UMKC School of Law Fall 2011

COURSE NAME: International Human Rights Law

COURSE NUMBER: 8831R

PROFESSOR: Rana Lehr-Lehnardt

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: None

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES: International Law

COURSE BOOKS:


METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:

Grades will be based on (1) a final paper, (2) a short presentation, and (3) class participation. The professor reserves the right to administer announced quizzes (which will also count toward the final grade) if she deems it necessary to ensure that students read assignments.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

This course will explore the theoretical foundation, history, and development of that branch of international law devoted to human rights protections and enforcements. The course will examine the substantive law and how it fits within the international legal order as well as its interaction with the domestic legal regimes of the many countries of the world. Additionally, the course will examine international and domestic human rights enforcement mechanisms and institutions. Those institutions include international institutions such as the International Criminal Court and the European Court of Human Rights, as well as domestic institutions such as domestic law courts.

The course examines major international and regional human rights instruments as well as international and domestic enforcement mechanisms. General issues covered include the universality of human rights versus cultural relativism, civil society and other non-state actors, the UN system, and conflicts between rights. Specific rights studied will depend on the interests of students. Possible rights to focus on during the semester include women’s rights, children’s rights, the right to development, self-determination, socio-economic rights, civil and political rights, the intersection between multi-national corporations and human rights, etc.

RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:

A study of international human rights is crucial to understanding many of the current issues facing the world, its societies, and the many individuals suffering daily human rights abuses. A knowledge of
international human rights law can prove useful in a variety of career settings including practice in the following domestic arenas: U.S. constitutional law (it figured heavily in the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on the death penalty for minors); Immigration Law (e.g., amnesty petitions frequently focus on human rights issues); Civil Rights (including race and gender discrimination issues); Family Law; and even in Corporate Law (multinational corporations have recently been forced to adopt human rights codes of conduct following alleged complicity in human rights abuses). Accordingly, a U.S., and indeed a KC attorney, would be well served to have an understanding of modern International Human Rights.

**RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR MO/MULTI-STATE BAR EXAMINATION:**

This course has limited relevance for the Bar Exam, it could enhance a student’s understanding of some constitutional law issues.