

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

FALL 2006

LW740 - Human Rights and Health

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Time: Tuesdays 2:30-5:00 p.m. **Location:** T 307C

Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The health of people worldwide is closely linked to the realization of human rights. For example, preventable illness, infant mortality, premature death, malnutrition, and epidemics are closely tied to discrimination, limits on freedom of expression, oppression of women, lack of education, and inhumane labor practices. This course explores the relationship between human rights and health by examining relevant international declarations (e.g., UDHR, ICCPR, ICESCR) in historical context, exploring the meaning of “human rights” and their challenge to state sovereignty, discussing the meaning of “health” and its relationship to human fulfillment, and analyzing specific case studies that illuminate the problems, prospects, and potential methods of promoting health by advocating for human rights on the national and international levels.

Goals and Objectives:

By the end of this course the student will:

1. Understand the relationship between human rights and health.
2. Be familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Conventions on Human Rights and relevant documents related to health and human rights.
3. Describe the impact of human rights abuses on health
4. Cite case examples of the interrelatedness of public health and human rights.
5. Identify the role of public health practitioners in the field of health and human rights
6. Understand the history, role, and function of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in addressing human rights problems.
7. Be able to determine when human rights have been violated, as well as to suggest strategies to protect and promote human rights.
8. Identify strategies for human rights advocacy within public health program planning.

Students:

This course will be of special interest to the non-U.S. students (who are exempt from the introductory U.S.-focused Health Law courses) as well as U.S. students interested in international health, international law, and human rights.

Prerequisites:

None

Course Texts:

- Wiesel E. Night, Bantam, 1982, ISBN: 0553272535 (pbk.)
- Twenty-five Questions on Health and Human Rights from World Health Organization Available at http://www.who.int/hhr/information/25_questions_hhr.pdf “Questions”
- The United Nations. Twenty-five Human Rights Documents, New York: Center for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University, 2001. (“Documents 25”)
- Marks S. Health and Human Rights: Basic International Documents, 2nd edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006, ISBN: 0-674-02377-3 (pbk). (“Documents”)
- Amnesty International Ethical Codes and Declarations Relevant to the Health Professions, 4th edition. London: Amnesty International, 2001. (“Codes”) Available at <http://web.amnesty.org/rmp/hponline.nsf/ethics>
- Mann J, Gruskin S, Grodin M, Annas G. Health and Human Rights: A Reader, New York: Routledge, 1999, ISBN 0-415-92102-3 (pbk) (“Reader”)
- Gruskin S, Grodin M, Annas G, Marks S. Perspectives on Health and Human Rights, New York: Routledge, 2005, ISBN 0-415-94807-X (pbk) (“Perspectives”)

Additional Resources:

World Wide Web http://www.bu.edu/dbin/sph/departments/health_law/index.php
<http://www.glphr.org/>

Course Info

Course Requirements:

A 20 page research paper (80% of final grade) addressing a specific problem in the area of human rights and health. The topic, outline, and bibliography must be submitted and discussed with faculty prior to writing final paper. The paper will be written in two parts.

★ Part I:

- Define the nature, scope, and context of a human rights and health problem;
- identify the impediments that have thus far prevented effective action to solve the problem;

★ Part II:

- prepare a detailed proposed policy agenda for problem resolution that includes identifying foes and allies, funding considerations, implementation strategies, and mechanisms for review of plan efficacy.

The final submission package will include:

1. Topic Proposal (approved)

2. Initial Bibliography (approved)
3. Paper Outline (approved)
4. Part I of paper (with comments)
5. Part II of paper
6. Oral Presentation Handouts or PowerPoint
7. Cover Letter to NGO funding source

Students will also give a brief (12-15 minute) oral presentation of their proposals to the class (10% of final grade). Class participation, preparation of the readings and quizzes will also be considered in the final grade (10% of final grade).

Class Logistics:

Late assignments: While we would like to be lenient with late assignments, giving full credit to late work (without a valid excuse or prior arrangement) is unfair to the students who hand their work in on time. If you are absent, arrange the delayed submission in advance with Prof. Grodin.

