Beyond the Classroom Living and Learning Program

UNIV 389G: Beyond the Classroom Seminar III
Solving Converging Global Crises:
The Role of the United Nations and Civil Society in
Advancing Global Governance

Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD (3 credits)
Section 0101; 1102 South Campus Commons, Building 1
Thursdays, 3:30-6:00 pm, Spring Semester 2012

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Course Overview
The recent global economic and financial crisis has underscored the need to understand
other emerging global crises that are interrelated, and to develop effective approaches
for action. What are the key converging global crises that threaten human security and
planetary systems that must be solved in the next 30 years? How do we develop
integrated approaches and effective solutions that cut across these converging global
crises? Specifically, how do we understand the cross-cutting factors that affect climate
change, health epidemics, HIV/AIDS, environmental decline, poverty, unemployment,
the economic recession as well as energy, food and water shortages? In order to solve
these cross-sectoral and inter-connected issues, key actors from international
organizations, government and civil society need to work together to develop joint,
integrated solutions to these global issues and converging crises. The purpose of this
multi-disciplinary research seminar is to enable students to explore how the United
Nations and civil society organizations can work together to help inform and advance
this critical research agenda and implement effective solutions to these converging
global crises.
This multi-disciplinary seminar will enable students to develop their leadership skills by working collaboratively with their peers on a joint research and civic action project to understand the scope and magnitude of key global crises, the inter-connections among these crises, and the possibilities for developing effective solutions. Students will do collaborative research on the inter-connections among key global issues and prepare a joint report for presentation to a Global Civic Forum involving key leaders. Students’ research will be showcased in Beyond the Classroom’s Democratic Approaches to Global Governance (DAGG) newsletter.

**The Challenge and Inspiration**

**The Need for Immediate, Integrated Action on Climate Change**

**The Need to Reform the Global Governance System**
...[T]here is a tight nexus between reform of individual international institutions and reform of the global governance system and its apex institutions. Without progress on both fronts the international system will not have the capacity to provide the world’s population with adequate responses to the issues of health, education, gender equality, environmental sustainability, poverty reduction, financial stability, economic growth, human rights, good governance, and personal security. If the international system does not develop the capacity to meet the challenges of the global age, it will fail to have ‘practical meaning,’ and it will falter and slip behind in meeting humanity’s hopes and expectations.” – Colin I. Bradford, Jr., and Johannes F. Linn, eds., (2007), Global Governance Reform: Breaking the Stalemate. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, pp. 130-131.

**On the Moral Responsibility to Act:**
“It is the responsibility of all citizens to prevent us from sleepwalking into another avoidable catastrophe that our children would have to face.” – Paul Collier, (2007). The Bottom Billion. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 176.

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste” – Hazel Henderson, economist.

**Embracing Crisis and Change as an Opportunity for Renewal**
“We need a new approach to the great challenges we are confronting.... We need to be comfortable with constant change, radical surprises, and even breakdown, because these are now inevitable features of our world, and we must constantly anticipate a wide variety of futures. With a prospective mind we’ll be better able to turn surprise and breakdown, when they happen, to our advantage. In other words, we’ll be better able to achieve what I call catagenesis – the creative renewal of our technologies, institutions, and societies in the aftermath of breakdown.” – Thomas Homer-Dixon, (2006), The Upside of Down, p. 268.
Course Expectations
Students are expected to participate actively in framing and shaping discussion and to reflect critically on the key concepts and ideas presented in the readings and discussion. Students are encouraged draw on both their own academic and experiential insights to understand the main dimensions affecting the possibilities for transforming leadership for effective engagement on global issues. Some seminar time will be devoted to collaborative group project meetings to define priorities, clarify roles and responsibilities, and delegate tasks for joint civic projects.

