

New York University
School of Professional Studies
M.S. in Global Affairs
Children's Rights: International Norms and Standards
Course Number: GLOB1-GC 2341001
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Office Hours: By appointment
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Spring 2016

Course Meeting

Mondays, 3:30pm to 6:10pm
14 sessions, 2hrs and 40 minutes each

Course Description

The promotion and protection of the human rights of children is founded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and strengthened by the adoption of international legal instruments and policies, which prescribe measures to ensure that children everywhere are accorded special protection and care, and enjoy the human rights to which they are entitled.

The course will examine the international norms and standards that make up children's rights from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its three Optional Protocols, to the outcomes of World Summit for Children and a World Fit for Children. The course will also provide an understanding of how children's rights evolve and progress as a result of the changing international environment, the changing needs of children, and challenges that children are exposed to. Accordingly, the course will examine topical issues such as, violence against children, children and peace and security, children and juvenile justice, and children's rights in international development, including in the Millennium Development Goals and the Post 2015 Development Agenda. Special attention will also be paid to the girl child.

With the world having celebrated the 25th anniversary of the CRC in November 2014, the course will also focus on the implementation and monitoring of children's rights and ask the question, "Is the world a better place for children?"

Learning Objectives

- The course will provide a solid grounding on children's rights by providing an understanding of the international norms and standards that make up the promotion and protection of the rights of children, including how implementation and monitoring works to uphold children's rights.
- It will familiarize students with current policy debates on children's rights and the growing need for child protection by examining topical issues on violence against children, the MDG's and the Post 2015 Agenda, juvenile justice, and children in international peace and security.
- The students will be provided with an understanding on the status of the girl child, her particular vulnerabilities and need for added protection.
- And finally, through class participation the course will aim to strengthen student's skills in research and analysis, as well as public speaking.

Recommended Readings

See the required readings for each class under the heading *Schedule of Class, Topics and Readings* as set out in the syllabus below. Most of the required readings (websites, publications, journals and articles) are available online and some readings will be distributed in class and/or emailed in PDF format.

Suggested books (not mandatory/not required)

Barbara Bennett Woodhouse, *Hidden in Plain Sight: The Tragedy of Children's Rights from Ben Franklin to Lionel Tate*, February 2010

Martin Guggenheim, *What's Wrong with Children's Rights*, Harvard University Press, 2005

Recommended Websites

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>

UNICEF
<http://www.unicef.org>

Watch List
<http://watchlist.org>

Child Rights Information Network
<https://www.crin.org>

Special Representative on Violence Against Children
<http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org>

Grades

The course grading will be as follows:

Two written assignments	30% (15% each)
Class participation and group work	30%
Final Research Paper	40%

Written Assignments

The course will require a fair amount of writing. Students will be asked to write **two assignments** on topics to be assigned by the instructor. Further details of the assignments, including due dates will be provided during the course of the semester. All assignments must be handed in to the Professor at the end of class on the day of the deadline, or emailed to the professor on the day of the deadline. Assignments should be handed in by the due date. The grade of the assignment will drop for each day after the due date that it is handed in, unless the delay has been excused in advance for compelling personal or medical reasons.

Length of Assignment: Times New Roman, 12-font size of no more than 2500 to 3000 words (approximately 5-7 pages). Please note that if the word count is more the additional words will unfortunately not be read and will not contribute toward your grade.

Works Cited: It is imperative to cite your references clearly. Assignments must provide footnotes, endnotes or parenthetical notes, as well as a list of works cited or a bibliography.

Class Participation and Group Work

A substantial proportion of the grade will be based on class participation, including students' interaction with their peers. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings, and should actively engage in class discussion, small group activities, practical exercises, case studies, simulation exercises, and other in-class exercises. Note that participation means contributing constructively to discussions based on one's reading of the assignments and one's personal knowledge of the topic being discussed, but it does not mean knowing all the answers. A question can be as valuable as a statement; an admission of confusion can lead to a clarification that is helpful to the whole class. Because students must be present to participate, attendance will be taken for every class. And punctuality is important.

