

NGOs IN WORLD POLITICS

GOV. 465/665
SPRING 2009
SAWYER, RM. 1134
W 5:30-8:10

INSTRUCTOR INFO

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes an analytical approach to understanding the role of non-governmental organizations in world politics. We begin by looking at competing theoretical frameworks that seek to explain the work that NGOs do and their impact on international politics. Next, we turn to the issue of accountability and ask two inextricable questions: 1) In what ways do governments and political actors hold NGOs accountable? and 2) In what ways do NGOs hold governments and political actors accountable? We build on that debate by examining the tools and strategies that NGOs deploy. Finally, we take a more practical look at the work of NGOs by examining their internal politics and the business and administrative challenges that they face as organizations. This course will be writing-intensive, and students also will have the opportunity to develop their presentation skills. Further, the course will have a strong community-oriented focus. We will invite speakers from the NGO community to speak to our class, and most importantly, students will embark on an in-depth research project that will apply our studies in the classroom to the work of a Boston-based NGO.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **Class Participation (15%):** This course will be run as a seminar, and your daily contribution to discussion is crucial. This means coming to class having read and thought about the readings. Come prepared to participate *actively*, and remember, quality counts just as much as quantity. Attendance is mandatory, although I do allow two “free pass” days over the course of the semester. You needn’t tell me why you won’t be attending seminar on these days. After that, any absence will affect your grade negatively; with three or more absences you are in serious risk of failing the class.
- **Discussion Leader (10%):** Each student will lead our discussion once over the course of the semester. Because we have more students than weeks, you will work in pairs to prepare: 1) a one-page handout for the class that summarizes the readings; 2) a set of discussion questions; and 3) a 7-10 minute presentation.
- **NGO Project (75%):**
 - **Paper 1 (20%)—Crafting a Theoretical Framework:** For this first paper, students should choose a theoretical framework/question to explore in depth. The options are nearly limitless. Students might choose to examine how grassroots NGOs are held accountable, how local NGOs pursue global objectives, or how NGOs seek to obtain and maintain their moral authority, to name just a few ideas. The theoretical papers should draw on existing scholarship and highlight any gaps in the literature. They also should raise empirical questions about NGOs and their place in the world, which the students will try to answer through their subsequent research (see Paper 2). Graduate student papers should be 6-8 pages long; undergraduate student papers should be 5-7 pages long. All students should include an annotated works cited list. Paper 1 is due in class on 2.18.09.

- **Paper 2—Understanding NGOs: New Investigations (20%):** For the second paper, students should examine how the development and work of a Boston-area NGO fits with the theoretical framework that they expounded in the first paper. Students should rely on the NGO's website and annual reports, as well as secondary sources. Most importantly, students should contact the NGOs directly and interview individuals who work there to round out their research. Students should write up their research in the form of an analytical essay. Graduate student papers should be 8-10 pages and undergraduate papers should be 6-8 pages. In addition, students should include a works cited list, synopses of their interviews and contact information for their interviewees. Paper 2 is due in class on 4.1.09.
 - **Paper 3—Developing a Business Plan (15%):** In this paper, students should apply what they have learned through lectures, readings and outside research about the administrative aspect of NGOs and create a business plan for the NGO they have been studying. To do so, students will need to understand the organizational structure and business goals of their NGOs. We will look at a sample NGO business plan and discuss the paper in more depth during the semester. The business plan should be 3-5 pages long and is due in class on 4.15.09.
 - **Paper 4—Executive Summary (10%):** Students should compile all of their research, including the business plan, into a two-page (single-spaced) executive summary. The summary is due on the last day of class, 4.22.09.
 - **Presentation (10%):** Each student will give a ten-minute presentation based on his or her NGO project at the end of the semester. The presentations should be professional, well-prepared and supported with handouts, PowerPoint or similar. All students' presentation materials—regardless of presentation date—should be emailed to me by 8:00 AM on 4.15.09 to allow for photocopying handouts, uploading PowerPoint, etc.
- **Academic Honesty**
I have a zero-tolerance policy for academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Handbooks for the University's policies for plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty. If you have any questions concerning the proper use of citations or sourcing, I would be more than happy to answer them.

READINGS

You should complete the assigned readings for the week prior to our Monday class meeting. We will rely on four primary texts this semester, and occasionally, I will ask you to read an article from a scholarly journal, think-tank or policy institution. You can access the academic articles through the Sawyer Library Electronic Journal Database; links for the other readings are included in the course outline, below.

The required books we will use are:

- Crutchfield, Leslie and Heather McLeod Grant. *Forces for Good: The Six Practices of High-Impact Nonprofits*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008.
- DeMars, William. *NGOs and Transnational Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics*. London: Pluto, 2005.
- Hopgood, Steven. *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty International*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006.
- *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?*, Tom Mertes et. al, eds. New York: Verso, 2004.
- *NGO Accountability: Politics, Principles and Innovations*, Lisa Jordan and Peter van Tuijl, eds. London: Earthscan, 2007.
- Sikkink, Kathryn and Margaret Keck. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: Introduction to NGOs (1.14.09)

- DeMars, *NGOs and Transnational Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics* (Ch. 1).

Week 2: The History of NGOs (1.21.09)

- Keck and Sikkink *Activists Beyond Borders* (Ch. 2).
- Smith, Pagnucco and Lopez, "Globalizing Human Rights: The Work of Transnational Human Rights NGOs in the 1990s," in *Human Rights Quarterly* (1998), 20: pp. 379-412.
- Charnovitz, "Two Centuries of Participation: NGOs and International Governance," *Michigan Journal of International Law* (1996) 18.