Course Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete this course will fulfill the following learning outcomes and will be able to:

1. Engage in knowledge building, problem-solving and critical thinking about vital civic and policy issues at the global level;
2. Understand and apply the concept of global civic engagement and strategies for enhancing civic action and advancing global governance by undertaking participatory action research that addresses complex global trends and issues;
3. Develop their leadership capacities and skills for fostering civil discourse and effective professional practices in the civil society sector;
4. Identify the key civic values, attitudes and expectations that motivate them personally as well as others to engage in global leadership and civic action;
5. Engage in effective communication (i.e., writing, class discussion, and presentations) and outreach to key stakeholders to increase awareness about key global crises.

Assessment and Grading:
Assessment of student performance will be based on the following course requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Weighting (percent)</th>
<th>Relevant Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Active Participation in Seminar and Civic Events (Conference &amp; Global Civic Forum)</td>
<td>• On-line commentary • Active Class Discussion</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• Comment on-line each week, weeks 2-11</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Interview with Key Actors on Global Crises</td>
<td>• Interview Questions • Analysis</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• March 8, 2012&lt;br&gt;• April 12, 2012</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Civic Project Research Design and Literature Review</td>
<td>• Issue Brief • Research Strategy • Action Plan</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>• March 1, 2012&lt;br&gt;• March (in class)&lt;br&gt;• April 19, 2012</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Civic Project Final Paper (collaborative project)</td>
<td>• 12-15 pages</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>May 10, 2012</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Civic Project Presentation</td>
<td>• Global Civic Forum</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>May 3, 2012</td>
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Participation in Class Discussion: You must regularly come prepared to participate actively in discussions, both on-line and in class! Based on each week’s readings, you will write a brief commentary (1-2 paragraph) that addresses the key questions:

- How should we frame this issue?
- How can global civic action solve this issue?

Your participation will be on how your participation, in terms of comments, ideas and questions, helps to enhance and to advance our overall collective understanding through critical discussion and listening. The occasional good question or thoughtful comment on the material being discussed will serve us all better than unsupported opinions. I use the following criteria to assign the participation component of your overall grade.

A = Highly Effective Participant: Insightful questions and comments; clearly does the reading and goes beyond by introducing other relevant material.
B = Consistent Participant: Thoughtful questions and comments; clearly does the reading.
C = Occasional Participant: Regularly attend class; sporadic involvement in discussions; often based on personal opinion rather than analysis of class material.
D = Observer: Regularly attend class, but does not get involved in class discussions.
F = Occasional Observer: Sporadic attendance; no participation in class.

Course Requirements:
Students will conduct, both individually and as part of a group, a research project using the model of civic-based participatory research. Students are expected to engage in systematic inquiry, identifying and applying relevant methodological approaches that are most appropriate to addressing these global crises under study. Students are encouraged identify key stakeholders and resources to define appropriate civic projects.

Course articles and materials will be distributed in class and also be made available either on-line, or through the course web site on ELMS.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY INFORMATION
The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit http://www.shc.umd.edu. To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).” Website: www.shc.umd.edu

Course Evaluation
You are highly encouraged to participate in the new campus-wide online course evaluation system, CourseEvalUM, in order to provide you valuable feedback about this
Course. CourseEvalUM will be open for all students to complete evaluations. You can go to the web site: www.courseevalum.umd.edu to complete your evaluation.

Course Schedule

Week 1, January 27, 2012: Overview of the Seminar: The Global Civic Leadership Initiative

Key Themes for the Seminar

1. **Global Threats and Crises:** What are the key converging global crises that affect human well-being and the future of the planet?
   - Video: The 11th Hour (2007); The Greenpeace Agenda (2009); Collapse (2010)

2. **Economic Globalization and Restructuring:** How do we rethink and reform the global system?
   - Video: Where Is the World Going, Mr. Stiglitz? (2007)

3. **Global Institutions and Actors:** Who is responsible for solving these converging global crises?
   - Video: Where Is the World Going, Mr. Stiglitz? (2007)

The Main Components of the Global Civic Leadership Initiative

1. **Research Seminar (UNIV389G) on “Solving Converging Global Crises” (Spring Semester 2011):** This research and advocacy seminar will enable students to do collaborative research on the inter-connections among key global issues and prepare a joint report for presentation to a Global Civic Forum involving key leaders here on campus. Research/travel stipends have been approved for students to do interviews with leading officials and civil society activists working on these issues.

