Conrad Grebel University College  
University of Waterloo  
PACS 620 Special Topics: Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law for Civil Society Practitioners  
Winter 2019

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Location: Room 2201, Henry Paetkau Seminar Room, Conrad Grebel University College  
Class Time: Mondays, 6:00 - 8:50 pm  
Office Hours: Mondays 4 – 5 pm, but by appointment is always best

Acknowledgment:
We are on the traditional territory of the Attiwandaron (Neutral), Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometers on each side of the Grand River.

Course Description:
This course will introduce students to the concept of law that is essential to ordering community life while simultaneously promoting particular national and global values. The underlying principles guiding law will be explored through a peace studies lens, leading to examination of the peace impact of domestic law, international human rights, humanitarian, criminal, and commercial law. Law’s function as an operating system working behind the scenes to “engineer” society and international relations through incentives and disincentives, resolve conflicts, mitigate the impact of disputes and to ensure that most conflicts are avoided peacefully will be analyzed. This course is particularly relevant to social justice, human rights and humanitarian aid workers who seek to intervene in situations of injustice or conflict in order to help them better understand the architecture of law and how civil society workers can use these principles to build and strengthen the foundation of peace.

Course teaching methodology:
This seminar will emphasize critical analysis and discussion. It will not assume that there is one “right” answer to questions posed or issues discussed, but rather that there are ways of thinking that will enable students to develop their own personal philosophy. Students have much to contribute to collectively deepening our understanding of civil society and are expected to be very engaged in class discussions and come to class well prepared. This course assumes that we all learn best and internalize lessons learned most effectively in a process of dialogue with each other. Students must therefore
personally wrestle with concepts discussed in order to benefit from the course. Teaching methodologies that will be used will include:

- Presentation of key topics by course instructor
- Student questions posed in class
- Small group discussions during class
- Videos and guest lecturers
- Case studies that challenge students to apply theory to practice
- Discussion of current events relevant to course topics
- Student involvement in research, presentations and reports

Course learning objectives:

Students who complete this course will:

- Understand core principles of international law that are designed to enumerate human rights and protect civilians in times of conflict
- Become aware of how fundamental principles of international law can be used by a peace practitioner to advance the interests of those impacted by civil society organizations
- Recognize how international law can serve both as a sword causing harm to individuals as well as a shield providing protection and advancing individual well-being
- Be exposed to a variety of different civil society organizations that leverage international law to serve the best interests of those with whom they work
- Develop a personal vision to be more effectively engaged in the debate about the efficacy of international law as a tool of peace
- Be able to articulate how international law may be applied to one’s vocation

Course Evaluation and Assignments:

Attendance and participation in class (15% of course mark). Students are expected to attend class and participate in class discussions. In addition, students are expected to subscribe to a network or listserv of interest and related to this course and circulate an approximate 250 word written summary or update to the rest of the class on the course LEARN website at least two times during the term (once before the mid-term break and once afterwards) that reflect new developments as reported in the listserv. The point of this exercise is to draw application between new or interesting matters noted on the list monitored, and course content. Potential lists to which to subscribe may include the following or any other similar listserv:

- International Centre for Transitional Justice
- Open Global Rights
- World Beyond War
- War Criminals Watch
- War Crimes Prosecution Watch
- Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
- ICRC International Humanitarian Law Newsletter
- InterAction Newsletter
- Canadian Council for International Cooperation News and Updates
- UN Enable Newsletter
- United Nations Global Compact Bulletin
- Responsibility to Protect Weekly
Application and impact (30% of course mark). Each student will select a human rights, humanitarian law, or international criminal prosecution legal instrument to research in order to become a key class expert resource on this body of law. Potential instruments can include any international human rights law treaty, Geneva Conventions of its Protocols, SPHERE Humanitarian Charter, or a similar document. Students will be expected to draft at least a 2,000 word paper which is due at the start of class on January 28, 2019 (word count excludes title page and table of contents), on their chosen instrument that will address the following issues:

- When was the instrument drafted?
- Why was it drafted?
- Who was involved in it’s drafting? How might this have influenced the outcome?
- What are key provisions that summarize the document? In other words, what are essential core principles that undergird the entire instrument that are relevant for this class?
- What are common criticisms of this instrument?
- How extensive are violations of this instrument? Or to what extent do states adhere to and implement the standards enumerated?
- What in your opinion has been the impact of this instrument?
- Why might this instrument be important for civil society practitioners? How might they use it?
- Include other pertinent attributes that you think important to note.

Reflection (10% of course mark). Each student is required to draft a 1,500 – 2,000 word reflection, due at the start of class on March 25, 2019, that reflects on what you have learned during the term and applies course principles to the kind of work that you hope to engage someday. It anticipated that this assignment will be highly reflective of your own thinking, but likely include reference or citation to assigned readings of information you discovered during your research. Your reflection should include the following matters:

- Describe the likely vocation that you hope to be engaged in during your lifetime.
- Explain which, if any, core principles discussed during the term have application to your possible vocation.
- How might you use these principles to make your work more effective? What are the ways that you can leverage international law to strengthen impact? Try to be as specific as possible.
- Enumerate specific principles that you find most relevant. Discuss principles, if any, that may explicitly contradict the way you anticipate implementing your chosen vocation.
- What are shortcomings or deficiencies of international law as it pertains to your vocation?
- Reflect on whether you believe that international law as discussed in class should be included in an MPACS program. Does international law function as a sword causing harm or as a shield serving a protective function?
- Include other relevant thoughts and insights that you believe are important for summarizing how you may combine international law with your life framework.

