

UGA CURO Research Course
INTL 4622R (INTL 4770): GLOBIS Human Rights Research
FALL 2020, MWF 10:10 AM – 11:00 AM

Instructor: K. Chad Clay
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Prerequisites: HONS 1000H or 15 Completed Hours

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION & STUDENT OBJECTIVES:

Human rights are crucial tools for ensuring that people live lives of dignity, allowing us “to fully develop and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents, and our conscience and to satisfy our spiritual and other needs” (United Nations 1987, 4). Despite this importance in the experience of daily life, human rights are poorly understood by the American public. They are rarely covered in basic, required education, and infrequently discussed in any systematic way by the media. The GLOBIS Human Rights Lab focuses on this gap by encouraging students to work with existing human rights research projects at GLOBIS to produce original work that analyzes and educates the public about human rights practices.

In this course, students will:

- (1) learn about human rights, international law, non-governmental organizations, education, the communication of scientific findings to the public, and the conduct of quantitative social scientific research,
- (2) learn how to conduct research both academic and practitioner settings,
- (3) have the opportunity to serve as research assistants for human rights measurement projects, such as the Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI) and the Sub-National Analysis of Repression Project (SNARP),
- (4) work on various public-facing projects, including data visualization, blog posts, and other materials,
- (5) have the opportunity to produce educational and journalistic work on human rights for a public audience,
- (6) conduct their own independent research on human rights,
- (7) present results in writing and in other communication formats, and
- (8) receive feedback from the faculty mentor on their research progress and written, oral, or digital presentation of results or key products.

REQUIRED READINGS:

A thorough literature review will be a required part of this course. Other required readings may be assigned as needed.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES & ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance, Participation, & Conscientiousness (30% of final grade)

Students participating in the lab will be expected to attend agreed upon meetings and to actively participate in and contribute to those meetings. Attendance and conscientious participation are a necessary condition for satisfactory achievement in this class.

Human Rights Data Project (30% of final grade)

As a part of this course, you will gain experience assessing government human rights practices by working with a human rights data project. Human rights data like these are utilized by scholars and students who seek to test theories about the causes and consequences of human rights violations, as well as policy makers and analysts who seek to estimate the human rights effects of a wide variety of institutional changes and public policies. Indeed, previous data projects that I have worked on have been utilized by hundreds of governments and organizations worldwide, including the United States' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Commission, and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), among others. As such, your work on this project is very serious and important, with implications that go far beyond your grade in this course.

Your assignments will depend on the specific data project you are assigned and the goals of that data project during the semester. More information will be provided on this as the semester progresses.

Research Project (40% of final grade)

At the end of the course, you will turn in a research project. This project will have a significant writing component, but could also include other creative components, such as videos, podcasts, photography projects, blogs, performances, or other creative endeavors. Overall, the project should rely on existing information, as well as research that you conduct on your own, to answer a question concerning some aspect of human rights. This project will be a central focus of the course from the very beginning; thus, we will discuss it in greater detail over the duration of the semester.

MEETINGS & STUDENT TIME REQUIREMENTS

The student will typically meet with the instructor three times a week, MWF 10:10 AM – 11 AM. The student will be expected to spend at least 12 hours per week on Human Rights Lab tasks, including time spent in meetings with the instructor and the student's own independent research. In general, this will mean spending a minimum of 9 hours outside of class on research work every week.