article 15; ICCPR Art 27; CEDAW Art. 13 (c) CERD Art. 5 (c) African Charter Art 22; San Salvador Protocol Art. 14; Convention on the Rights of the Child Art 31


Declaration on the Right to Development, GA Res. 41/128, 4 December 1986
CESCR, General Comment 2 on International Technical Assistance Measures (1990);

General Comment 9 (1998) of CESCR – on the domestic application of the Covenant

CESCR General Comment 14- right to health

CESCR General Comment 15 – on the right to water (2003)

**Capacity building**

Chandler, Susan (2003). Writing Proposals for Capacity Building. (needs permission for use)


**Activities:**
- Lectures, discussions and readings on capacity building and development.
- Introduction of final project.
- Heifer International Program on sustainable farming & capacity building.
- Field trip to Terrawatu education and conservation project.
- Workshop on evaluation planning with Erwin Kinsey.
- Field trip to Miracle Corners.
- Discussions of different kinds of capacity that different types of organizations lack and can contribute.
- Reflection through on experiences.

**Unit 4**
**Topic: Final Projects and Closing Discussions/ Celebrations**

Activity:
Students will work in groups to deepen their understanding of a project currently in the process of being implemented by an organization that we have visited. Based on what students have learned about the organization as well as a limited amount of additional research students will do the following as part of their project:

- Understand the overarching goals and objectives of the organization and the project.
- Compare the overarching goals with what we witnessed on our visit to the organization.
- Reflect on the assets of the organization as well as the capacity they lack.
• Understand the approach to human rights that the organization adopts.
• Examine any available outcomes of the project.
• Develop an evaluation plan that students would use in order to fully assess the assets and capacity of the organization.
• Think of ways in which students can enhance the capacity of the organization.

Students will received detailed guidelines of their final projects and will select an organization to focus on at the end of week two. They will have two afternoons to conduct additional research and arrange presentations. Presentations and closing ceremonies will be held at program’s conclusion.

Course Requirements:
Reflexive Journal: (30%). Students are required to keep a daily, ongoing log of observations, experiences, and reflections on their observations and experiences. Instructors will provide questions and topic for reflection throughout the course. At times, instructors will reflect on students’ journals and/or students will be required to reflect on each others reflections.

Final Project: (30%). Students will work in groups to prepare a presentation on one of the organizations we visited during the course. Details will follow.

Written summary of final project: (10%). Each student is expected to write a 3 page essay summarizing their final project.

Attendance, participation, preparation: (30%). Students are expected to attend all required activities, to come to activities prepared having done readings and reflective assignments. All course activities, trips, speakers and discussions are required. Any unexcused absence will result in a reduction in the students’ grade.