Course Description

This course will examine the growing and changing roles of nongovernmental actors in international politics. We will ask whether a “global civil society” may be said to exist today, and examine the components of it that have been discussed in international relations literature, including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), social movements, advocacy networks, and protest movements. The course will then delve into thematic questions on NGO authority, strategies, funding, and ethical issues facing activists. The remainder of the course concentrates on particular issue areas of nongovernmental activism: human rights, women’s rights, humanitarian relief, international development, and the environment.

A crucial aspect of the course is that it includes a mandatory community service learning (CSL) component. CSL is a model of experiential education that combines classroom learning with volunteer work that responds to community identified goals or priorities. Each of you will be matched with community partners I have identified, and within the first few weeks of the course, you will meet your partners to refine the specific projects you will conduct over the course term. Your reflection upon your work with your partner organization will constitute a significant component of the course material and your evaluated assignments. The CSL component of the course is discussed in greater detail below.

The course is focused on encouraging students to think critically in assessing the arguments that different authors make concerning NGOs and global civil society. Students will be expected to take an active part in lively discussions during the seminar meetings.

Community Service Learning

Each student in the class will be assigned to work with a community partner organization for approximately 20 hours over the term. Each of the partners with whom I have secured relationships for this year is requesting several students to
work with them.
Please note that you will not be marked primarily on the actual project you complete for the community partner and its success (although the community partner’s evaluation of your contribution to the project will constitute part of your participation mark). Instead, you will be marked on your depth and insight of reflection on your experiences in such work. These reflections will formally occur through two presentations and a CSL journal assignment, outlined in the assignment descriptions below.

The community partners I have identified for this year are:
- Amnesty International
- BC Council for International Cooperation
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Seva Canada
- Asia Pacific Foundation
- Commonwealth of Learning

These are all organizations based in or with offices in Metro Vancouver, which do globally-oriented work. This set of organizations encompasses a broad range of project opportunities: research, community activism or outreach, marketing materials development, strategic planning, etc. In most of these cases, creative thinking is extremely welcome, so as you peruse the project and partner descriptions, think about which opportunities might harness your own skills and talents most effectively.

The specific partner project descriptions will be posted on the Poli 464A Canvas site. On the site, you will also find a link to a poll asking you to express your ranking of preferences for different partnerships. The TA and I will take your preferences into account, as well as our own sense of which students might best suit various internships, in assigning your CSL placement. You will need to log on to Canvas, view the partner project descriptions and answer the poll regarding your #1 through #5 placement preferences. Please enter your preferences in the poll by end of Sunday, January 14. We will then endeavour to assign all students to placements and inform you by Friday, January 19.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

**Oral Group Presentations:**

A 30-40 minute group presentation, worth 15 percent of your grade, during the seminar session in which we discuss your CSL partner’s thematic area. These presentations will occur in Weeks 7 through 11 of the course. You will see that each community partner is matched with a particular week of the course. You and your fellow students placed with that partner will give a presentation in class during the week in which your partner organization is listed.

- Your goal in these presentations is to survey all of the week’s readings and draw links to the work of the community partner with whom you are placed and your
experiences in working with the organization. Your group should be concise in your summary of the readings (since all students will have read them) and instead spend most of the time drawing connections among the readings, critiquing them, and drawing links to your CSL experiences thus far. Note that the presentation may include some points from the short papers students have written this week (outlined below).

- At the end of this presentation, present a list of questions for class discussion that arise from the material. These may partly overlap with those in the syllabus, but should largely be questions of your own. These questions, together with the ones included in the syllabus, will frame the class discussions that follow.
- See the presentation evaluation template at the end of this syllabus for guidance on how I will evaluate your presentation.

**20-minute group presentation regarding CSL placement projects, in class on final date of course seminar (April 3), worth 20 percent.**

- In these presentations, you and your fellow students who have worked with the same community partner organization will deliver a presentation to convey the results of your project work and to reflect upon the ups and downs of the placement experience and, where relevant, how your experiences relate to the academic literature from the course.
- Representatives from the community partner organizations will also be invited to attend the session and we will celebrate the partnership achievements with refreshments!

**Written Assignments:**

**Weekly online reading responses (due each week at beginning of class) (10%):** Each class, you must submit a brief online written response on the course Canvas site, in which you react to the week’s readings. This post should be no more than a few paragraphs and certainly no longer than 500 words, and the online format allows all of your classmates to read it. The post is to be submitted on the Canvas course site discussion board that is located in that week’s course module section of the site. Do not agonize over its elegance, since you will receive credit as long as you submit a response that refers to all of the readings. You may submit your response any time prior to class but you must submit it by the start of class (not after class), or you will not receive credit for it. You must at least briefly mention all of the required readings and your reactions could include affirmation, criticism, or simply questions about some of the readings for the week. These responses will demonstrate to me that you have prepared for class and will provide a participation avenue more suited to those students who experience discomfort speaking in class. Ideally they will also help you to formulate some points to raise in class. These responses are marked on a pass/fail basis. You are not expected to submit a response on the week in which you present and submit a critical response paper on the readings, and you are permitted to skip one additional week of the term without notice or penalty.