2. **Conference on “Global Challenges: Global Solutions” in Washington, D.C. (March 15-17, 2012):** This public conference, organized by Citizens for Global Solutions, will draw on international (e.g., United Nations, U.N. Foundation, International Criminal Court), government (White House, U.S. State Department, U.S. Congress) and civil society organizations from New York and Washington, D.C. to understand the complexities and challenges to developing effective solutions to various global challenges ranging from the nuclear arms proliferation, global climate change, and the roles of the International Criminal Court, United Nations and the G-8/G-20 in advancing global governance. The conference will highlight the main policy lessons and research issues, and inform new curricular and co-curricular content and opportunities for preparing students for future leadership on these global issues. On Thursday, March 17th, students will participate in a Lobby Day on Capitol Hill on these global issues, and on Friday, March 16th, students will participate in an all-day briefing at the White House with senior policy advisors and U.S. State Department officials.

3. **Global Civic Forum, University of Maryland (Thursday, May 3, 2012):** We propose to offer this global learning opportunity to prepare students for leadership on global issues. Students will share their findings with the broader campus and members of the relevant community (e.g., public forum, conference, hearing, video presentation, etc.). This Global Civic Forum will enable students to network with key civil society leaders and to help them understand the processes for initiating effective dialogue between civil society and intergovernmental decision makers such as the United Nations (i.e. assess the
implications for meeting the Millennium development Goals), the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the G-8/G-20.

- **Discuss ideas for potential civic research and action projects**

**Week 2, February 2, 2012: Global Trends, Threats and Crises:** *What are the key converging global crises that affect human well-being and the future of the planet?*

- **Video:** *Averting the Global Triple Crisis* (2007, International Forum on Globalization)

**Required Readings:**

**Week 3, February 9, 2012: Embracing the Inspiration and Challenge of Envisioning a Better World: Setting a Research Agenda for Action**

**COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS:** Please prepare a commentary (on ELMS, see Discussion Board) on the required readings (submit 1-2 paragraphs) on two of the global issues or crises below:

1. What constitutes a “global crisis?” What is the threshold when an issue becomes a crisis?
2. What criteria and measures should we use to gauge whether an issue constitutes a crisis or not?
   a. **Scope of the Issue:** Not geographically limited;
   b. **Magnitude of the Issue:** It reverberates and affects a significant percentage (what percent?) of the population?
   c. **Time Horizon:** What time period is appropriate for gauging whether to take action? A human lifetime?
   d. **Urgency and Feasibility to Act**
   e. **Other factors?**
3. What priorities should guide us in whether “to solve” a global issue or crisis, or not?

**Required Readings:**


- **All Read:** Introduction: What Should We Do First? pp. ix-xxi.
- **Choose Any 2 Chapters:** Chapter 1: Global Warming; Chapter 2: Communicable Diseases; Chapter 3: The Challenge of Reducing the Global Incidence of Civil War; Chapter 4: Toward a Consensus for Addressing the Global Challenge of the Lack of Education; Chapter 5: The Challenge of Poor Governance and Corruption; Chapter 6: Hunger and Malnutrition; Chapter 7: Population and Migration; Chapter 8: The Water Challenge; Chapter 9: Subsidies and Trade Barriers).

  - **All Read:** Chapter 1: Rapidly Converging Global Trends; Chapter 2: Breakdowns; Chapter 3: Breakthroughs, pp. 5-50.


- The Earth Charter (www.earthcharter.org).

