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School of Diplomacy and International  
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Fall 2012

## DIPL 6129 Preventing Humanitarian Crisis

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*Seton Hall University*

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## **DIPL 6129 Prevent Humanitarian Crisis**

Fall 2012

Monday: 6:15-8:15 pm

Dr. Li-Wen Zhang  
Office hours: by appointment

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### **Course Overview**

The term "humanitarian crisis" is understood to mean any situation in which there is an exceptional and widespread threat to human life, health or subsistence. In such humanitarian crisis people are killed, or suffer from violence, displacement, hunger and disease.

With the increase in intrastate conflict, the growth of international civil society, the increased recognition of human rights, and the growing appreciation of global interconnectivity and the responsibility of governments to their citizens, states are facing a pressure to protect the civilians in countries other than their own.

At the 2005 World Summit, the world's leaders committed themselves to the "responsibility to protect", recognizing both that all states have a responsibility to protect their citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and that the United Nations should help states to discharge this responsibility using either peaceful means or enforcement action.

This course Investigates the causes, global responses to, and prevention of complex humanitarian emergencies. Beginning with the fundamental problem of defining what qualifies as a humanitarian crisis, the course further examines significant cases searching for factors to account for successful and unsuccessful international engagement.

### **Goals:**

The course will be centered on presenting, discussing and reflecting the main questions faced by the humanitarian community, examining these issues from a multidisciplinary approach, finding new and creative answers, and recommending practical tools to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action.

This course will help students learn:

- To understanding the connections between humanitarian crisis situations, their contexts and their causes
- To develop skills to analyze the role of socioeconomic, political, environmental and health factors in the onset of humanitarian crises
- To study the responsibility of States and individuals with respect to international law and national legislation

The course instructor does not have office at the campus but are available to meet with students upon request, preferably before class, exchanges by e-mail are encouraged.

### Performance Expectations and Measuring Performance

Student will be expected to complete all the required readings in advance of each session. The optional, reference readings provide additional background for those who wish to immerse themselves more deeply in particular issues covered in the course but reading them is not part of the instructor's performance expectations. Selected reference readings may, however, prove useful in preparation of the written exercises.

Students will be expected to participate proactively in group discussions and class exercises. Learning to work effectively in groups is an important aspect of the course. The discussions, exercises, and the final examination will be designed to encourage analysis, synthesis and application of ideas and information provided in the readings and previous classes.

### Grades will be weighted as follows:

- a) Quality of class participation-understanding of and drawing upon the readings and participating group discussions-20%
- b) Group project presentation on a developing country health problem-30%
- c) Project proposal-25%
- Take-home examination-25%

### Grading Scale

A	94-100%	A-	90-93%	B+	87-89%
B	83-86%	B-	80-82%	C+	77-79%
C	73-76%	C-	70-72%	D+	67-69%
D	60-66%	F	59% and below		

### **Group Presentation Overall Grading**

The oral presentation project will comprise 30% of your final grade in this course. The oral presentation project is designed for students to capitalize on their creativity while creating a presentation with usable content.

The actual presentation will be graded out of 30% points. 10% is for individual presentation and 20% is for team presentation. Everyone in the group must present some portion of the material, or points will be taken off.

### **Oral Presentation Evaluation**

#### Individual Performance (10%)

- 1. Pose/Professionalism 2%
- 2. Team work 6%

#### Group Performance (20%)

- 1. Choosing the case 5%
- 2. Understanding of topic 5%

3. Delivery	2%	3. Good use of time	5%
		4. Answered questions clearly	5%

**Remarks**

1. All forms of dishonesty, whether by act or omission including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism and knowingly furnishing false information to the University are prohibited. Intentional disruption or obstruction of teaching, research or administrative proceedings is prohibited. University sanctions may extend to suspension and dismissal.

For further information, please consult relevant University and School documents on academic integrity.

2. Students who have a physical, medical, learning or psychiatric disability, either temporary or permanent, may be eligible for reasonable accommodations at the University as per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. In order to receive such accommodations, students must identify themselves at the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), provide appropriate documentation and collaborate with the development of an accommodation plan. The DSS phone number is 973-313-6003. For further information, please go to website at

<http://studentaffairs.shu.edu/health/DisabilitySupportServices.html>.