Absences: Because we care about each of you, you will be missed if absent!!! Attendance will be taken at all classes. If you are or have been ill or if you are unable to attend a class, you should contact Prof. Grodin as soon as possible. The positive side of this is that we care enough about you to be concerned when you are missing important parts of the course.

Academic conduct: You should read the *Academic Conduct Code*, which you can pick up in the office of student affairs. All work handed in for credit must be your own, with the exception that you may quote or paraphrase from other sources if you also cite the reference and page number. If you need help, consult with Prof. Grodin or Annas.

Lecture and assignment schedules: The lecture and assignment schedule is on the following pages. These schedules and topics are subject to change, in which case announcements will be made in class.

COURSE OUTLINE

CLASS ONE: (September 5)

Health and Human Rights in the Shadow of the Holocaust; Introduction to Health and Human Rights; the Link Between Health Status, Vulnerability, and Rights

Wiesel (entire book)

Questions

Documents pp. 27-34, for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”

Reader Pp. 1-34

Perspectives Pp. xiii-xx, 1-70, 607-609

CLASS TWO: (September 12)

Human Rights Instruments and Documents: The International Bill of Human Rights

Documents Pp. 80-97, 98-108, 109-113 for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”

Codes

Reader Pp. 453-481

Perspectives Pp. 1-70 re read

CLASS THREE: (September 19)

Human Rights in Public Health Practice – Universality vs. Cultural & Ethical Relativism, From Theory to Practice (Case Study: Female Genital Cutting, Informed Consent, Sexual and Reproductive Rights)

Documents Pp. 212-249 for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”

Reader Pp. 336-372

Perspectives Pp. 223-291

PAPER TOPIC DUE

CLASS FOUR: (September 26)

Non-Governmental Organizations: Amnesty International, Physicians for Human Rights, Global Lawyers and Physicians

Reader Pp. 397-438

Perspectives Pp 517-525, 537-548, 569-605.

OUTLINE OF PAPER DUE

CLASS FIVE: (October 3)

AIDS & TB Policy and Research and Its Relation to Human Rights – Discrimination, Immigration, and Stigmatization. Case Study: AIDS in Africa – Treatment and/or Prevention

Documents Pp. 322-343, 353-361, 363-374 for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”
Reader Pp. 202-226, 284-335, 373-379
Perspectives Pp. 379-426, 179-222
UN Millennium Statement

CLASS SIX: (October 17)

Human Rights in Extremis, Humanitarian Law, Geneva Convention – Physician Involvement in Human Rights Violations – Armed Conflict and Torture. Case Study: Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights

Documents Pp.113-132, 133-144, 306-318. for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”
Reader Pp. 75-112.
Perspectives Pp. 293-377.

PART ONE OF PAPER DUE

CLASS SEVEN: (October 24)

International Criminal Court and Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda—Truth and Reconciliation Commissions

Documents Pp. 144-161. for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”

CLASS EIGHT: (October 31)

Families, Women, and Children and Human Rights – Problems of Gender and Sexual Orientation Discrimination, Empowerment of Women and Children, Population Control, CRC, CEDAW, Cairo, Beijing

Documents Pp. 248-279. for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”
Reader Pp. 253-280.
Perspectives Pp. 427-467.

CLASS NINE: (November 7)

Economics and Human Rights – Development, Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Sanctions, Multinational Corporations, World Bank, IMP, Structural Adjustment, Debt Relief

Reader Pp. 458-465.

Perspectives Pp. 71-130.

CLASS TEN: (November 14)
Biotechnology, Genetics, and the Environment

Documents Pp. 47-79, 375-392 for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”.
Reader Pp. 380-394.
Perspectives Pp. 131-178.

