

New Course Proposal Form

Directions:

- A. Complete this form.
- B. Attach a syllabus or course guidelines that includes
 - a. list of measurable student learning outcomes
 - b. information on how outcomes will be assessed including descriptions of reading and writing activities, projects, presentations, testing, etc
 - c. list of course requirements such as attendance, assignments, etc
- C. Have your proposal reviewed by the appropriate department and school/college committee.
- D. Submit your proposal to the University Curriculum Committee in care of the Office of Academic Affairs.

Form information:

1. Department/Program: Philosophy / International Human Rights
2. Course Information: HRTS / 2800 / Methods of Inquiry
Prefix Number Title
3 / HRTS / 2500
Credit Hours Prerequisites

3. Catalog Description for the catalog: (This description should briefly describe the basic content of the course as it will be offered.)

A general introduction to the methods and analysis used to examine human rights abuses, as well as a resource for sources, databases, and other material on human rights. Students will learn to analyze and conduct research and to write effective policy briefs and research proposals.

4. May students repeat this course for credit? If so, are there limits?

No, the course may not be repeated for credit.

5. What is the rationale for adding this course?
 - a. How does it support the philosophy and enhance the curriculum of your department?

Students in the International Human Rights program must frequently write "white papers," or policy briefs about human rights issues, yet they have been lacking the tools they need for gathering and analyzing the relevant information. A methods course will give them the tools that they need, especially for conceptualizing and writing their senior Overview paper.

- b. How does it relate to the overall University curriculum?

The course blends theory and practice, is inherently international in its focus, and emphasizes cultural understanding, critical thinking, and communications.

6. Should this new course be considered for General Education coding? No
If yes, attach the Application for General Education Coding Form.

7. Staffing requirements:

- a. Qualifications necessary for instructor MA or greater and training in social sciences research methods
- b. What staffing changes, if any, will be necessary to offer this additional course?
None.

8. When will this course be initiated? Fall 2009 How often will it be taught? Once per year
What sites are likely to offer this course? **Webster Groves**

9. Does this course affect degree requirements in your, or any other, department/program's major, emphasis, minor, or certificate. Yes
If yes, please attach corrected catalog copy for approval. **See attached.**

10. List any existing University course(s), undergraduate or graduate, which are similar in title and /or subject matter and explain how this course differs from them.

There are methods courses offered in other departments, such as INTL 2700 (Methods of Political Inquiry) and ANSO 2825 (Introduction to Research Methods), and we considered requiring the Human Rights students to take one of these courses, but they did not address the particular needs of the Human Rights majors, such as working with vulnerable groups and writing policy briefs.

11. Are University resources adequate to support this course? (library holdings, space, specialized, equipment, etc.) Yes If not, what additions are necessary?

12. What course(s), if any, will be dropped to make room for this course?

None

13. What entities (department, college/school) have reviewed and approved this proposal?

Philosophy Department, College of Arts & Sciences, some members of the Center for the Study of Human Rights

Signatures:

Britt Marie Schiller / *Jan 29, 2009*
Department/ Program Chairperson Date

Santa Lorea / *2.12.09*
Dean of College/School Date

_____/_____
Chair/Curriculum Committee Date

HRTS 2800: HUMAN RIGHTS – METHODS OF INQUIRY

Webster University

Instructor: Martha Bailey / Andrea Miller

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

When a human rights group wants to know how many people in the United States are victims of human trafficking, in what countries forced early marriage is most widespread, whether the banana industry discriminates against workers who attempt to organize trade unions, or which refugees seeking asylum have been subjected to political persecution, how should it go about gathering the necessary information? This course is intended to be a general introduction to the methods and analysis used to examine human rights abuses, as well as a resource for sources, databases, and other material on human rights.

The first element of the course is the focus on systematic approaches used for social research, with quizzes and in-class assignments to test your knowledge of course material. The second involves the writing of a research proposal on human rights of your own design.

