

2012

Advocacy and Human Rights

Evangelical Advocacy: A Response to Global Poverty

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LDEV 610: Advocacy and Human Rights

Syllabus

School of Leadership and Development

Spring 2010
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LDEV 610
Advocacy and Human Rights

Course Description

This course is designed to prepare Christian leaders to identify entry points for engagement in social justice advocacy in the context of the global struggle for human rights/justice. In order to approach such advocacy from a uniquely Christian perspective, participants will examine the Christian witness to the state (at all levels) and evaluate the role followers of Jesus have in walking with the oppressed to seek justice for them. Case studies from a variety of Christian and secular organizations will highlight the various levels at which advocacy can occur.

Objectives

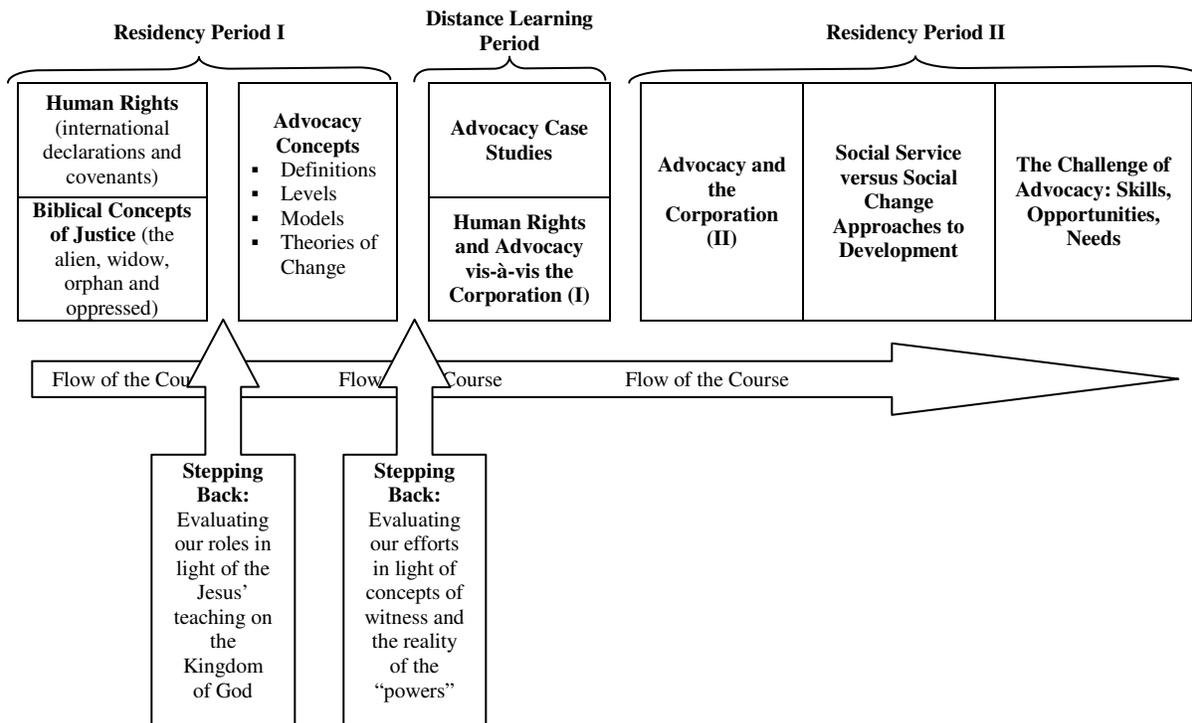
By the end of the course participants will have...

