**International Human Rights Advocacy, Professor Julia L. Ernst**

**First Class Reading Assignment: Monday, August 23, 3:00-6:00 p.m., Room 6**

Welcome to International Human Rights Advocacy! For this seminar, instead of requiring you to purchase a textbook, we will rely on free resources 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 take a look at 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 take a look at 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** need to write out or 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?

1. 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.
2. 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. You will have input in selecting the focus of our seminar—so please reflect upon issues and countries you might be interested in examining.

Have fun, and I look forward to seeing you in our first class!