There are multiple stages to the research process including: identification of the problem or objective, literature review, subjects for study, conceptualization and measurement, data collection, and analysis. You will design your proposal in stages, and you and your classmates will have the opportunity to comment on each other's proposals (peer review).

Finally, it is important to communicate your results effectively. Students will learn how human rights abuses are documented and how to write an effective report.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, Wadsworth, 12th edition, 2009. (Note: ok to use earlier edition.)

Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, Cornell University Press, 2002 (excerpts, provided by instructor)

Dermot Groome, *The Handbook of Human Rights Investigations*, Human Rights Press, 2001 (excerpts, provided by instructor)

other materials, as the course progresses

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who complete the course successfully will

- be able to write policy briefs/white papers concerning human rights issues.
- be able to analyze policy briefs/white papers critically
- be able to analyze primary and secondary data

- display understanding of tools and techniques for gathering information about potential human rights abuses, including:
 - participant observation
 - unobtrusive research
 - interviews
 - survey research
 - reviewing public documents
 - evaluation research
- display understanding of techniques for interacting with vulnerable people
- display understanding of the advantages and limits of human rights methods
- display understanding of ethical norms applicable to international human rights work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

3 Quizzes (40% of grade)

In-class assignments: hypotheses & peer review of proposal (20%)

Class Participation (10%)

Research Proposal (30% of grade)

DISCUSSION

Students are expected to participate actively and contribute substantive comments to class discussion.. Class participation is worth 10% of the grade.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. The schedule is noted by week.

Note: Some research methods are more applicable to human rights investigation than others. We will spend more time on methods such as field research, case studies, and less time on such methods as experimental research. Other reading assignments will be added as the course progresses.

WEEK:

1 Introduction to the Course: Human Rights & Methods

Human Inquiry & Science

Paradigms, Theory, and Social Research

Reading: Chs. 1-2, text

2 The idea of Causation in Social Research

Reading: Ch. 3, text

****Research Design Topic Due****

3 The Structure of Inquiry

Research Design

Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Measurement

In-class assignment: Writing an effective hypothesis for research

Reading: Chs 4-5, text

****QUIZ 1****

4 Indexes, Scales, & Typologies

The Logic of Sampling

Reading: Chs. 6-7, text

5 Modes of Observation

Experiments, Survey Research

Cross-national Aggregate Data and Human Rights Datasets: UNdata, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Human Rights Data Project (SUNY-Binghamton), The Genocide/Politicide Project, (George Mason University), Human Rights Data Analysis Group (Benetech)

Reading: Chs. 8-9, text

****QUIZ 2****

6 Qualitative Field Research & Investigation, The Relative Universality of Human Rights

Reading: Ch. 10, text, and Jack Donnelly, "Non-Western Conceptions of Human Rights," in *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, 2002.

7 Field Research & Investigation continued

Unobtrusive Measures

Reading: Ch. 2, "Human Rights Investigation," in Dermot Groome, *The Handbook of Human Rights Investigations*, 2001, & Ch. 11, text.

8 Evaluation Research & Analysis of Data

Quantitative Data Analysis

Reading: Chs. 12- 13

9 Quantifying Data Analysis

Research Workshop

Reading: Ch. 14

10 Elementary Quantitative Analysis

Reading: Ch. 15

11 The Elaboration Model

Reading: Ch. 16

12 Social Statistics

Reading: Ch. 17

****DRAFT PROPOSAL DUE – for Peer Review****

13 The Social Context of Research, Working With Vulnerable People,

The Ethics & Politics of Social Research

Reading: Ch. 18, text

14 The Uses of Social Research

Reading: Ch. 19, text

****QUIZ 3****

15 Writing effective reports

Readings: Case Studies & the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) from the BBC World Service

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/ihavearightto/>

Amnesty International 08 report at a glance

<http://thereport.amnesty.org/eng/report-08-at-a-glance>

Human Rights Watch – World Report 2009 (short version)

<http://www.hrw.org/en/node/79269>

16 Final exam week – Research Design Due