**Further Readings:**


**Week 4, February 16, 2010: The Planetary Threat of Global Climate Change: Global Dimensions and Civic Action**

**Video:** *Where Is the World Going, Mr. Stiglitz?* (2007); *The 11th Hour* (2007)

**Readings:**


**Further Resources:**


**Week 5, February 23, 2012: GLOBAL ENERGY FUTURES AND SECURITY**

(1) Peak Oil and the Global Energy Crisis; and

(2) Global Security and Nuclear Proliferation

**Video:** *Crude Impact* (2007)

(1) Peak Oil and the Global Energy Crisis

**Readings:**


• Energy Futures Group materials. (To be posted to ELMS)

**Further Reading:**

(2) Global Security and Nuclear Proliferation

**Required Readings:**

**Further Resources:**


*Is it possible to envision and to mobilize the world to solve the HIV/AIDS pandemic?*

**Assignment Due:** Issue Brief on two global issues (due in class, March 10)

**Video:** *The Age of AIDS; Pandemic: Facing AIDS*

**Readings:**
Week 7, March 8, 2012: A World without Poverty? Transforming Leadership to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals

Assignment Due: Interview with Key Actors on Global Crises: Submit key questions for your interview and global expert.


“Ending poverty is the great opportunity of our time, a commitment that would not only relieve mass suffering and spread economic well-being, but would also promote the other...objectives of democracy, global security and the advance of science.” – Jeffrey D. Sachs, (2005) The End of Poverty, p. 360.

Readings:
  Chapter 1: Falling Behind and Falling Apart: The Bottom Billion, pp. 3-13.
  Chapter 11: An Agenda for Action, 175-192.

Further Resources:
- United Nations Development Program, Human Development Reports.

**Week 8, March 15-17, 2012**: Citizens for Global Solutions Conference on “Unlocking the Doors to Power: Your Invitation to the White House” in Washington, D.C. Lobby Day on March 15th on Capitol Hill; White House Briefing on March 16th, 2012 (Note: You must formally register to be eligible for these events).
NO CLASS on March 22, 2012: Spring Break

Week 9, March 29, 2012: Global Governance of Water and Ocean Resources

Videos: Blue Gold: World Water Wars (2008); Water on the Table (2011)

Readings:

- International Rivers, "We All Live Downstream" --5-minute slide show available at http://www.internationalrivers.org/en/we-all-live-downstream

Week 9, March 29, 2012: Global Governance of Water and Ocean Resources

Videos: Blue Gold: World Water Wars (2008); Water on the Table (2011)

Readings:

- International Rivers, "We All Live Downstream" --5-minute slide show available at http://www.internationalrivers.org/en/we-all-live-downstream
- UN World Water Development Report--overview of key messages (8 pages)
- UN World Water Development Report--messages for NGOs/civil society (4 pages)
- UN-Water's fact sheet on water and climate change (2 pages)
- WHO/UNICEF report on progress on drinking water and sanitation (8 pages)
- UN-Water--overview brochure on UN activities (4 pages)

Further Resources:


Week 10, April 5, 2012: The Global Economic Crisis: Understanding the Possibilities for Balanced and Sustained Global Development and Prosperity

Readings:

Further Resources:


**Week 11, April 12, 2012: Understanding the Global Context: Diagnosing and Defining Global Crises and Identifying Pathways for Constructive Social Change**

- The Responsibility of Transformative Leadership: Seeing Possibilities, Changing Expectations and Realizing Solutions
- Assessing Where and How to Make Difference: What Criteria Should Be for Optimizing Impact?

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: Interview with Key Actors on Global Crises**

**Readings:**


**Other Resources:**


**Week 12, April 19, 2012: Advancing Global Governance: Linking Theory and Practice on Solving Converging Global Crises**

**Readings:**


**Further Readings:**


**Week 13, April 26, 2012: Crafting a Common Plan of Action and Research Agenda**

Reading: Review and comment on collaborative Global Civic Forum report and plan of action/strategy

**Week 14, May 3, 2012: Global Civic Forum: Student Group Presentations**

*Presentation of Global Civic Forum report to global civic leaders and scholars*


*Final Review of the Global Civic Forum report*