A short 5-7 page (double-spaced) paper, worth 10 percent of your grade,
reacting to the week’s readings, to be submitted in class on the week of your thematic presentation. You should read all of the readings for the week and write a paper that briefly summarizes and then responds to the readings. It is not mandatory that you discuss your CSL placement experiences for this paper (although you may if you wish), but you must briefly summarize and critically respond to the readings. You must also submit this paper electronically to Turnitin.com by one day after the paper is due.

A reflective journal regarding your CSL experience, in two iterations through the term (marked by the TA). I will be handing out much more detailed guidelines on the journal assignment within the next few weeks. Essentially, the purpose of your reflective journal is to make connections between your CSL placement experience and the knowledge you are gaining in the classroom.

1. An interim journal submission, due in class on February 27 (worth 5 percent on a pass/ fail basis). This is to make sure that you are making timely progress with your journal, and will give you an opportunity to receive detailed feedback from the TA in time to make any needed adjustments well before the final journal submission deadline.

2. Final journal submission, due by email to me and the TA by end of day on April 13 (worth 25 percent of final grade). If you have opted to write your journal in a physical written format rather than an electronic file, please make arrangements to deliver your journal to me by the end of that day.

Class Participation:

Class participation is worth 15 percent of your grade, and is split into two components: in-class oral contributions and community partner/ TA assessments of your contribution to the CSL project.

1. Oral contributions and attendance (10%): Of course, making oral contributions to class discussions is an important part of participation, especially in a seminar course. However, I do not consider quantity of speaking, but instead the quality of comments. Remember, there are no dumb questions! If you are confused about something, it is likely that at least one other person is, too.

2. Assessment of your contribution to your CSL project (5%). At the end of the term, I will solicit feedback from the community partner organization concerning each student’s performance and contribution in producing the agreed-upon CSL project with the organization. I will also solicit feedback from the teaching assistant regarding each student’s performance in this regard. Each student will receive a mark reflecting feedback on the quality of participation and output.
Summary of Key Due Dates:

- **Group’s week, as indicated**: Group thematic presentation and individual short papers
- **Beginning of class each week**: Deadline for weekly written response
- **February 27, in class**: Deadline for submitting interim reflective journal
- **April 3, in class**: Final group presentation on CSL projects
- **April 13 (by email)**: Deadline for submitting final reflective journal

Acknowledgement

UBC’s Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on in their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

General Academic Policies

Read the university calendar so that you are aware of no-penalty drop dates, requirements for medical authorization (to defer an exam, for example) and other procedures that may affect you.

Religious holidays – UBC permits students who are scheduled to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religions to notify their instructor in advance of these days and their wish to observe them by absenting themselves from class or examination. Instructors provide opportunity for students to make up work or examinations missed without penalty. (Policy # 65.)

Accommodating disabilities – UBC is committed to the academic success of students with disabilities. UBC’s policy on Academic Accommodations for students with disabilities aims to remove barriers and provide equal access to University services, ensure fair and consistent treatment of all students, and to create a welcoming environment. Students with a disability should first meet with an Access and Diversity advisor to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for.

Academic Integrity and Responsibility

Academic communities depend on their members’ honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings that appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others’ work as your own, penalties may follow. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department, who may decide that you should receive zero for the assignment. The Head will report your case to the Dean’s Office, where the report will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and
will forward your case to the Dean's Office. After an interview in the Dean's Office, your case may be forwarded to the President’s Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Like any academic author submitting work for review and evaluation, you are guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course. Your submitting work from another course, without your instructor’s prior agreement, may result in penalties such as those applied to the misrepresentation of sources.

**Illness, Absence and Late Assignment Penalties**

If you experience medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or academic performance, please notify Arts Academic Advising. If you are registered with Access and Diversity, you should notify your instructor at least two weeks before examination dates. If you are planning to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other commitments, you should discuss your commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

Unless you have discussed your inability to meet an assignment deadline in advance, or are able to document a medical or family emergency, there will be an automatic 3% grade penalty per business day for late papers. Overcommitment and burdensome workloads will not be accepted as excuses to avoid penalties for late assignments, since you are informed about the schedule of assignments and exams for your courses at the beginning of the term and have the entire term to budget your time for different assignments.