Major research paper (45% of course mark). Students will prepare a major research paper, due at the start of class on April 1, 2018, on a topic related to the course theme. The anticipated length of the paper is 18 - 20 pages, excluding Title, Table of Contents, and Bibliography. The purpose of this project
is to challenge students to explore a topic of particular interest. More details about this assignment will be discussed in class. You are encouraged (but not required) to draft a paper that may be suitable for inclusion in the Notre Dame Student Peace Conference, an annual conference to be held March 29 – 30, 2019, organized by students at the University of Notre Dame. See the Call for Proposals for more information. The Notre Dame Call is due January 21, 2019. You may also want to consider a paper for possible inclusion at another conference such as the Peace and Justice Studies Association, which will meet in Winnipeg in September, 2019. See the PJSA Call for more information on this conference.

Footnotes and Attribution
Please note that Chicago style footnotes, and bibliography, will be required. In-text citations will not be accepted. More information on Chicago style attribution can be found at Chicago Manual of Style Quick Citation Guide and Chicago Notes & Bibliography

Assignment Deadlines:
Late assignments will be assessed an automatic penalty of 5% with an additional 1% penalty assessed per additional weekday (excluding weekends). A valid medical document is required for medical reasons for late submissions.

Course reading materials:

☐ Significant use of internet sources will be made. At times links may change and to the extent possible, you will be notified in advance of new links. Internet sources used can often also be googled and alternative sites containing the same information found.
☐ Some materials will be posted on the class Learn website.

Research assistance:
Need research help? Visit a help desk at any University of Waterloo library or visit the PACS research guide online (subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/pacs). If you need more specialized assistance, the Peace and Conflict Studies liaison librarian, Laureen Harder-Gissing, located in the Conrad Grebel University library, is available for consultation. Laureen works with PACS faculty to order library resources and to create the research guide. See the guide for research tips and ways to contact Laureen.

UWaterloo Policies
Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Arts: Academic Integrity website University of Waterloo: Academic Integrity Office

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course
professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - [Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

**Other sources of information for students:**

**Note for students with learning differences:** The AccessAbility Services (AAS) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Counselling Services:** Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoc](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoc), ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

**Accommodation for Illness:** A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. More information can be obtained from Health Services and the form is available in pdf: [https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness](https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness)

**The Writing Centre:** Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre)

**Course schedule:**
The following schedule may change from time-to-time to reflect the pace of the course and to better refine the course schedule. Changes to this schedule will be announced in class or by announcement e-mailed to students.

**Introduction to Law**
January 7: Introduction to course, expectations, and each other

**Reading assignment:** None

January 14: Domestic law - the daily encounters that make or break peace

**Reading assignment:**
- Learn:
  - “What is Peace?” – draft chapter by Lowell Ewert.

International Human Rights

January 21: Introduction to international human rights – the corrective to abuses of domestic law

**Reading assignment:**
- Internet sources:
  - [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](http://example.com), UN Website.
  - [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](http://example.com), through Article 27.
  - [International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights](http://example.com), through Article 25.

January 28: Children and human rights (Application assignment due)

**Reading assignment:**
- Internet sources:
  - [Convention on the Rights of the Child](http://example.com), OHCHR
  - [Ending child labour: A review of policies and programmes](http://example.com), by ILO
  - [Ignoring the benefits of children’s work](http://example.com), by Michael Bourdillon

February 4: Disability and human rights

**Reading assignment:**
- Text: *Evidence for Hope*, Chapter 4, pgs. 94 – 136.
- Internet sources:
  - [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](http://example.com), OHCHR
  - [Position paper: The right to live and grow up in a family](http://example.com), by DRI
February 11: Diversity and women’s rights

Reading assignment:
- Internet sources:
  - *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, UN Women
  - *Gender justice and women’s rights*, OXFAM article

February 18: Reading week, no class

February 25: Business and Human Rights

Reading assignment:
- Internet sources:
  - *Rigged Rules and Double Standards*, read first 18 pages of this Oxfam report, and feel free to skim the rest.
  - *United Nations Global Compact*, UN website, become familiar with the ten principles, various companies that may be of interest to you, and generally the website and initiative.

International Humanitarian Law

March 4: International Humanitarian law – putting people first

Reading assignment:
- Internet sources;
  - *Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions*, read Articles 35 – 60.
  - Read Chapter 1 and 2, – Rules 1 – 14: *Distinction Between Civilians and Combatants*, and Specifically Protected Persons and Objects, prepared by ICRC.
  - *The Roots of Restraint in War*, ICRC, read through page 26, and skim the rest.

March 11: International humanitarian law continued - violations
Reading assignment:

- Internet sources:
  - The International Criminal Court, Rome Statue, read through Article 33.
  - Legal Obligation to Record Civilian Casualties, Oxford Research Group

- Learn:
  - “The Special Court for Sierra Leone,” by David Crane.

March 18: Global Policing, Guest is David Beer

Reading assignment:

- Internet sources:
  - Strategic Guidance Framework for International Police Peacekeeping, UN Police

March 25: Humanitarian intervention and practice (Reflection assignment due)

Reading assignment:


- Internet sources:
  - The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
  - Sphere Project scan pages 1 – 78.
  - Possible additional assigned readings that may emerge during the term

Summary: Capturing Lessons Learned

April 1: Summary, presentations on final projects (Major assignment due)

Reading assignment: None