International Law, International Organizations and Human Rights
Heather M. Smith

Goals of the Course
We begin with an introduction to international law and the debates within this field. We then move on to consider the actors in international law including: states and governments, regional supervisory mechanisms, international organizations and NGO’s. In the third part of the course students are asked to evaluate and compare the contributions of the international community in a variety of human rights crises including: the Nuremburg Tribunals, the UN tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and the global “War on Terror.”

Required Texts
3) Course reader with all additional articles listed in the syllabus.

Grading
Grading for this course will be based on the following:
1 Midterm exam on February 22nd (20%)
Participation in 1 of 3 UN or international tribunal simulations on March 1st, March 8th or March 15th (20%)
Participation and attendance (15%) 
Final Exam (45%)

Course Outline and Assignments

I. Overview of and debates about international law
Week 1
January 9: What is international law?
Malanczuk, chapter 1: Introduction and chapter 2: History and Theory
January 11: Sources of international law
Malanczuk chapter 3: Sources of International Law

Week 2: Debates about international law
January 16: Is international law the domain of powerful states?
Baehr, chapter 2: Universalism versus Cultural Relativism and chapter 3: Gross and Systematic Violations.
January 18: Dealing with past human rights violations
Baehr, chapter 9: How to Deal with Past Violations.

Week 3: Jurisdiction issues in international law
January 23: Establishing jurisdiction
Malanzcuk. Chapter 7: Jurisdiction
January 25: Jurisdiction in context: The US and the Alien Tort Claims Act

Week 4: The compliance debate
January 30: Compliance
February 1: Compliance and human rights

II. Actors in International Law: States, International Organizations, and Non-Governmental Organizations

Week 5: States and Governments and Regional Organizations
February 6: States and Governments
Malanzcuk, chapter 5: States and Governments
February 8: Regional Courts
Baehr, chapter 7: Regional Supervisory Mechanisms

Week 6: International Organizations
January 13: Background on IO’s
Malanzcuk, chapter 6: International Organizations, Individuals, Companies and Groups.
February 15: Critique of the IO’s and the UN
Baehr, chapter 6: The United Nations Organs.
Week 7: The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations
February 20: NGO’s
   Baehr, chapter 10: Non-Governmental Organizations
   International Studies Quarterly 4.
February 22: MIDTERM EXAM (in class)

III. Human Rights Crises: What Role Can International Law Play?

Week 8: Case #1: The Nuremberg Trials
February 27: Background on war crimes trials and Nuremburg
   The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Issue 2.3 August.
   Read Chapter 5: Nuremburg only.
March 1: Simulation #1: The Nuremburg Trials

Week 9: Case #2: The United Nations Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
March 6: Background on Yugoslavia
   Law Review, no. 7.
March 8: Simulation #2: The Tadic Case

Week 10: Case #3: The War on Terror
March 13: Background on the war on terror
   Taft and Buchwald. 2003. “Preemption, Iraq and International Law. 97 The
   American Journal of International Law, no. 3.
   American Journal of International Law, no. 3.

Final Exam