**Reach out and ask for help if you need it**

University students encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. If you run into difficulties and need assistance, I encourage you to contact me by email or by dropping by my office. I will do my best to support your success during the term. This includes identifying concerns I may have about your academic progress or wellbeing through Early Alert. With Early Alert, faculty members can connect you with advisors who offer students support and assistance getting back on track to success. Only specialized UBC advisors are able to access any concerns I may identify, and Early Alert does not affect your academic record. For more information about Early Alert, visit [earlyalert.ubc.ca](http://earlyalert.ubc.ca). For information about addressing mental or physical health concerns, including seeing a UBC counselor or doctor, visit [students.ubc.ca/livewell](http://students.ubc.ca/livewell)

**Respectful University Environment**

UBC recognizes that “the best possible environment for working, learning and living is one in which respect, civility, diversity, opportunity and inclusion are valued.” The full *UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff* can be found at
Students should read this statement carefully and take note of both the protections and the responsibilities that it outlines for all members of the UBC community. Students should also review the Student Code of Conduct, at:

http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0

This course values frank discussion, healthy debate, and the free and respectful exchange of ideas. Students are welcome to voice and defend their views, which may differ from those of other students or of the instructor. However, disrespectful behavior, including bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated. The instructor and teaching assistant will be professional and respectful in all their exchanges with students, and students will exercise similar professionalism and respect in their interactions with each other, with the teaching assistant, and with the instructor.

If you have any concerns about the class environment, please raise them with the instructor. You also have the options of contacting the Head of the Political Science Department, UBC's Equity and Inclusion Office (http://equity.ubc.ca), or the UBC Ombudsperson for Students (http://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/contactus/).

**Equity and Harassment**

UBC is committed to equity (including but not limited to gender equity) and fostering a safe learning environment for everyone. All peoples should be able to study, work, and learn in a supportive environment that is free from sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination. UBC’s Policy #3 on Discrimination and Harassment defines harassment as: “unwanted and unwelcome attention from a person who knows, or ought to know, that the behaviour is unwelcome. Harassment can range from written or spoken comments to unwanted jokes, gifts, and physical assault, and may be accompanied by threats or promises regarding work or study opportunities and conditions. Harassment can be either a single incident or a series of related incidents.” Such behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at UBC. If you or someone you know has encountered sexual violence or harassment, you can find confidential support and resources at the AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC), and the Equity and Inclusion Office. The SASC is an all-genders service that serves the UBC-Vancouver campus community and is committed to creating a safer campus community, free from sexualized violence. Their work is informed by feminism, anti-oppression and recognition of intersectionality. The Equity and Inclusion Office is committed to fostering a community in which human rights are respected and equity and diversity are integral to university life.

Resources are available at:
Sexual Assault Support Centre, (SASC)
249M, Student Union Building, UBC
604-827-5180
sasc@ams.ubc.ca
http://amssasc.ca
Submitting Papers to Turnitin.com

In an effort to deter plagiarism, the Political Science Department requires that you submit an electronic copy of each of your papers to Turnitin.com. This is a service that universities are using increasingly as a method to detect instances of plagiarism. This service compares student papers to thousands of published documents, “paper mills” of essays for sale, and to all of the other student papers submitted to the website, to detect levels of overlap in wording. You can find out more about Turnitin, and the university’s policies on it, at http://vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/turnitin-at-ubc/.

For this course, you will need to submit your short papers to Turnitin (but not your reflective journals, since these are very idiosyncratic and may be in various non-scannable formats). In order to submit your paper to Turnitin.com, you will need to create a user profile on the website at http://www.turnitin.com/login.asp. You will also need to enter the “course ID” and the “course password” for this course. The information you will need is:

Course ID: 8446325  
Course enrolment password: globalcs

You must upload your short papers to Turnitin.com by one day after the paper assignment is due to me. Otherwise, you will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day for each day you are late in submitting the paper. Note that if you are handing in the paper to me late anyway, you will only be penalized a total of 3% per day (not 6% per day) until you have handed in the paper to me and uploaded it to Turnitin.

Citation Styles

I am happy to accept any common style of citation in your papers, whether it uses in-text author-date-page citations, footnotes at the bottom of each page, or endnotes at the end of the essay. The key requirement is that you should be thorough and consistent in your citation style. If you need a reference guide, the UBC library website has basic style guides for the APA and MLA citation styles (http://help.library.ubc.ca/researching/how-to-cite/). Another more detailed reference is the well-known Chicago Manual of Style (University of Chicago Press). In any case, in addition to individual citations, you should include a “works cited” page at the end of your essay as a matter of standard practice, even though the sources are likely to be from the course syllabus itself. Please come and see me if you have any questions about styles of reference.
Your short papers must be double-spaced with one-inch margins and use 12-point font for the text.

**Reading Requirements**

There is a considerable amount of reading expected in this course. The assigned reading averages a total of approximately 60 pages per week. Some weeks have a heavier reading load; other weeks have significantly lighter loads. You should endeavour each week to read all of the readings, in order to make useful contributions to class discussions. Although there is no final exam to test your reading coverage in this course, your weekly written response marks and participation mark will depend in part on your knowledge of the readings.