1. **Compared** and **contrasted** major human rights foundational documents with biblical concepts of justice
2. **Drafted** an argument supporting or disputing that modern human rights are consistent with biblical concepts of justice
3. **Analyzed** various authors' writings on the "powers" to characterize the reality we face in engaging in advocacy
4. **Applied** basic concepts of advocacy to analyze advocacy efforts from case studies
5. **Distilled** from case studies practical issues to consider when engaging in advocacy work
6. **Developed** and **applied** a taxonomy of advocacy elements to classify 20-30 different international/national organizations engaged in advocacy in some form
7. **Wrestled** with the "messiness" of advocacy using a case study from the global fight against AIDS, TB and malaria and a consideration of health as a basic human right
8. **Compared** and **contrasted** rights based programming with common community development approaches and **responded** to critiques of social service versus social change models for dealing with human needs
9. **Analyzed** the corporation and its role in upholding human rights and **developed** some ways to engage in advocacy to the corporation
10. Critically **evaluated** John Howard Yoder's notion of "witness" as an organizing concept for Christian advocacy in light of Jesus' message of the kingdom and his life and **articulated** a "theology of advocacy" drawn from their own and other traditions that summarizes their understanding of God's call to engage in advocacy and work towards justice accounting for the reality of the "powers" in the world

Course Flow

The following diagram maps the flow of this course from beginning to end. It illustrates several things:

1. We begin with a consideration of rights and biblical concepts of justice before moving into the practice of advocacy. This illustrates that our advocacy efforts are (or should be) grounded in an explicit worldview and understanding of rights and justice.
2. While we introduce “standard” rights and advocacy concepts, we also “step back” to analyze them in light of biblical/theological principles.
3. We rely on a variety of case studies to draw principles of practice. See Assignments 3, 4 & 9 for details on this aspect of the course. You will choose one of four case studies to analyze for Assignment 9.
4. We try to link this course to others you have had on community development



Though it is an overused term, I do expect this course to be highly participatory building on what you already know and encouraging you to challenge ideas presented for discussion. We are all learners here and I hope to model that idea. I also hope that you will be able to see places where this course links directly with others you have taken. Principles I value and hope to model include: mutual respect, relevance, affirmation and dialogue.

Academic Policies:

Please refer to the Eastern University graduate catalog for information related to school policies governing academic matters. In addition, here are a couple of my own:

Makeups:

If the realities of life (illness, funerals, etc.) create irreconcilable scheduling conflicts with assignment deadlines, contact me in advance if you can. We will work out a suitable alternative, possibly before the normal due dates.

Lateness

In general, we will need to discuss point deductions if an assignment is late and you did not let me know.

Missing classes

Given the intensive nature of the residency portion of the course, missing any of the six days poses some problems. Please see me immediately or let me know beforehand if you have to miss a class. We will decide how to deal with that. Missing part of any of those days is also a problem but may be easier to deal with. Bottom line: let's talk as soon as you think you might have a problem in this regard.

Required Textbook & Readings

Your textbooks—which I would encourage you to buy—are:

- Yoder, John Howard. *The Christian Witness to the State*. Scottsdale: Herald Press 1964.
- VeneKlasen, Lisa with Valerie Miller (Debbie Budlender and Cindy Clark co-editors). *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*. Bourton on Dunsmore: Practical Action Publishing, 2007.

In addition to these texts other readings that are listed in the assignments below will be available either online (on Blackboard). I may assign one or two other BRIEF readings during the class. They will also be available on Blackboard or in hard copy.

Finally, for Assignment 9 below you will read a book and articles as background. You may want to examine the following table to decide which one looks interesting to you so you can buy the book in advance. I will have one copy of each book to loan to students but realize that several people will probably be examining the same case study as you. In addition to these books, a series of articles for each case study are available on Blackboard under “Course Documents” in the “Case Study Readings” folder.

Note: I have been using these same case studies since 2007 and continue to use them though some situations have changed a bit (especially the Uganda situation) because they still represent excellent examples of the variety of ways to approach advocacy.