For some classes, students will be divided into groups and expected to lead the discussion on certain topics by providing an overview, summarizing key elements, and raising questions. In order to enhance the learning experience, there will be at least 4 practical exercises in class, including case studies.

Final Research Paper

Students will be expected to submit a ***final paper*** on a topic, which will be assigned by the instructor. Please note this final paper makes up the largest percentage of the grade and will be due on the last day of class. The paper, at maximum, should be ***10 -12 pages in length or 5000 words***. Students will be expected to explore the topic in an original fashion, applying concepts learned during the course. The emphasis should be on good quality research and analysis, using both primary and secondary sources.

Grading Scale

Grade	Meaning	GPA Conversion
A	Exceptional; superior effort	4.0
A-	Excellent	3.7
B+	Very good	3.3
B	Good; meets program standards	3.0
B-	Meets program standards in most respects	2.7
C+	Requires moderate improvement	2.3
C	Requires significant improvement	2.0
C-	Requires extensive improvement	1.7
F	Fail – Did not meet minimal course requirements	0

Evaluation Criteria

- ❖ **Research Paper:** Clear evidence of wide and relevant research and critical thinking about the data and sources; a strong thesis or problem to address; effective analysis that leads to a compelling conclusion; good, accurate and persuasive writing.
- ❖ **Policy Memo:** Clear evidence of wide and relevant research and critical thinking about the data and sources; a strong thesis or problem to address; effective analysis that leads to a compelling conclusion; good, accurate and persuasive writing.
- ❖ **In-Class Exercises:** Contributions of insight to the analysis; raising questions showing insight into the implications of the analysis; accurate work.
- ❖ **Quizzes and Exams:** Mastery of the facts and scholarship involved; accurate answers; drawing insightful conclusions based on analysis.
- ❖ **Group Project:** Addressing the questions asked and drawing relevant and useful conclusions based on research and analysis; working together effectively as a team.
- ❖ **Presentation:** Clear understanding of the issues at hand; ability to present them in an interesting, lucid and professional manner appropriate to the audience.
- ❖ **Class Participation:** Active, respectful and collegial engagement in class discussion; evidence of reading and preparation.

Course Calendar

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
25	1	7	4	2
	8	21	11	9
	15 (NO CLASS)	28	18	
	22		25	
	29			

University Policies

- **Attendance and Lateness policy:** All students must attend class regularly. Your contribution to classroom learning is essential to the success of the course. Any more than two (2) absences (other than for verifiable medical or similar reasons) during the Fall and Spring and one (1) absence during the summer will likely lead to a need to withdraw from the course or a failing grade.
- **Incomplete policy:** Incompletes are only granted in extreme cases such as illness or other family emergency and only where almost all work for the semester has been successfully completed and the basis for the Incomplete can be verified. A student's procrastination in completing his/her paper is not a basis for an Incomplete.
- **Submission of work:** All written work must be submitted via the Assignment Tool on NYU Classes; student work will be scanned by Turnitin plagiarism-detection software.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically, plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer; a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; creative images, artwork, or design; or facts or ideas gathered, organized, and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing and not providing proper attribution. Since *plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention*, it is crucial that

acknowledgement of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism. ***Penalties for plagiarism range from automatic failure for a paper or course to dismissal from the University.***

Schedule of Class, Topics and Readings

Please note the following list of lecture topics and readings are subject to change during the course of the semester.

Week 1: January 25

Introduction and Background: The class will examine the beginnings of children's rights captured in clauses of International Declarations (aspirational and non-binding) to the question of *why children*, which culminated in the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989. Through this examination an introduction and overview of the course will be provided.

Required Reading:

- UNICEF Report, *25 years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: Is the World a better place for children?* A collection of essays marking the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2015

Week 2: February 1

International Legal Framework: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) - As the founding document for children's rights, the CRC will be examined in detail, including its principles "The Best Interest of the Child" and "Do No Harm", as well as the issue of "parental rights and responsibilities". The class will examine what is the CRC? What is the aim of the Convention? What are its functions?

