

**AALS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS SECTION
SURVEY OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES IN U.S. LAW SCHOOLS**

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**International Human Rights Advocacy Center
University of Denver**
http://www.du.edu/intl/humanrights/ihrac_about.html

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Questions about your Human Rights Centers, Institutions or Programs (CIP):

1. How many Human Rights Centers, Institutions or Programs do you have and what are they called?

Center for Human Rights Advocacy

2. What is the makeup of the Center/Institute/Program staff? (full-time staff, part-time staff, law professors, law students, other professors or students, and advisory board)

Robert Golten, an adjunct professor at DU Law School and the Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Studies, directs the Advocacy Center, an Interdisciplinary clinical program. An Advisory Board oversees the running of members of both faculty and administration oversees the running of the Center. Staff attorney Sharon Healey directs the Center's Indigenous Asylum Project. Each year we usually have roughly 15 Graduate School of International Studies students and 15 law students working with us for credit.

3. How are law students involved with the CIP? (i.e. are there journals, newsletters, briefs, or other publications, human rights programs abroad, other international human rights campaigns, etc.)

The Center offers an active and wide ranging program experiential education for graduate and law students at Denver University. In response to requests from international clients, it provides human rights attorneys and non-governmental organizations with comprehensive and well-researched advocacy memoranda and reports. For example, a multi-disciplinary team prepared a report, Bhutan, The Right

to Return, for Amnesty International's Legal Support Network in June of 1999. Information at its web-site <http://www.du.edu/intl/humanrights> is also very helpful.

4. If it's not obvious from the name of the program, does the CIP focus on any specific international human rights law issues (i.e. refugees, women's rights, etc.)?

Three "special projects": Asylum/Refugees, Indigenous Rights, Disability Rights

5. What classes, seminars, symposiums, or other presentations have been offered in conjunction with the CIP?

International Human Right Advocacy Clinic is offered as an interdisciplinary clinical course through the Graduate School of International Studies; law school clinical interns also receive a 10-hour abbreviated course in human rights law.

6. Does the CIP assist students in acquiring internship/externship opportunities with human rights organizations (NGOs, IGOs, etc.)? Which organizations?

The Advocacy Center works in conjunction with the Graduate School of International Studies Office of Career Services to facilitate overseas internships and externships with non-governmental, international, and domestic human rights organizations. Some internships are partially funded through a stipend from the Paterson International Internship Fund, and the Small Grants Program in DU's Office of Internationalization. In 2001-2002, eight students followed up their Advocacy Reports with overseas Internships in Uzbekistan, Nepal, India, Croatia (2), Bosnia, Belize, Nigeria, and Uganda. Since then, students have done follow-up work in Nicaragua, Romania, Peru, Ecuador, and Kenya.

7. In general, how is the CIP funded?

The Center receives space, utilities and much logistic support (photocopying, telephone, fax, furniture, computers, ect.) from the University. Operating funds are raised from foundations (mostly small ones).

8. Does the CIP have any affiliations with Human Rights groups outside the law school or university? Which ones? What is the nature of the affiliation?

The center has established relationships with attorneys and activists working in Africa, Latin America, Australia, South and Central Asia and Eastern Europe. It has provided legal advocacy, research and consulting to a variety of national and international non-governmental organizations. It has working relationships with law school clinical programs in Uganda, Azerbaijan, and Nicaragua. The Center also maintains connections to Amnesty International's Legal Support Network, Human Strategies for

Human Rights (California), Minority Rights Group International (London), Survival International (London), Rights Action (Canada), and International Rights National (California), among others.

9. Does the CIP allow student involvement in actual International Human Rights cases? What is the degree of that involvement?

Yes, the crux of the program is converting human rights violations into cases to be taken into a domestic court or appropriate international tribunal using the “rule of law.” Students are involved through the clinical human rights course in writing litigation (or advocacy) reports concerning certain human rights topics; internships and externships for academic credit; and work-study students, working for compensation provided by the federal work-study program. Both law and graduate students also help represent before the Immigration and Naturalization Service asylum seekers in the Denver metropolitan area.

