This course fulfills an elective for the Undergraduate Certificate in Human Rights; L, G, and SB Gen Ed requirements; and honors credit (by petition).

Professor: LaDawn Haglund
E-mail: ladawn.haglund@asu.edu
Office Location: Wilson Hall Room 265
Phone number: 480-965-7083
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-12:00

“The failure to grasp the enormous potential that human rights have on sustaining environment ... will only lead to a larger scale of dispossession and homelessness across the world.”

- Miloon Kothari, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Statement at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg South Africa, August 2002

I. Course description:

This course explores connections between human rights and environmental sustainability. Legal and scholarly approaches linking human rights and sustainability are emerging, due to the important resource dimensions of economic and social rights and the human dimensions of sustainability. The right to food, housing, and a healthy environment are all areas where the discourses and practices of both human rights and sustainability are invoked to address shortcomings in current practices.

Yet human rights and environmental concerns are not always in harmony. Conservation efforts have at times created obstacles for local communities in terms of access to land and livelihoods. At the same time, the world's poor and indigenous populations often bear the costs of environmental degradation, pollution, and climate change that result from patterns of production and consumption from which they do not personally gain. The priorities of environmental justice movements, at times referred to as “environmentalism of the poor,” may differ from those of mainstream environmentalists. Furthermore, the emphasis within human rights law and practice on individual rights exists in tension with the collective and third-party impacts of sustainability challenges, while the context-specific, place-based nature of most environmental problems (and the populations that endure them) sits uneasily beside universal human rights claims.
This course addresses these dilemmas through theoretical and empirical readings on human rights and sustainability; grassroots accounts of struggles over environment-related human rights; and selections from literature and film that illustrate the environmental justice issues at stake. It also explores the routes by which rights can be realized beyond claims-making, emphasizing the importance of inclusive processes in the design and implementation of environmental policy.

The course will be divided into several sections, including an introduction to the concepts of human rights and sustainability, an exploration of how these concepts are operationalized in the real world, and a deeper examination of three substantive areas in which these ideas intersect and sometimes clash. The first substantive module will examine “urban ecology and human rights” including emerging claims for a “right to the city” and the sometimes conflicting mandates urbanization can create for states attempting to ensure adequate housing (including water and sanitation) while simultaneously protecting land and water resources.

The second substantive module will consider “the human right to food” and the related sustainability implications of the current global food system. The shift in the last 100 or so years from primarily rural agrarian societies to fossil fuel-based, urban industrial societies (and increasingly industrialized farming techniques) has created a number of challenges to both food security and environmental protection. The third substantive module investigates more deeply the consequences of industrialization processes for human rights, in particular, extractive industries such as oil and mining, and their implications for accelerated global climate change, community displacement, indigenous rights, and human health.

The objectives of the course are:

1. To clarify the official and unofficial meanings of “human rights” and “sustainability”
2. To acquaint students with theories and methodologies used to study and interrogate human rights and sustainability, in particular as they relate to one another
3. To demonstrate various ways that nations, communities, and advocates have attempted to promote human rights vis-à-vis sustainability challenges
4. To elucidate the structural characteristics of sustainability challenges, including the ways these challenges are shaped by dominant processes of production and consumption
5. To evaluate the role of power in the alleviation and/or perpetuation of environmental injustices, including the way it shapes struggles over solutions
6. To examine critically the unequal distribution of environmental injustices among poorer societies and vulnerable groups
7. To further student research on topics of human rights and sustainability
8. To foster a sense of political responsibility in regard to human rights and sustainability challenges, as well as develop a set of ideas regarding how more just and sustainable alternatives may be realized
Student learning outcomes: Students who have taken this course will have a theoretical and empirical basis for research in the fields of international development, human rights, and human dimensions of sustainability. It can serve as a foundation for future work in internationally-focused governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, or policy institutes.