Case Study Title	Required Book	Brief Description
3D Initiative	<i>Security by other Means</i> by Lael Brainard	This case study examines the Washington-based 3D (defense, diplomacy, development) Initiative and their efforts to challenge US foreign policy priorities that focus overwhelmingly on defense at the expense of diplomacy and development. They place a great emphasis on examining the concept of security as an advocacy tool.
Colombia Rights Documentation	<i>More Terrible than Death: Violence, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia</i> by Robin Kirk	This case study examines the role of Justapaz, a Colombian NGO linked to the Evangelical Churches of Colombia that focuses on documenting human right abuses committed against protestant churches in Colombia in order to challenge both US and Colombian government policies around a generation old conflict in that country.
Canadian Food Policy Advocacy	<i>Food Aid After Fifty Years: Recasting its Role</i> by Christopher Barrett and Daniel Maxwell	This case study examines how the Canadian Food Grains Bank—a consortium of NGOs focusing on food aid delivery and policy—worked across Canada to change Canadian government policy on food aid sourcing.
Northern Uganda UN Advocacy	There is no book for this case study. A series of readings is available on Blackboard	This case study examines the Quaker UN Office's advocacy work related to the nearly 20-year conflict in Northern Uganda. The office connected Ugandans with world leaders in New York to seek a just solution to the gross human rights abuses committed against Northern Ugandan populations.

Assignments

1. Reflection on human rights articles/excerpts: Friday 14 May (5 points)

Choose five of the following readings that deal with one or more of these topics, read them and do the following for class (you will not turn these in but share them in class):

- a. Provide 1-2 quotes from the authors that illustrate the issue/issues he/she is addressing from the questions raised in class:
 - Are modern conceptions of human rights built upon theistic foundations, which have since been discarded?
 - Do human rights really need God?
 - Is rights language consistent with Biblical language or has rights language co-opted Biblical understandings?
 - Should Christians be concerned with naming and promoting human rights?
 - Isn't the current human rights language really another form of Western imperialism?
 - Is there really such a thing as "universal" rights in a pluralistic world?

- Isn't the concept of human rights now so overused that it has little practical use to safeguard people who really need it?
- b. React to one or more of the quotes—do you agree/disagree and why?
 - c. Provide an open question about what one author has written that you would like to discuss with the class. We will discuss them in small groups tomorrow.

Readings:

Readings 1-5 are from: Bucar, Elizabeth and Barbra Barnett eds (2005) *Does Human Rights Need God?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans

- 1) Stackhouse, Max "Why Human Rights Needs God: a Christian Perspective" pages 25-40
 - 2) Guroian, Vigen "Human Rights and Modern Western Faith: An Orthodox 3. Christian Response" pages 41-47
 - 3) Novak, David "God and Human Rights in a Secular Society: A Biblical Talmudic Perspective" pages 48-57
 - 4) George, Robert "Natural Law and Human Rights: A Conversation" pages 135-144
 - 5) Henken, Louis "Religion, Religions and Human Rights" pages 145-155
- 6) Reading 6 is from: Witte, John (2006). *God's joust, God's justice : law and religion in the Western tradition*. Grand Rapids, Mich., W.B. Eerdmans. Chapter 1 pages 31-48: "A Short History of Western Rights" and Chapter 3 pages 63-113: "A Dickensian Era of Religious Rights: Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Contributions
- 7) Sen, Amartya (1999) "Culture and Human Rights" in *Development as Freedom*. New York Anchor Books pages 227-248
 - 8) Marshall, Paul (2005) "Human Rights" in Sider, Ronald and Diane Knippers eds *Toward and Evangelical Public Policy*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books pages 307-322

The following constitute a single reading

- 9) a. Blois, Matthijs de "The Foundation of Human Rights: A Christian Perspective" in Beaumont, Paul ed (1998) *Christian Perspectives on Human Rights and Legal Philosophy*. Cumbria: Paternoster Press pages 7-29;
- b. Rivers, Julian (1997) *Beyond rights: the morality of rights-language*. Cambridge Papers (available at http://www.jubilee-centre.org/cambridge_papers/index.php);
- c. Abbot, Richard (2003) *Human rights and the draft EU constitution*. Jubilee Centre (available at <http://www.jubilee-centre.org/Resources/resourcecatalogue.php?cat=18&page=4>)