10. What, in your opinion, attracts students to participate in the CIP?

Opportunities for real-world experience; service

11. What are some specific projects or cases that the CIP has undertaken in recent years?

Examples of the three dozen or so human rights advocacy projects undertaken by the Center’s students are those regarding (a) the denial of property rights of ethnic Serbs in Croatia, (b) the rights of the Garifuna (Afro-Caribbean people) in Honduras and Belize, (c) the shooting of Zambian Tribes people exercising subsistence hunting rights on a national game preserve, (d) obtaining political asylum in the U.S. for a Sudanese refugee and (e) filing a petition with the U.N. on behalf of the aboriginal people in South Australia trying to protect their land rights and cultural integrity. Students have followed up their project reports with on-site internships, e.g. in Croatia (denial of property rights to ethnic Serb returnees), Uganda (children’s rights), Uzbekistan (religious freedom of practicing Muslims), Bosnia (discrimination against gypsy schoolchildren in public schools) and India (Tibetan rights of self-determination).

12. Are there cultural and language barriers that impede your work? If so, how have you overcome these barriers?

- a) **Through the use of translators in Central Asian countries**
- b) **Having at least one staff person with Spanish fluency**
- c) **Mariday Fulam and Otter Tubal, translators for our African asylum seekers**

13. Are there any other suggestions you may have concerning the organization of a CIP?

Questions about your human rights clinical work:

14. How many clinics do you have that are handling international human rights litigation or projects (by using international law in domestic fora and/or by taking matters to IGOs)?

One.

For each such clinic, please answer the following questions:

15. What is the makeup of the clinic staff? (full-time staff, part-time staff, permanent/non-tenure track/temporary law professors, law students, other professors or students)

See #2, above

16. In what fora do you practice?

INS (asylum cases), UN Human Rights Commission, Inter-American Commission

17. Who are your case referral agencies?

Catholic Services (for asylum work), Survival International, Minority Rights Group International, International Rights Network (indigenous rights), Human Strategies for Human Rights (general)

18. Please list any partner NGOs that assist you in casework or in teaching the clinic.

19. If you were planning to start up a human rights clinic, what are the most important substantive books to have on your shelf, the top websites you would bookmark and the most important listservs to join (you do not have to catalogue your library for us, we would just like to let our colleagues know your “top ten list” of items you most strongly recommend for people who are starting out)?

20. Do you have syllabi, simulations or any other material that you are able to make available to others, either upon request or by putting it up for colleagues on a shared link between the AALS human rights section website and your clinic’s website (the AALS link could be password protected if this would be helpful)?

Syllabus for human rights course at http://www.du.intl/human_rights . Subscriptions, e.g., to Eurasia Weekly listserve, Africa Action, PILI, Human Rights Quarterly (hard copy), and Cultural Survival (hard copy). The establishment of working relationships with human right activists and groups, particularly in developing countries (in post-communist eastern Europe/Central Asia, and post-colonial Africa) is extremely helpful if not critical. For those programs not enjoying University funding and auxiliary

support, having a “development” person to have primary responsibility for generating funding would be extremely helpful.

21. What percentage of the students in this clinic typically travel abroad for their clinic work?

15 – 25%

22. Do students have the opportunity to meet their clients in person?

Asylum clients: YES

23. What mix of domestic work (if any) and international cases does this clinic handle?

25% Asylum, 75% International and 1 major domestic case, involving displaced Navajo people in Arizona

Individual Faculty Efforts:

24. Do you have any faculty that are performing or supervising significant international human rights litigation or projects outside the formal structure of centers and clinics? If so, what type of project and how many students are involved?

Externships:

25. Do you have students receiving credit for human rights service performed outside your law school? Roughly how many students are doing this each year? What percentage of externships involve placement outside the U.S.?

6-8 students, 100% placement outside the U.S.

AALS Human Rights Section:

26. As you know, the AALS human rights section is just getting off the ground and we would be grateful for your suggestions and leadership. Please let us know in writing or by calling Beth Lyon at 610-519-7126.

A final draft of your responses will be circulated to you before it is uploaded to the Section website. Please let us know if you would prefer that any of your answers *not* be placed on the website.