II. Course requirements and grading:

Students must:

a) Attend all seminar meetings and participate in class discussions
b) Do all required readings prior to the class for which they are assigned
c) Post weekly blogs outlining your critical reactions to the assigned texts
d) Lead class discussion once during the semester
e) Complete 2 short (4-6 page) papers on substantive themes
f) Submit an annotated bibliography of sources to be used for your final paper
g) Complete a 12-15 page final paper with final bibliography (not annotated)

a) Both attendance and participation are vital to the success of the seminar and to your grade. Attendance will be tracked and grades lowered for excessive absences (defined as more than 3 absences for any reason).

b) This is a reading-intensive seminar. We will cover a lot of material (~100-150 pps/wk) during the semester. All seminar participants are expected each week to allot the time required for reading assigned materials thoughtfully and thoroughly, prior to class. This will provide the basis for your active participation in our in-class discussions. I strongly recommend, as a matter of good scholarly practice, to take extensive notes by:
   1. noting the main points of each source, and if there is more than one source, considering how they are related (with one main point from each work as an example);
   2. considering what is new to you about the topics discussed and how (if at all) they have changed your conception of human rights and sustainability; and
   3. developing an understanding of how the week’s readings, films, and lecture material apply to current events

I want you to engage the readings, so you should have questions ready each week regarding how they relate to modern life and/or current events.

c) Weekly blogs of 500-800 words (approximately 1-2 pages, double-spaced, in a standard Word document), outlining your critical reflections on the assigned texts, will be required.

In your introductory blog (due Monday of Week 2), you should:
   1. Introduce yourself to the class
   2. Write a brief (~400 word) statement about how you currently understand human rights and sustainability to be related or linked
   3. Tell us (in another ~150 words) what is important or interesting to you about human rights and/or sustainability, and why. Try to speak from your heart rather than your head.

Complete the remainder of your blog entries as follows:
   1. Read/watch the material that is due for the upcoming week.
2. Use the following triangle, square, and circle method to analyze the texts.¹
   a. **Triangle**: Find three points in the materials as a whole that you believe are *important* and/or had an *impact* on your thinking about human rights and sustainability, points that you find to be critical or poignant.
   b. **Square**: Consider at least one point that *sits well with you* in some way, either from the three above or elsewhere in the materials. Perhaps it reflects your own ideas about human rights and sustainability, or it intrigues you in some way.
   c. **Circle**: Identify 2-3 questions *not answered in the materials* that you think are important or intriguing, or that require more research to understand.

3. Do not regurgitate the materials; concisely analyze them.
4. Consider including links to images, articles or other relevant sources on the web.
5. As a scholarly product, your post should never be composed directly online. Use a text editor (e.g., Microsoft Word) to draft and finalize your post before adding it to your blog. All posts should adhere to conventional grammar and punctuation.
6. **Post** your blog entry covering each week’s materials **no later than noon on Monday**. This will allow your professor and classmates to review it before class Tuesday.

**Comments** on the blogs of others:
1. In addition to your blog, you should skim the blogs of all other students and comment on at least three others on the weeks you do *not* post and at least one on the weeks when you do. This can be done anytime **between Monday & Thursday of the same week**.
2. Try to comment on different people’s posts each week.
3. When you comment on the blog of a peer, try to probe more deeply and advance the conversation, rather than just saying “I agree.” Remember to be polite.

Your **second blog** (Week 4), “human rights and sustainability: making the linkages” should incorporate what you have learned from the readings for Weeks 2-4. In this blog, you should:
1. Provide reflections on what has changed in your understanding of human rights since you wrote your first blog, if anything
2. Provide reflections on what has changed in your understanding of sustainability since you wrote your first blog, if anything
3. Provide your reader with a thoughtful outline and defense of “environmental human rights,” “eco-justice,” “just sustainabilies,” or one of the other hybrid concepts that you have learned, giving reference (and links) to a real-world issue that reflects this concept

**Subsequent blogs** will be due according to the following schedule. Two groups of students (A or B) will alternate on six assignments:

**BLOG #3: Consumption, production, and capitalism**
Economic rationality; Industrialization, carbon-based economies; Inequality in costs and benefits; exploitation; Public goods; Alternative logics