The following constitute a single reading

- 10) a. "Stand up for your rights" *The Economist* Mar 22nd 2007
- b. "The meaning of Freedom." *The Economist* Apr 4 2009, Vol. 390, Issue 8625
- c. "Diplomacy, faith and freedom." *The Economist* Apr 4 2009, Vol. 390, Issue 8625

2. Definition of elements to assess advocacy organizations: Saturday 15 May (5 points)

Read quickly

- Chapter 5 (pages 59-87) in Cohen, David, et al (2001) *Advocacy for Social Justice: A Global Action and Reflection Guide*. Bloomfield: Kumarian Press;
- Chapter 1 (pages 11-24) in VeneKlasen, Lisa, et al (2007) *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics: the Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*. Warwickshire: Practical Action Publishing;
- Sections A2-A4 (pages 21-48) in Gordon, Graham (2002) *Advocacy Toolkit: Understanding Advocacy*. Teddington: Tearfund.

With a partner brainstorm a list of 5-6 elements you could use to assess the advocacy actions of an organization. Base your ideas on the descriptions of advocacy, advocacy approaches and advocacy actors in these publications. We will combine our ideas to create a single matrix or “taxonomy” that we will all use to describe organizations that are engaged in some way in advocacy (see next assignment)

3. Application of advocacy elements to assess three organizations: Wednesday 23 June (10 points)

Choose three organizations anywhere in the world that are engaged in some way in advocacy work. We will assure that there are no duplicates. Use the matrix or taxonomy we developed to summarize the organization’s work. Your summary will simply be to fill in each matrix cell with pertinent information about the organizations. We will combine the results into a single matrix and have a summary of the entire class’ chosen organizations to take along with us after the course.

4. Identification and description of advocacy efforts related to current issues: during weeks of distance learning (10 points)

Three times during the distance-learning period (see dates below) choose 2 domestic or international issues in the news (from a news source of your choice) and research any advocacy work concerning them. This will give you a total of 6 “cases” of advocacy work. Of the 6 cases at least 2 should concern advocacy directed at a corporation.

Be specific concerning the issue and write a maximum one-page summary of the issue, who is engaged in advocacy concerning it and what specifically they are doing. Provide any web or other sources you used to research the organization. Post your results on Blackboard in the appropriate place and comment on or add ideas to at least two other people’s contributions. (I will provide an example in class).

In order to prepare to critically analyze the cases you will read, during the week of 18-22 May, the following chapters in your textbook by VeneKlasen et al: Chapters 2-4 and 13-17. You may skim all “Exercises” in those chapters.

The summaries should be posted on Blackboard by the following dates

First set of two: 21 May

Second set of two: 28 May

Third set of two: 4 June

**5. Readings related to human rights and advocacy in relation to corporations:
during the weeks of distance learning (10 points)**

During the second residency we will evaluate the evolving relationship of the corporation in relation to human rights and how to think about advocacy to the corporation. To prepare for these discussions you are required to read the following documents/articles. There will be no posting on Blackboard related to these articles but you will be drawing upon them in the second residency. All readings will be posted on Blackboard and I would suggest reading them in the order listed here.

- 1) Chapter 5: “The Visible Hand and the Bottom Line” in Rempel, Henry (2003). A high price for abundant living : the story of capitalism. Waterloo, Ont., Herald Press.
- 2) United Nations Economic and Social Council, C. o. H. R. (2003). Draft Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights. E/CN.4/sub.2/2003/12/rev.2. U. Nations. (read this before reading the next article)
- 3) Ruggie, John G. (2007). Business and Human Rights: The Evolving International Agenda. Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative. Cambridge, MA, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University: 40.
- 4) United Nations. Global Compact Office. (200?). United Nations Global Compact-After the Signature: A Guide to Engagement in the United Nations Global Compact. New York, N.Y., United Nations Global Compact Office.
- 5) Section 3.4 pages 36-45 “Human Right” in Gordon, B. (2007). The State of Responsible Business: Global Corporate Response to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Challenges, Ethical Investment Research Services (EIRIS): 98.
- 6) A special report in *The Economist*, from January 2008 on corporate social responsibility.