Week 3: Theories of NGOs: Normative Approaches (1.28.09)

- Boli and Thomas, "World Culture in the World Polity: A Century of International Non-Governmental Organization," in *American Sociological Review* (1997), 62(2): pp. 171-190.
- Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Chs. 1, 3 and 4; skim the rest).

Week 4: Theories of NGOs: Structural Approaches (2.4.09)

- DeMars, *NGOs and Transnational Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics* (Chs. 2, 3, 5 and 6).
- Wallerstein, "New Revolts Against the System," in *A Movement of Movements*.
- Wagner, "Reframing "Social Origins" Theory: The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere," in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* (2000), 29(4): pp. 541-553.

Week 5: Activism and Seeking Government Accountability: Naming, Shaming, Framing and Information Politics (2.11.09)

- Finnemore and Sikkink, "International Norms and Political Change," in *International Organization* (1998) 52(4) : pp. 887-919.
- Price, "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines," in *International Organization* (1998), 52(3): 613-644.
- Gulbrandsen and Andresen, "NGO Influence in the Implementation of the Kyoto Protocol: Compliance, Flexibility Mechanisms, and Sinks," in *Global Environmental Politics* (2004) 4(4): pp. 54-75.
- Palit, "Monsoon Risings," in *A Movement of Movements*.
- **Also, read Appendices A-C on doing research about NGOs in *Forces for Good* to help prepare you for interviewing people at the NGO you are studying.**

Week 6: Direct Activism: Protests, Demonstrations and Violence (2.18.09)

- O'Neill, "Transnational Protest: States, Circuses, and Conflict at the Frontline of Global Politics," in *International Studies Review* (2004), 6(2): pp. 233-252.
- Bob, "Political Process Theory and Transnational Movements: Dialectics of Protest among Nigeria's Ogoni Minority," in *Social Problems* (2002), 49(2): 395-415.
- Marcos, "The Hourglass of the Zapatistas," in *A Movement of Movements*.
- Sellers, "Raising a Ruckus," in *A Movement of Movements*.

Paper 1: Developing a Theoretical Framework Due 2.18.09.

Week 7: NGOs and IOs (2.27.09)

- Clark, Friedman, and Hochstetler, Kathryn, "The Sovereign Limits of Global Civil Society: A Comparison of NGO Participation in UN World Conferences on the Environment, Human Rights, and Women," in *World Politics* (1998), 51(1): pp. 1-35.
- Rustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions," in *International Studies Quarterly* (2002), 41(4): 719-740.

- Sanchez, "Brief observations on the mechanisms for NGO participation in the WTO," *Sur International Journal of Human Rights* (2006), 4(3): pp. 103-127. (Available under "2006" at <http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/int/wto/index.htm>.)

Week 8: Unpacking NGO Networks (3.4.09)

- Loveman, "High Risk Collective Action: Defending Human Rights in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay," in *American Journal of Sociology* (1998), 104(2): pp. 477-525.
- Kaufmann and Pape, "Explaining Costly International Moral Action: Britain's Sixty-year Campaign against the Atlantic Slave Trade," in *International Organization* (1999), 53(4), pp. 631-668.
- Naím, "Al Qaeda, the NGO," in *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2002). (Available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=1833.)

Week 9: Accountability for NGOs (3.11.09)

- Jordan and van Tuijl, "Rights and Responsibilities in the Political Landscape of NGO Accountability: Introduction and Overview," in *NGO Accountability* (Ch. 1).
- Armstrong, "The Limits and Risks of Regulation: The case of the World Bank-supported *Drafts Handbook on Good Practices for Laws Relating to NGOs*" in *NGO Accountability* (Ch. 4).
- Xiaoguang and Li, "NGO Governance in China: Achievements and Dilemmas," in *NGO Accountability* (Ch. 8).
- Antlöv et. al., "NGO Governance and Accountability in Indonesia: Challenges in a Newly Democratizing Country," in *NGO Accountability* (Ch. 9).

Week 10: Spring Break (No class 3.18.09)

Week 11: Inside NGOs (3.25.09)

- Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty International*.

Week 12: NGOs as Businesses (4.1.09)

- Cooley and Ron, "The NGO Scramble: Organizational Insecurity and the Political Economy of Transnational Action," in *International Security* (2002), 27(1): 5-39.
- Crutchfield and MacLeod Grant, *Forces for Good* (Intro and Chapters 1-3, 5, 7 and 9. Skim the rest).

Paper 2: Understanding NGOs Due 4.1.09.

Week 13: The Future of NGOs (4.8.09)

- Sader, "Beyond Civil Society," in *A Movement of Movements*.
- Klein, "Reclaiming the Commons," in *A Movement of Movements*.
- Kovach, "Addressing Accountability at the Global Level: The Challenges Facing International NGOs," in *NGO Accountability*.
- DeMars, "Changing Partners, Shaping Progress: The Future of NGOs," in *NGOs and Transnational Networks: Wild Cards in World Politics* (Ch. 7).
- Government of Norway, "New Roles for Non-Governmental Organisations in Development Cooperation. Section 4: Future Roles for NGOs." (Available at: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/Documents/Reports-programmes-of-action-and-plans/Reports/2006/New-roles-for-non-governmental-organisations-in-development-cooperation/5.html?id=420468>.)

Week 14: Presentations (4.15.09) Paper 3: Business Plan and Presentation Outline Due 4.15.09

Week 15: Presentations (4.22.09) Paper 4: Executive Summary Due 4.22.09