CLASS ELEVEN: (November 21)
Human Rights Education, Oral Presentations, Use of Media
Guest: Rob Schadt, Office of Teaching, Learning and Technology

CLASS TWELVE: (November 28)
Oral Presentations and Discussion of Individual Papers

CLASS THIRTEEN: (December 5)
Oral Presentations and Discussion of Individual Papers

CLASS FOURTEEN: (December 12)
Human Right to Health

Re-read Documents Pp. 80-97, 98-108. for complete text of documents see “Documents 25”
Perspectives Pp 469-516.

FINAL PAPER DUE

CLASS FIFTEEN: (December 12)
Future of Health and Human Rights, Human Rights Advocacy; Lobbying; Course Review

Reader Pp. 439-452.
Perspectives Pp. 549-567.

PAPER TOPIC AREAS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND HEALTH

1. Generally:

Sexual rights and health in [country or region]

Refugees and internally displaced people in [country]

Mental health and human rights in [country]

Environment, health and human rights [focusing on specific environmental problem]

Universalism and cultural relativism [in specific context]

HIV/AIDS: New frontiers in Prevention

Health professionals and the legacy of Nuremberg: Where should we go from here?

Complex humanitarian emergencies: Lessons from past failures (e.g. Somalia)

Homelessness: Is it a human rights issue?

Women's health and human rights in [country]

Child labor: Necessary evil for economic development?

2. Specifically (Paper Topics from Past Years):

Truth-telling and Patients Rights in Japan: The Case of HIV

Child Prostitution in Brazil

Rape as a War Crime in Bosnia

Persecution of Coptic Christians in Egypt

Palestinian Human Rights in the West Bank

Economic Sanctions in South Africa

Needle Exchange Program in Anchorage, Alaska

Group Consent Human Genome Diversity Project

Child Soldiers - the role of children in armed conflict

Trafficking: Sale of women/children into forced prostitution in Thailand-effects on health

Corporal Punishment in U.S. Schools

Mandatory HIV testing of infants & women's rights

Dowry-related crimes in India

Canadian Red Cross Tainted Blood Scandal

The Ogoni situation in Nigeria

HIV vaccine in developing countries

Routine Episiotomy as violation of women's human rights

TB in developing countries in a context of human rights & health

Human Rights: A new basis for public health?

Guatemalan Human Rights abuses: The 1996 Peace Accord

Environmental Protection & Disease Prevention

Physicians' Role in Torture in Turkey

Human Rights Violation in Orphanages in China

Capital Punishment in U.S. Death Row Inmates - Human Rights Violations

Torture and the Medical Profession in Chile

Female Genital Mutilation in Egypt

Enforcing the Biological Weapons Convention

Environmental Degradation as a Human Rights Violation

HIV Clinical Trials in Africa

Involuntary Sterilization

Women, Reproductive Rights, and Pregnancy Discrimination in Mexico

Disability Rights in China

Effectiveness of the Truth Commission and Human Rights in El Salvador

Human Rights of the Elderly- A New Convention on Human Rights

The Media Campaign to Abolish the Death Penalty

Native American Land Claims

Embargos Including Food and Medicine as a Political Weapon

Human Rights and China's Orphan Policy

Genocide and Unaccompanied Children in Rwanda

Chernobyl: Environmental Contamination from Nuclear Power Plants

The Taliban's Rule Over Women

Human Rights, Political Asylum Seekers, and Victims of Torture

The Problem of Early Marriage within a Health and Human Rights Framework

HIV/AIDS Vaccine Clinical Trials

Human Rights of the Mentally Ill

Combatants and Prisoners in Guantanamo

Psychiatric Medicating Prisoners on Death Row to be Executed

Small Arms and Liberia

Persecution of the Baha'i in Iran

Child Labourers in the Carpet Weaving Belts of India

Cameroon and the Anglophones: Health and Human Rights Context

Life after Landmines: Survivor Assistance Programs in Cambodia

Caring for Mauritanian Slaves

Creation of a Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Sexual Minorities

New Mechanisms for Protecting Informed Consent in East Africa

Child Soldiers in Sri Lanka

The Role of Physicians in War: Health and Human Rights Violations at Abu Ghraib Prison

Juvenile Detention Centers in Rio de Janeiro