**Late Assignments and Make-up Policy**

All assignments and exams should/must be completed by the date indicated in the syllabus. If for some substantial reason you cannot turn in your assignment or take an exam/quiz at the scheduled time you must/should contact the instructor directly prior to the due date, or test date. Make-up exams will not be given unless exceptional circumstances prevail. The decision whether to grant a make-up is solely at the instructor's discretion. No one will be allowed to take a make-up for more than one examination. I will generally expect you to take exams early if you are going to miss the regular date.

**A Note for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability, or think you might have one, you may be eligible for accommodations in academic classes, the residence halls, food service areas, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Disabilities may include those that are permanent or temporary and include, but are not limited to: learning disabilities, ADHD, medical issues, psychological or psychiatric problems, limited mobility, low vision or blindness, and hearing impairments. Students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To receive special accommodations or assistance, please self-identify at the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact Linda Walter, Director of DSS, at (973) 313-6003.

**Textbooks**

John L. Gurr, Ted Robert Davies Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning. Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998

**Recommended:**

Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs 72,3: 22-49.

Snyder, Jack. 1999. When Voting Leads To Violence: Democratization And Nationalist Conflict. New York: Norton Books.

Three written products will be submitted:

- a) A group study project, students will provide an example a particular current case that will present the reality of the complexity in which humanitarian crisis happens. The students, with their experience, knowledge and common sense, will respond to a realistic scenario. The exercise will help the group to identify the dilemmas and challenges that will match the topics for the rest of the program.
- b) A group proposal for an Early Warning System (EWS) & Camp Design Practical Training. Students will explore how the existing mechanisms used to identify potential humanitarian crises and to explain what is EWS, how is it used; it's effectiveness and importance in preventing crises and making them less destructive. Students will demonstrate some of the practical issues that must be dealt with when constructing/designing a refugee camp.
- c) Individual take-home examination at the end of the course. The date for the take-home examination will be determined during the course. In principle it should be taken immediately after the final class session.

### Week 1 (27/Aug/12)

Introduction to some basic concepts and approaches of this course

### September 3 Labor Day-University Closed

### Week 3 (10/Sept/12)

Early-Warning System (EWS)

What is a EWS, how is it used, its effectiveness and importance in preventing crises and making them less destructive.

Humanitarian crises: definition and indicators

**Read:** A Risk Assessment Model of Ethno-political Rebellion, pp.15

**Week 4 (17/Sept/12)**

Evolution of humanitarian crisis situations (1)

**Read:** The State Failure Project: Early Warning Research for U.S. Foreign Policy Planning, pp.27

**Week 5 (24/Sept/12)**

Evolution of humanitarian crisis situations (2)

**Read:** Indicator Development: Issues in Forecasting Conflict Escalation, pp.39

**October 8 Fall Break-No Classes**

**Week 7 (15/Oct12)**

Case study

**Read:** Early Warning of Humanitarian Crises: Sequential Models and the Role of Accelerators, pp.70

**Week 8 (22/Oct/12)**

Group Presentation (**case study**)

Humanitarian Action and Military Action: to discuss how do we deal with the issue of lack of security for the humanitarian community? What are meanings and roles of intervention and peacekeeping?

**Week 9 (29/Oct/12)**

**Read:** Cluster Analysis as an Early Warning Technique for the Middle East, pp.95  
Group Discussion

**Week 10 (05/Nov/12)**

International Humanitarian law and Human Rights

**Read:** Human Rights Abuses and Arms Trafficking in Central Africa

**Week 11 (12/Nov/12)**

**Read:** A Pattern Recognition Approach to Conflict Early Warning, pp.121

*“Early-Warning System: From Surveillance to Assessment to Action”* by Ted Gurr. Cahill, Preventive Diplomacy, Chapter 8. p 123-143

**Week 12 (19/Nov/12)**

Neutrality and Impartiality: Are they possible?

**Read:** An Expert System for Assessing Vulnerability to Instability, pp. 142

To discuss how should we understand these two principles today? Is there any new approach?

**Week 13 (26/Nov/12)**

Humanitarian and development

To discuss how can we do humanitarian action from the developmental perspective? Post-emergency actions: Transition, Healing, Forgiveness, Justice, Reconciliation, Peace. What are the political, economic, cultural and spiritual elements? What are the practical recommendations?

**Week 14 (03/Dec/12)**

**Class review session**

**Read:** The Humanitarian Early Warning System: From Concept to Practice, pp. 209

**Week 15 (10/Dec/12)**

**Last Day of Class**

**December 12-18 Final Examination**