Human Rights Advocacy
CONF 399 – 002 & CONF 695 - 004
The School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution
George Mason University
Douglas Irvin-Erickson  dirviner@gmu.edu
Time: 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm    MWF
Arlington: Founders Hall 320
May 21, 2018 - Jun 23, 2018

This seminar considers major issues in contemporary international human rights advocacy. Students will gain an understanding of the history of the human rights movement, and contemporary human rights standards and their implementation and enforcement through international, regional, and national institutions and by non-governmental organizations. The seminar will evaluate human rights advocacy tools and strategies applied in current political and social contexts and through case studies. We will examine the role of institutions and non-governmental organizations in upholding, advocating or failing to uphold international human rights standards. Topics will include the challenges and opportunities presented to human rights advocates by: global social movements and contentious activism campaigns; international human rights and humanitarian law; and the challenge of meeting economic and social rights in free-market economies and developing countries.

Reading List:
Week 1 – Overviews
May 21, 23
Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*

May 25
Micheline Ishay, *The History of Human Rights*

Week 2 – History & Movements
May 28, May 30
Micheline Ishay, *The History of Human Rights*

May 30, June 1
Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*

Week 3 – Social Movements & The Law
June 4, 6
Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*

June 6, 8
Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights*

Week 4 – Civil Society and Civilians
June 11, 13
Alison Brysk, *Human Rights and Private Wrongs*

June 13, 15
Thomas W. Smith, *Human Rights and War Through Civilian Eyes*

Week 5 – The Police and Critiques
June 18, 20
Rachel Wahl, *Just Violence: Human Rights in the Eyes of the Police*

June 20, 22
William Easterly, *The Tyranny of Experts: Economists, Dictators, and the Forgotten Rights of the Poor*
Writing Assignments and due dates:
Each student picks a different book from below. Only 1 student per book. Each student joins a group of 3 or 4, and works in that group all semester. Undergraduate papers must focus on 1 case study book from below, and 1 required book above. Graduate papers must focus on 1 case study book below, and 3 required books above.

Papers must advance an original thesis.

Papers must also include:
1. The name of two scholarly journals in which you would like to publish the paper
2. A 1-paragraph explanation for why you’d like to publish in this journal
3. A 1-paragraph plan for next steps, to turn your paper into a publishable manuscript
4. A timeline for revising your course paper into a publishable manuscript

Due Dates
• May 28, students share a rough book review with each other. June 1, return reviews to your peers.
• June 4, students share an outline of the final paper with each other. June 8, return outline to your peers.
• June 11, students share rough draft of final paper with each other. June 15, return drafts to your peers.
• June 18, students share final draft of final paper with each other. June 20, return final draft to your peers.
• June 22, students turn in final paper into professor.

If students want comments, turn in a suitable document envelope with $4 worth of US Post Office stamps pasted in the upper right corner.
Case Studies

North America
   and

Recommended Background

Southeast Asia
   and
   and

Recommended: Very Legal, Technical Books


Africa & Middle East (and Islam)
   and
   and
   and
Latin America

and


and


The United Nations

and


and


and


International Law

and


and