New York University  
**Global Citizenship: Podcasting Global Issues**  
Freshmen Seminar  
Spring 2021, Mondays 2:00-4:30 pm  
Deutsches Haus, Washington Mews (University Place)

Instructor: Professor Ulrich Baer; University Professor of Comparative Literature and German, FAS, and Photography and Imagining, TISCH

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Are we all global citizens? How can we belong to a community that is defined by a shared sense of purpose, origin, or identity, and yet think of ourselves as inextricably part of the whole world? This seminar poses a specific question: Are there *global* rights and concepts, or are human rights defined by the communities in which they live? Are there immutable principles that apply to everyone around the world and that cannot be adjusted according to local customs and norms?

Are women’s rights to equal social standing universal? Is the death penalty acceptable? Is physician-assisted suicide acceptable? It is morally defensible to eat animals? Who should pay for polluting the oceans? Does democracy have a uniform definition that must include free elections, freedom of expression, and independent courts? What about equality?

What happens when we impose our values on others and on other cultures? What are the issues that must be addressed jointly, across actual and invisible borders and divisions?

The class examines these issues, starting with a consideration of global rights and responsibilities (institutionalized in the United Nations). In order to gain practical skills in the production of humanistic knowledge, students learn to produce several podcast episodes in changing teams by recording interviews with experts, activists, and other students. Students will learn a set of skills: framing a question by researching various approaches; preparing interview questions; outlining an interview protocol; recording a podcast conversation; using Hindenburg software to edit, sound design, share, upload and promote a podcast.
CLASS FORMAT, EXPECTATIONS, & GRADING

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Weekly assignments:
• Seminar participation. Each class will cover topics and information vital to your successful completion of the course; attendance and punctuality are essential. You are asked to come to our seminar prepared, with your audio, reading, and writing assignments completed and your contributions to our NYU Classes discussion posted in a timely fashion.
• 1-3 assigned readings: articles, journal essays, book chapters
• 1-4 audio listening assignments
• Discussion posts to NYU Classes (reading or podcast responses; discussions of classmates’ posts; glossary contributions)
Podcast production assignments:
Mini-podcast: interview-based (pass/fail)
Podcast 1: research and audio collected as a group; podcast produced in a small group; due mid-semester.
Annotated bibliography and storyboard (first draft, then annotated)
One-page written critique of peer’s podcast-in-progress for Podcast 1. (Email your critique to the peer and post a copy of your critique to the Assignments section of NYU Classes.)
Podcast 2: podcast produced in a group (different from the previous group), due end of semester.
Annotated bibliography and storyboard. Graded by Instructor.

GRADING
5% Mini-podcast (pass/fail)
5% Attendance and posted comments
20% Seminar participation
20% Podcast 1
15% NYU Classes discussion posts and peer critique of Podcast 1
10% Annotated bibliography and storyboard
25% Podcast 2

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
DISCUSSION POSTS
Each seminar member is asked to post two weekly critical reactions to the NYU Classes Discussion section. One post should be an original comment about the reading and audio assignment, and the other a response to a classmate. At least one of your posts should address the reading. When commenting on a specific moment in a podcast, please include the timestamp so that we can find the moment to which you’re referring. Class members may participate in the discussion throughout the week, but the final deadline for posting both comments is at 10 PM (no later) on Sunday before class time. This will give everyone enough time to read your comments before class.
PODCAST PROCESS ASSIGNMENTS
While developing your podcast, you will be asked to create the following:
- an annotated bibliography reflecting your academic research for your story
- an annotated storyboard that increasingly forms a written transcript of your story
- a written peer critique of another student’s podcast-in-progress for Podcast 1

FORMAT FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
All written assignments should follow these guidelines:
- 12-point Times New Roman or other legible typeface
- double-spaced (including indented quotations)
- standard margins
- numbered pages
- where relevant, documented with parenthetical references and a Works Cited list that follows the form specified in the MLA Handbook, 8th edition
- thoroughly proofread
- printed and stapled, with your name, submitted at the beginning of class

AUDIO ASSIGNMENTS
MINI-PODCAST (IN PAIRS, 30 seconds - 1 minute)
A mini-podcast on “Spirit of the Greek Games” using peer interview and at least one of the following: voice-over narration, ambient sound, or music

PODCAST 1 (GROUP PRODUCED PODCAST, 5 minutes)
Students will be assigned to small groups and are required to decided jointly on a topic to be discussed from a local and global perspective. Each member of the group will contribute to the development of a research plan, research, interview and other sound collection. Then, each group will jointly produce a 5-minute podcast with the group-generated material.

PODCAST 2 (GROUP PRODUCED PODCAST, 10-15 minutes)
Using the skills honed this semester, each group will develop a podcast from idea to completion, using a topic of their choice (and professor approval). Along the way, a research plan, interviews, transcripts, and scripts will be developed and discussed. Production drafts, in the form of working excerpts, will be workshopped in class. The final 10-15-minute podcast is due on May...

Attendance Policy:
You are required to attend all seminar meetings and field trips, upload all recordings/edits/documents to a shared platform/drive on time, arrive on time, and inform the instructor of excused absences (due to illness) as soon as feasible (in advance of class, or soon after the missed class).