Required Reading:

- OHCHR: *The Convention on the Rights of the Child: Full Text in PDF Format*
<http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- UNICEF Fact Sheet: A Summary of the Rights Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- UNICEF Report: Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, September 2007
- OHCHR Fact Sheet Number 10: The Rights of the Child
<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FactSheet10rev.1en.pdf>

Week 3: February 8

The International Legal Framework continued – The implementation and application of the CRC - This takes place through the CRC Committee, which is key in the promotion and protection of children's rights. The class will examine the mandate and the functions of the CRC committee.

Required Reading:

CRC Committee: Overview of the Committee, Reports, and General Recommendations
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIndex.aspx>

Week 4: February 22

The Optional Protocols of the CRC – All 3 optional protocols (optional protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; optional protocol on children in armed conflict; optional protocol for a communications procedure) will be examined, including their purposes and usefulness.

** The first in-class presentations will be made during this session.*

Required Reading:

- Innocenti Research Centre, Handbook on the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, February 2009
http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/optional_protocol_eng.pdf
- Cris R Revas, The Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on Sex Trafficking and Child Soldiers
- Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Guide to the Optional Protocol on the Use of Children in Armed Conflict, December 2003
- Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIndex.aspx>

Week 5: February 29

A World Fit For Children – The class will examine why the need for a World Summit on Children and for Special Sessions on Children. The class will examine the critical areas for children outlined in the outcome documents, and ask what have these forums done for the realization of children's rights?

Required Reading:

- Johnathan Todres, *The challenge of creating a world fit for children*, 2002
- United Nations Special Session on Children: Background, Documentation, Outcomes
<http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/wffc/>

** The first in-class practical exercise will be conducted during the session.*

**Please note, the first written assignment will be handed out on February 29 and will be due March 7. The assignment will focus on the international legal framework on children's rights. The assignment accounts for 15% of the grade.*

Week 6: March 7

Violence Against Children - We will examine how children's rights have evolved and progressed as a result of the changing international environment, the changing needs of children, and the current issues children are exposed to. We will begin by examining the issue of Violence Against Children (VAC), including the UN Study on VAC, which provides a detailed account of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, including clear recommendations for action to prevent and stop violence.

Required Reading:

- Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, *World Report on Violence Against Children*, 2006

[http://www.unicef.org/lac/full_text\(3\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/full_text(3).pdf)

- UN Report, *Toward a World Free from Violence, Global Survey on Violence Against Children*, 2013
http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/document/_921

Week 7: March 21

Children's right and juvenile justice – The class will examine the international norms and standards outlining the specific rights of children in juvenile justice to ensure that children in conflict with the law are treated with dignity and respect, in recognition of their level of development, and in ways which privilege re-education and rehabilitation rather than repression and punitive sanction.

Required Reading:

- SRSG on VAC, *Promoting Restorative Justice for Children*, 2013
<http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/page/919>
- Defense for Children International, *From Legislation to Action: Trends in Juvenile Justice Systems Across 15 Countries*, 2007
<https://www.defenceforchildren.org/files/DCI-JJ-Report-2007-FINAL-VERSION-with-cover.pdf>
- UNICEF, *Justice for children*,
http://www.unicef.org/protection/57929_57999.html

Week 8: March 28

Children in international peace and security – The class will examine the rights of children in the area of peace and security by focusing on children in armed conflict and the plight of child soldiers, including through the resolutions of the UN Security on children in armed conflict. The class will also examine the landmark case of the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo for recruiting and using child soldiers in conflict.

Required Reading:

- The Paris Principles: *Principles and Guidelines Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups*, p.4-7. 13-16
<http://www.unicef.org/emerg/files/ParisPrinciples310107English.pdf>
- UN Security Council Resolution on Children in Armed Conflict S/RES/1612 (2005)
<http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/2005/shtml>
- UN Report, *The 6 Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation*, November 2013
- Cynthia Chamberlain, *Children and the International Criminal Court: Analysis of the Rome Statute through a children's rights perspective*, 2015
<https://www.crin.org/en/library/publications/children-and-international-criminal-court-analysis-rome-statute-through>

Week 9: April 4

Children's rights in international development – Examine children's rights in relation to socio-economic

development and poverty eradication by focusing on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), specifically the goals related to children, their education, health, and child poverty. And with a new Post 2015 Development Agenda adopted in September 2015, the class will examine the issue of children in relation to the new agenda and assess what are the expectations for children's rights and what issues related to children should be captured in the new agenda.