- **Group A** due Monday of Week 5
- **Group B** due Monday of Week 6

---

¹ Acknowledgements (and thanks) to Dr. Sher Ratnabalasuriar for these guidelines
BLOG #4: Urban sustainability & the right to the city
“Right to the City”: housing, water, sanitation; Impact of building, urbanization

- Group B due Monday of Week 7
- Group A due Monday of Week 8

BLOG #5: Sustainable agriculture and the human right to food
Trade, intellectual property rights; Agricultural policy; Green revolution; Land and energy use; Hunger and malnutrition; Food security; Biodiversity; GMOs

- Group B due Monday of Week 10
- Group A due Monday of Week 11

BLOG #6: Indigenous rights and extractive industry
Mining; Petroleum dependency; Climate change; Indigenous Rights

- Group A due Monday of Week 12
- Group B due Monday of Week 13

Your final blog, due Monday of Week 15, will be slightly different.

1. As in your other blogs, outline your critical reflections, but for the semester as a whole, highlighting ~3 key take-away points. You can refer to specific readings, but it’s more important to foreground the key ideas that you believe are critical or poignant and/or had an impact on your thinking about human rights and sustainability.

2. Next, identify 2-3 new actions that you have taken this semester or could take in the future that might positively impact a human rights and sustainability issue, and describe how it feels (or might feel) to take those actions.

3. LAST STEP: Find a picture or a video that sums up your final blog and either link to it or include it in your blog.

d) Student-led discussion: two students will co-lead class discussion once during the semester. Sign-up will take place during the 1st session. If you join class after this, please contact me to sign up. You will select an additional news article or informative video (not more than 20 min) for your peers to consider that is relevant to the week’s assigned materials, and transmit this material electronically on Friday prior to your presentation. As discussion leaders, you will raise important questions and issues based on the materials and critical reflections posted by all students. You should attempt to find common themes, points of divergence or confusion, and interesting observations that can guide the conversation in fruitful directions. You should not regurgitate the readings, as everyone will be expected to have done them prior to class. You are encouraged to link the week’s themes to current news.

e) There will be two short papers (5-6 pages) that explore and critique the arguments made in the readings from the first two substantive sections of the course:
   1) Urban ecology and human rights - due Thursday of Week 9
   2) The human right to food – due Tuesday of Week 12
These short papers should incorporate:

1) An analysis of the group of readings on each theme in light of the following questions:
   - In what ways does a human rights approach compliment a sustainability approach in this area? In what ways do these approaches contradict each other?
   - What are the key challenges to sustainable human rights realization in this area?
   - What are some possible strategies for overcoming challenges to human rights and sustainability in this area?

2) A concise summary of main arguments of at least four key readings (not short articles)

3) Your scholarly (not personal) reactions to or reflections on the readings (noting the strongest points of each reading before critiquing it)

I encourage you to have discussions with your classmates, but your short paper must be your own work, and in your own words, or it may be considered plagiarized. To be accepted, papers must be submitted on Blackboard via SafeAssignment by 4:00 p.m. on the due date.

You can utilize comments from your own weekly blogs for these short papers, though I would like to see you synthesize, analyze, and critique the materials in a scholarly manner, and from the perspective of each topical area as a whole. I will provide guiding questions for these papers.

f) Your annotated bibliography is due two weeks before your final paper. It should consist of a brief (3-6 sentence) statement regarding the topic of your paper and the questions it seeks to answer, followed by a minimum of six (6) scholarly sources that you intend to utilize, explaining in 2-3 sentences how each source will be useful for your topic. Please submit to Blackboard via SafeAssignment prior to class on the due date. A PowerPoint presentation is posted on Blackboard to guide you in constructing this bibliography.

g) Your final paper should be approximately 10-13 pages, and should link your substantive interests with theoretical approaches to and empirical realities of human rights and sustainability. One requirement is that you meet in person with me at least once to discuss your paper before you write it. My office hours are posted at the top of this syllabus.