6. Reading and discussion of articles concerning social service versus social change approaches to development: Monday 7 June (5 points)

Read six short readings (three of them from *New African*) that offer critiques of the work of NGOs that focuses on delivering social services as opposed to engaging in the work of social change (and one that looks more broadly at framing “development” around goals (Millennium Development Goals in this case) versus using a “rights based approach”. The readings, all on Blackboard are:

- 1) From *New African* no 443 August/September 2005
 - a) Sankore, Rotimi, “What are the NGOs doing?” pages 13-15
 - b) Manji, Firoze and Carl O’Coill, “NGOs: A Tainted History” pages 16-20

- c) Onyano, Michael, "NGOs: Pseudo Governments or Surrogates of Western Powers pages 20-21
- 2) Roy, Arundhati (2004) "Help that Hinders" in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (available at <http://mondediplo.com/2004/11/16roy>)
- 3) Farmer, Paul (2003) "On Suffering and Structural Violence" Chapter 1 in *Pathologies of Power*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pages 29-50
- 4) Kivel, Paul (2007) "Social Service or Social Change" pages 129-150 in *Incite! Women of Color Against Violence*. (2007). *The revolution will not be funded : beyond the non-profit industrial complex*. Cambridge, Mass., South End Press.
- 5) Nelson, Paul J. (2007). "Human Rights, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Future of Development Cooperation." *World Development* **35**(12): 2041-2055

Come prepared to discuss the following issues in class:

- From your own experience in what ways do you feel these critiques are justified or not justified?
- If given a chance to talk to one or more of the authors what questions would you ask to clarify their comments?
- Choose one of the critiques and talk about what actions you would take as a member of a development or advocacy NGO to overcome the problems outlined in the critique.

7. Reading and discussion of articles on international health challenges: Tuesday 8 June (5 points)

Read the following articles in preparation for our discussion on the AIDS, TB and Malaria advocacy case study. Notice the complexity of the structural environments in which health is "produced", the challenge of thinking in terms of systems and how even important research into real health problems might miss the mark. Together these articles provide a vignette of the world of maternal and child health. Combined with an interview on malaria advocacy they paint a picture of the complexities—the messiness—surrounding advocacy work done in the arena of international public health. Please read the articles in the order given.

- 1) Gruskin, Sofia, E. J. Mills, et al. (2007). "History, principles, and practice of health and human rights." *Lancet* **370**(9585): 449-455.
- 2) Backman, G., P. Hunt, et al. (2008). "Health systems and the right to health: an assessment of 194 countries." *Lancet* **372**(9655): 2047-2085 (skim this article looking mainly at tables).
- 3) Leroy, Jef et al (2007) "Current Priorities in Health Research Funding and Lack of Impact on the Number of Child Deaths per Year", *American Journal of Public Health*. 97:2 pp 219-223.
- 4) Heikens, G. T., B. C. Amadi, et al. (2008). "Nutrition interventions need improved operational capacity." *Lancet* **371**(9608): 181-182.
- 5) Shekar, M. (2008). Delivery sciences in nutrition. *Lancet*. **371**: 1751-1751.
- 6) Garrett, Laurie (2007) "The Challenge of Global Health", *Foreign Affairs*. 86:1

(available at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070101faessay86103/laurie-garrett/the-challenge-of-global-health.html>)

8. Final Project I—critique of Yoder’s *A Christian Witness to the State* and statement of a “theology of advocacy”: Wednesday 23 June (25 points)

Read John Howard Yoder’s *A Christian Witness to the State*. In 8-10 pages critique it from the perspective of your faith tradition and use it and other discussions and readings from the course—e.g. on the “powers”, the kingdom of God or others—to articulate your own “theology of advocacy”. Use especially the “witness” models in Chapter 7—The Classic Options Graphically Portrayed—to describe your own traditions’ witness to the state if applicable.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Though this assignment is not due in written form until the end of the course be ready to share one element from you paper with the class on Wednesday 9 June.

