

International Human Rights Advocacy (#235), Professor Julia L. Ernst

First Class Reading Assignment

Welcome to International Human Rights Advocacy! We will not use an assigned textbook in this class. Instead, we will rely on sources that can be accessed electronically (e.g., through the Internet, Westlaw, etc.) or through the library. In preparation for our first class, please explore the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website:

- <http://www.ohchr.org>

Please especially peruse the following links on that page:

- The link at the top labeled “What Are Human Rights?”
- The tabs across the top labeled “About Us,” “Issues,” “Human Rights Bodies,” and “Publications and Resources,” and
- The Quick Selection at the bottom labeled “Civil Society.”

Please also explore the International Justice Resource Center website:

- <http://www.ijrcenter.org/>

Please especially peruse the following links at the top of that page:

- “Human Rights Law,”
- “Courts & Monitoring Bodies,” and
- “Media & Publications.”

When exploring these websites, please think about the following questions (you do not have to write out nor hand in your answers):

1. Why do so many different kinds of human rights mechanisms exist? What purposes do they serve, and what are their goals?
2. What methods can civil society (e.g., non-governmental organizations) use to influence the human rights mechanisms? Try to come up with as many different methods as you can, and think about which methods might be the most effective and why.
3. What are some of the most important issues that are being addressed by the human rights mechanisms? What issues are missing?

Please also think about topics you would be interested in exploring more deeply through this course. We will be working on several projects in this seminar where you will have input in selecting the focus—so think about issues and countries or regions in which you might be interested. Have fun, and I look forward to seeing you in our first class!