Guest Lecturer: Cecilia Anicama, Office of the SRSO on VAC and expert on the issue of 'Business and Children's Rights'.

Required Reading:

- Gillian Mann, *My World My Vision: Consultations with Children on their priorities for the Post 2015 Framework*, 2012
- UNICEF, *Children and the MDG'S*
http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Children_and_the_MDGs.pdf
- UNICEF, *A Post 2015 World Fit for Children: A review of the Open Working Group Report on Sustainable Development Goals from a Child Rights Perspective*, 2014
- UNICEF, *Key Messages on the Post 2015 Development Agenda*, 2013
http://www.unicef.org/post2015/files/Post_2015_Key_Messages_V07.pdf

** Please note that the second written assignment will be handed out on April 4 and will be due on April 11. The assignment will focus on the evolution and progress made on children's rights, as well as the many challenges. The assignment accounts for 15% of the grade.*

Week 10: April 11

The Girl Child – We will focus on the status of the girl child by examining issues that affect the girl child by virtue of the fact that girls are both children and young women, and issues that require specific and targeted attention. In this regard attention will be paid to issues of child marriage, gender based violence in schools, female genital mutilation and issues of adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights.

Required Reading:

- Plan International, *The State of the World's Girls*, 2011, 2012, 2013
- UNFPA Report, *Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage*, 2012
- Equality Now, *Protecting the Girl Child*
http://www.equalitynow.org/sites/default/files/Protecting_the_Girl_Child.pdf
- Plan International, *A Girl's Right to Learn Without Fear*, 2012
<http://plan-international.org/girls/reports-and-publications/all-publications-en.php?lang=en>
- UNICEF, *Bringing Girls into Focus*,
http://www.unicef.org/gender/files/UNICEF_Beijing_plus_15_Brining_Girls_Into_Focus_Revise_d.pdf
- UNICEF, *Women and Children's Rights: Making the Connection*, 2011
http://www.unicef.org/gender/files/Women_Children_Rights_UNFPA_UNICEF_final.pdf

Week 11: April 18

The Girl Child continued – The class will learn how an NGO works on the promotion and protection of the rights of girls, including the challenges and opportunities. The focus will be on “Why the Girl Child?”

Guest Speaker: Zara Rapoport, Gender Advisor and ‘Because I am Girl’ Leader from Plan International

Week 12: April 25

How do States ensure the promotion and protection of the human rights of children? An overview of a State’s obligations and responsibilities will be provided, including through the development of national laws and national institutions.

** This class will take the form of In-Class Presentations: Students will be expected to make presentations on the development and implementation of a national action plan to uphold children’s rights.*

** Requirements and instructions for the Final paper will be handed out on April 25. The paper is due on the last day of class, May 9. The final paper accounts for 40% of the grade.*

Week 13: May 2

The need for effective implementation and monitoring of children’s rights – An overview and understanding will be provided on the international and regional bodies responsible for the implementation and monitoring of children’s rights, such as UNICEF, the OHCHR, the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Children, the Special Representative on Children in Armed Conflict etc.

Required Reading:

- UNICEF, *Governance and the Rights of Children*, 2012
http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/iwp_2012_11.pdf
- Office of the Special Representative on Violence Against Children
<http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/srsg/mandate>
- Office of the Special Representative on Children in Armed Conflict
<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org>
- UNICEF Report: *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, September 2007
http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Implementation_Handbook_for_the_Convention_on_the_Rights_of_the_Child_Part_1_of_3.pdf

Week 14: May 9

Final Presentations to be made by each student his/her final research paper.