

COURSE
HUMR 5191
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THESIS DEVELOPMENT
Spring 2014
SYLLABUS & Lecture Plan

LECTURE 1***Introduction to the Course***

Tuesday, 21 January

1015-1200

Seminar Room, NCHR

Instructor: Stener Ekern

- Presentation of the course.
- Social science: What is an ‘explanation’? Around what is a thesis in the social sciences constructed?
- Formal requirements

Reading list:

- Dessler, David, “Beyond Correlations: Toward a Causal Theory of War”, *Int. Studies Quarterly* 35, 3 (1991) pp 119-154.
- Trachtenberg, Mark, *The Craft of International History: A guide to method*, Princeton University Press, 2006, ch 1-5.

LECTURE 2***Research Questions and Legal Problems (continued)***

Friday, 24 January

1215-1400

Auditorium 5, DA

*Instructors: Stener Ekern and
Gentian Zyberi*

- Formulating a ‘research question’ (with a lawyer’s comments)
- Formulating a legal problem (case discussion with comments from a social scientist)

Reading list:

- Richard Posner, ‘Legal Scholarship Today’, *Harvard Law Review* vol. 115 (2002), pp 1314-1326.
- - McConville, Mike and Wing Hong Chui, *Research Methods for Law*, Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2007, pp. 1-16.
- -- Daniel Kanstroom, ‘On ‘Waterboarding’: Legal Interpretation and the Continuing Struggle for Human Rights’, *Boston College Third World Law Journal*, Vol. 28 (2008), pp 269-287.
- Trachtenberg, Mark, *The Craft of International History: A guide to method*, Princeton University Press, 2006, chs 1-5.
- Montgomery, Heather, “Imposing Rights? A case study of child prostitution in Thailand”, in Cowan, Jane K., Marie-Bénédicte Dembour and Richard A. Wilson, ‘Introduction’ in Jane K. Cowan, Marie-Bénédicte Dembour and Richard A. Wilson, *Culture and Rights. Anthropological Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp 80-102.

LECTURE 3***Research Questions and Legal Problems***

Tuesday, 28 January

- Law: What is a legal interpretation? Around what is a thesis in law constructed?

1015-1200

Seminar Room, NCHR

Reading list:

Instructor: Gentian Zyberi

-- Smits, Jan M., "Redefining Normative Legal Science: Towards an Argumentative Discipline", in Coomans, Fons, Fred Grünfeld and Menno T. Kamminga (eds.), *Methods of Human Rights Research*, pp 45-58, Intersentia 2009.

-- Brems, Eva, "Methods in legal human rights research", in *Methods of Human Rights Research...*, pp 77-89.

LECTURE 4***How to Read Statistics***

Friday, 31 January

- How to read statistics

1215-1400

Seminar Room NCHR

Reading list: Landman 2006

Instructor: Kjersti Skarstad,
(Dept. of Pol. Science)

LECTURE 5***Legal Method in International Law***

Tuesday, 4 February

Reading list:

1015-1200

-- Brownlie, Ian, *Principles of Public International Law*, 7th Edition, pp 3-29 and 630-38.

Seminar Room, NCHR

-- Ratner, S. and A-M Slaughter, "Appraising the Methods of International Law", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (1999), pp. 291-302.

Instructor: Gentian Zyberi

LECTURE 6***Human Rights Methodology (Operationalisation and Measurement) and Comparative Research Design***

Friday, 7 February

Reading list:

1215-1400

-- Landman, Todd, *Studying Human Rights*, London and New York: Routledge, 2006.

Seminar Room NCHR

-- Jonsson, Urban, "A Human Rights-based Approach to Programming", in Gready, P. And J. Ensor (eds.) *Reinventing Development? Translating Rights-based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, London: Zed Books 2005, pp 47-62.

Instructor: Stener Ekern

LECTURE 7

Tuesday, 11 February

Exploring the Sources and Using them in Your Thesis

1015-1400

Room K39, Domus
Bibliotheca

Instructor: Head Librarian
Kirsten Fuglestved

LECTURE 8

Modes of Reasoning

Friday, 14 February

- Construction of arguments, constructions of evidence, making recommendations, policy-making

1215-1400

Seminar Room, NCHR

Reading list (Choose Two of the Four):

-- Philosophy: Waldron, Jeremy, "The Core of the case Against Judicial Review", in *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 115 (2006), pp 1346-1406.

-- Law: Langford, Malcolm and Khulekani Moyo, "Right, Remedy or Rhetoric? Land Restitution in International Law", *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (2010).

Instructor: Gentian Zyberi

-- Social Science: Beth Simmons, *Mobilizing for Human Rights: International Law in Domestic Politics* (2009), pp. 349-380.

-- Practice: Human Rights Watch, *Rain of Fire. Israel's Unlawful Use of White Phosphorus in Gaza*, 25 March 2009, pp 1-66.

LECTURE 9

Sources: A Critical Review

Tuesday, 25 February

- Data, interviews, statistics. Cases, secondary literature, documents, observations, fieldwork, archival material

1015-1200

Seminar Room NCHR

Reading list:

-- Ekern, Stener, "The modernizing bias of human rights: stories of mass killings and genocide in Central America, in *Journal of Genocide Research*, 12:3-4 (2010), pp 219-241.

Instructor: Stener Ekern

-- Kidder, Robert L., "Exploring Legal Culture in Law-Avoidance Societies", in June Starr and Mark Goodale, *Practicing Ethnography in Law*, Palgrave Macmillan 2002, pp 87-107.

LECTURE 10

Friday, 28 February

One-day Workshop (6 hrs) in Academic Writing

0915-1600

Reading list:

Seminar Room, NCHR

-- Lynn P Nygaard, *Writing for Scholars. A Practical Guide to Making Sense and being Heard*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 2008.

*Instructor: Lynn P Nygaard,
PRIO*

LECTURE 11

Exam preparations

Friday, 7 March

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1215-1400

Seminar Room NCHR

Instructor: Stener Ekern