9. Final Project II—project/paper based on case studies of advocacy efforts (1 per group): Tuesday 8 or Wednesday 9 June (25 points)

In groups of no more than 4 people (you will submit one paper/project per group) listen to 2 of the 4 podcast case studies (they are all described above in the section on Course Readings). Choose one to explore more deeply and then read the corresponding book and articles that provide essential background to the issue. Listen to your chosen podcast a second time and then with your partner do one of the following (or seek approval to do something else):

- a. Find other organizations/groups working on the same issue in a different way and describe in detail what they are doing.
- b. Take a piece of the approach that the organization used/is using and research other organizations using a similar approach on another issue. Describe it in detail.
- c. Take their approach and provide some original research or writing on the issue that you think might help them. This could include things like videos or audios or a website they could use in their work.
- d. Using the issue they are working on, think about a different audience or approach to effecting change in the situation in question that you could imagine implementing using your skills (e.g. a study curriculum, creatively engage students or church members, etc.)

You can present your final product in any form you like—your own podcast, a poster session and paper, a paper, a video presentation, a Powerpoint presentation, or some combination of these or others. Groups will have 15 minutes to share some aspect of their project with the class on the final two days of the course. Be sure to name any Biblical/Theological considerations that strike you as critical in the case in question.

Grading

Summary of Course Assignments & Grading Points

ASSIGNMENTS	Points	Due Date
1. Reflection on human rights articles/excerpts	5	Friday 14 May
2. Definition of elements to assess advocacy organizations	5	Saturday 15 May
3. Application of advocacy elements to assess three organizations	10	Wednesday 23 June
4. Identification and description of advocacy efforts related to current issues	10	During weeks of distance learning
5. Readings related to human rights and advocacy in relation to corporations: during the weeks of distance learning	10	During weeks of distance learning
6. Reading and discussion of articles concerning social service versus social change approaches to development	5	Monday 7 June
7. Reading and discussion of articles on international health challenges	5	Tuesday 8 June
8. Final Project I—critique of Yoder’s <i>A Christian Witness to the State</i> and statement of a “theology of advocacy”	25	Wednesday 23 June
9. Final Project II—project/paper based on case studies of advocacy efforts (1 per group)	25	Tuesday 8 or Wednesday 9 June
Total	100	

The chart shows that the total number of points given for assignments is 100. There is no separate grade for “class participation” because it is built into the points for each assignment for which there is class participation.

For any assignment that involves writing (except for the online discussions) you may substitute another format including making a video with voice or a voice recording for the writing. The timing of the alternate format should require the same effort as writing the number of pages required.

Schedule (topics)

Thursday 13 May (4 hours of class time)

- Introduction to the course, objectives, expectations and assignments and readings
- Human rights and biblical concepts of justice

- Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God and how it informs our roles
- Challenges of/Questions about human rights

Friday 14 May (4 hours of class time)

- Advocacy concepts and perspectives on advocacy
- Theories of change
- The Christian witness to the state (and other powers)
- The “powers”, what they are and how they influence our thinking on advocacy

Saturday 15 May (4 hours of class time)

- Continuation of discussions on Christian witness and the powers
- Elements of advocacy to assess organizations
- Advocacy organizations and various resources
- Work to be done during distance learning periods

During distance learning weeks

- Readings on human rights and the corporation
- Assignments on current issues and advocacy associated with them
- Advocacy case studies and readings associated with them
- *POSSIBLE Wimba session on Rights Based Approaches to Development (RBA) with Lowell Ewert of Conrad Graebel University in Waterloo, Ontario*

Monday 7 June (6 hours of class time)

- Analysis of the corporation and advocacy to it
- Lessons learned from case studies
- Social service versus social change discussion

Tuesday 8 June (6 hours of class time)

- The “messiness” of advocacy as illustrated in the global fight against AIDS, TB and malaria
- Presentations of final projects

Wednesday 9 June (6 hours of class time)

- Discussion of critiques of Yoder and/or “theologies of advocacy”
- Presentations of final projects
- Final evaluation