**Important:** I expect advanced students to have mastered the basics of writing papers, using a standard style manual and proofreading their work. Please take the time to present professional quality work. Get to know one of the social science style manuals – e.g., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Kate L. Turabian), *A Manual of Style* (The University of Chicago - use the “Author, Date” system for the social sciences), or the *APA Manual* – and pay particular attention to the pages on bibliographic references. You can lose up to a full grade for sloppiness, noncompliance or inconsistency with an established style, or poor proofreading.

**Summary of assignment (blogs, short papers, bibliography, and final paper) due dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>B4</td>
<td>SP1</td>
<td>B5</td>
<td>B6, SP2</td>
<td>Bib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>B4</td>
<td>SP1</td>
<td>B5</td>
<td></td>
<td>SP2</td>
<td>B6</td>
<td>Bib</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that late work will not be accepted without a documented and dire reason.
Your grade will be based on:

- Attendance, participation, presentation: 15%
- Critical reflection blogs: 15%
- Paper #1: 20%
- Paper #2: 20%
- Final paper: 30%

The grading scale is as follows:

(No A+)
- 95-100 = A
- 90-94 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 84-86 = B
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 74-76 = C
- 70-73 = D
- Below 60 = E

III. Required Texts:

The following texts will be available for purchase at the ASU book store:


IV. Supplementary materials

A number of articles for this course will be handed out in class or compiled in a reader for your purchase. Videos links, when required, will be posted on Blackboard.

V. Miscellaneous course information:

*Obvious courtesies:*
- Arrive on time
- Turn off your cell phone
- Let me know in advance if you must leave early

*Incompletes:* “A mark of ‘I’ (incomplete) is given by the instructor only when a student who is otherwise doing acceptable work is unable to complete a course because of illness or other conditions beyond the student’s control” (from the ASU General Catalog).

*Academic integrity:* Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity.

*Disability Services:* ASU’s Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the entity that provides services to students with disabilities. If you desire accommodation for this course, contact DRC at http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc to establish your eligibility and make sure they can provide you with the services you will need for this course. Students with disabilities must meet the same standards, deadlines, etc. as any other student in the course. All information regarding disability is confidential.
Writing assistance: The ASU Writing Center is available to all enrolled students to help them improve their writing skills through online and in-person tutoring: http://studentsuccess.asu.edu/home/writingcenters. The Writing Center website also contains handouts and services that can help you write better papers.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1: August 20
Overview and Introduction to the Course

WEEK 2: August 25-27
What are Human Rights?
Topics: Where do rights come from? How do we know they exist? How can we gauge rights realization?

WEEK 3: September 1-3
What is sustainability?
Topics: Historical roots of ecological crises; Rio summit, Kyoto protocol, The Brundtland Report, etc.; Alternative definitions of sustainability

WEEK 4: September 8-10
Human Rights and Sustainability: Making the Linkages
Topics: Environmental human rights, Eco-Justice, Just sustainabilities

WEEKS 5-6: Consumption, production, and the role of capitalism
Topics: Economic rationality and global expansion; Industrialization, carbon-based economies, technological advances and pollution, transportation; Inequality in costs and benefits, winners and losers at all scales/levels, gender/class/race; exploitation; Public goods; Alternative logics

September 15-17: Economic rationality and global expansion

September 22-24: Alternative Logics

WEEKS 7-8: CASE STUDY 1 - Urban ecology and human rights
Topics: “Right to the City”; Right to housing, water, sanitation; Impact of building, urbanization

September 29-October 1, October 6-8

WEEK 9: October 15 – Paper Due (No Class October 13 – Fall Break)

WEEKS 10-11: CASE STUDY 2 - The human right to food
Topics: Trade, intellectual property rights; Agricultural policy; Green revolution; Land and energy use; Hunger and malnutrition; Food security; Biodiversity; GMOs

October 20-22, October 27-29
WEEKS 12-13: CASE STUDY 3 - Industrialization processes and human rights
Topics: Mining; Petroleum dependency and extraction; Indigenous Rights
November 3-5, November 10-12

WEEK 14-15: SOLUTIONS
November 17-19, November 24 (November 26th is Thanksgiving – No Class)

WEEK 16: Wrap up and LAST DAY OF CLASS (December 3rd)
FINAL PAPER DUE December 10th at NOON