READINGS
Required Texts:
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse upon the Origin and the Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind* (many editions available)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*
Kushwhant Singh, *Train to Pakistan*
A reader with articles, short essays, and debates on global issues will be made available for purchase at Advanced Copy Center, 552 LaGuardia Place and online at NYU Classes.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

Session 1:

Session 2: WHAT IS GLOBALIZATION
**February 3:** Visit to the UNITED NATIONS headquarters or VIRTUAL MEETING with UN official: Meet at: United Nations Visitors Headquarters
405 E 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017
(46th Street and 1st Avenue)

Readings (in class reader, or online):
Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (13 pages)
Suzy Hansen, "Unlearning the Myth of American Innocence" (8 pages)
Watch: Where Do Human Rights Begin?
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=5RR4VXNX3jA&feature=emb_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=5RR4VXNX3jA&feature=emb_logo)
The Story of Human Rights: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=oh3BbLk5UIQ&feature=emb_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=oh3BbLk5UIQ&feature=emb_logo)

Session 3:
**February 10:** Learning audio editing software
FIRST AUDIO ASSIGNMENT:
PRODUCE MINI-PODCAST on the (assigned teams of 2 students each: 1 – 2 minutes)
A mini-podcast on “The Idea behind the UNITED NATIONS” using peer interview and at least one of the following: voice-over narration, ambient sound, or music.

[February 17: Holiday/President’s Day]

Session 4: ARE THERE UNIVERSAL RIGHTS?
**February 24**
Readings:
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse, on the Origins of Inequality Among Men* (44 pages)
Listen to Rousseau episode with Professor Melissa Schwartzberg, *Think About It* podcast

“Debating Human Rights: Are they Universal or Relative to Culture,” by Tom O’Connor
Audre Lorde, “The Master’s Tools will Never Dismantle the Master’s House”

Session 5: WOMEN’S RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

**March 2**

“Recognizing Rights, Promoting Progress: CEDAW Report on Women’s Rights


Susan Moller Okin, “Gender Inequality and Cultural Differences” (20 pages)


Watch: Chimamanda Ngozie Adiche, “The Danger of a Single Story,”

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (“Introduction”)

Allison Jaggar, “Saving Amina: Global Justice for Women and Intercultural Dialogue”

Listen to episode on Simone de Beauvoir on *Think About It* podcast

DUE: Choose a topic for Podcast 1; write one page summary of issue from local and global perspective

Session 6: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION: A UNIVERSAL RIGHT?

**March 9**

Readings:

**Bill of Rights:**

Read: Yu Hua, *China in Ten Words* (“Introduction,” “People,” and “Disparity”)

Social Media in the US, China, and the rest of the world

**MARCH 13** (FRIDAY) DUE: Storyboard and bibliography or guest profiles for Podcast 1

[March 16 – SPRING RECESS]

Session 7: RIGHT TO WORK/FAIR LABOR

**March 23**

Gillian B. White, “All Your Clothes are Made with Exploited Labor,” (*The Atlantic*):

https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/06/patagonia-labor-clothing-factory-exploitation/394658/ (5 pages)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (18 pages; try reading some of the many Prefaces as well)

Listen or watch Marx episode with Videk Chidder, *Think About It* podcast, on Karl Marx

Watch: “Rana Plaza Factory Collapse” (New York Times video doc:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Fkhzdc4yb

Session 8: CAN THE WEST SELF-CORRECT?

**March 30**
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (90 pages)
Chinua Achebe, “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness” (12 pages)
Watch: Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now*
Ciro Guerra, *Embrace of the Serpent*
Listen to episode with Manthia Diawara on Chinua Achebe on *Think About It* podcast

**Session 9: SECURITY/TERROR**

**April 6**
Visit to the 9/11 Museum or VIRTUAL conversation with curator at 9/11 Museum
Readings: Onora Nell, “Lifeboat Earth” (access via NYU Libraries login; 18 pages)
Pamela Sneed, “Elvis” in: *110 Stories: New York Writes After September 11*
Pankaj Mishra, “The Western Model is Broken” (8 pages)

DUE: Choose a topic for Podcast 2; write one page summary of issue from local and global perspective

**Session 10: SOVEREIGNTY AND SELF-DETERMINATION**

**April 13**
Israel/Palestine
China/Tibet
Canada/Quebec
Spain/Catalonia
India/Pakistan/Kashmir
DUE: Storyboard and bibliography and/or guest profiles for Podcast 2
Read Khushwant Singh, *Train to Pakistan* (180 pages)
Watch: Eytan Fox, *The Bubble*

**Session 11: IS CLIMATE CHANGE A GLOBAL CONCERN?**

**April 20**
Listen or watch Climate Change episode with philosopher Dale Jamieson on *Think About It* podcast
Readings: Naomi Klein, from *This Changes Everything* (20 pages)
Arundhati Roy, “THE RISING TIDE: PERHAPS, 2018 FLOOD IS ONLY A GENTLE WARNING”
Greta Thunberg, “Grown-Ups Have Failed Us” (6 pages)

**Session 12: MIGRATION/RIGHT TO ASYLUM/FREEDOM FROM PERSECUTION**

**April 27**
Read: Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, Morality”
Thomas Hurka, “The Justification of National Partiality”
Dayo Olopade, interview about her book, *The Bright Continent: Breaking Rules in Modern Africa* (read or listen)
Watch: Manthia Diawara, *Opera of the World*
Lars von Trier, *Dogville*

Session 13:

**May 4**

PODCAST PRESENTATION AND CRITIQUE

DUE: Podcast 2

Session 14 (FINAL CLASS MEETING)

May 11