**Course Texts**

There are no readings that need to be purchased for this course. You can find all required readings on the syllabus electronically through the UBC Library Reserves site. Go to [https://courses.library.ubc.ca](https://courses.library.ubc.ca), and log in with your UBC CWL to access the online readings for the course. You will be able to access pdf or e-book versions of each journal article and book chapter listed as a required reading through that service.

**Week-by-Week Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

**Week 1, Jan. 9: Introduction**

No assigned readings.

**Week 2, Jan. 16: Global Civil Society or Something More Modest?**


**Recommended readings:**

Discussion Questions:

1. What should be the definition of global civil society? Is it an ideal-type concept or something that actually exists? Should it be defined by organizational types, spheres of activity, or values and goals?
2. What are the practical and ethical implications of choosing to define civil society in one way or another?
3. Are certain actors excluded from a definition of global civil society? What would be reasons for excluding them? Do actors have to be “good” or “nice” to be included?
4. Is GCS the correct term, or should we be talking about transnational civil society or transnational social movements as a less ambitious term? Should we not be talking about “civil society” at all?
5. Is GCS new, or is there something new about it in recent years compared to the past?
6. What is the difference between and INGO and a transnational social movement (TSM)? Do any TSMs exist in reality?

Week 3, Jan. 23: Evolving NGO Power and Authority


Recommended readings:


Ann Florini, “Is Global Civil Society a Good Thing?” *New Perspectives Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (Spring

Discussion Questions:

1. To what extent are states relevant in shaping the opportunities and constraints that transnationally active NGOs, networks, and social movements face?
2. Should we be measuring NGO power as a zero-sum equation in relation to state power?
3. What is the “authority trap” for NGOs, and what does this mean for the ability of NGOs to achieve their ideal advocacy goals?

Week 4, Jan. 30: NGO Strategies and Technology


Matt Price, “Disruption in the NGO Sector,” Ch. 4 in Engagement Organizing: The Old Art and New Science of Winning Campaigns (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017): 84-102. [NOTE: Especially if presenting this week, you may wish to read more chapters of this book, especially Ch. 2 – available as e-book from library.]


If you have time, jump ahead to Hafner-Burton article on “naming and shaming” in Week 7.

Recommended:


Michael Strange, “‘Act Now and Sign Our Joint Statement!’ Media, Culture & Society 33, no.


Discussion Questions:

1. What are the various modes through which GCS attempts to influence world politics? Which identifiable strategies seem to be most fruitful for activists?

2. What is the “boomerang pattern” and what conditions do you think are necessary for it to work?

3. Does it matter that NGOs sometimes publicize inaccurate facts if the basic problem they are amplifying does exist and their intentions are charitable? Why or why not?

4. Do anonymous “e-bandits” fall within the scope of civil society? How are their tactics different from those of conventional NGO activists?

Week 5, Feb. 6: Funding


Recommended:


Discussion Questions:

1. What are the pros and cons of various types (sources) of funding for NGOs? What would be the ideal configuration of funding for NGOs in order to preserve their autonomy but still have enough financial resources to be effective?

2. Are there any ways in which funding programs or recipient practices could be modified to help reduce the problem of NGO dependency and activities shaped by donor priorities?

3. What kinds of effects do foreign donors have on local NGO movements within state borders? Is reliance on foreign funding thus an inherently dangerous condition for local activists?

4. Do you think that a large influx of funding from donors on balance strengthens or weakens an NGO? In what ways?

Week 6, Feb. 13: Ethical Issues for Global Activists


Duffield, Mark, “NGOs, Permanent Emergency and Decolonization,” Chapter 2 in Development, Security and Unending War: Governing the World of Peoples

**Recommended:**


**Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the ethical problems of governance associated with the growth of transnationalized civil society? Should there be some kind of agency created to monitor and rate NGOs? If so, who would do the monitoring?
2. Is it important for NGOs or transnational networks to be run democratically? Or does this simply hamper effectiveness of the organization/network in achieving its goals?
3. What problems of inequality or misunderstanding arise between foreign activists/organizations and local organizations/citizens/governments in poor countries? Is this inevitable or can these problems be mitigated?
4. Do NGOs rely upon the permanent existence of humanitarian emergencies to sustain their existence?
5. Should NGOs avoid provision of services that are best seen as responsibilities of the state?

**REMINDER: NO CLASS FEB. 20 DUE TO READING WEEK BREAK **

**REMINDER: INTERIM REFLECTIVE JOURNALS DUE IN CLASS FEBRUARY 27 **

**Week 7, Feb. 27: Human Rights**

*(Students placed with Amnesty International will present this week.)*

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Discussion Questions:**

1. How frequently does the “spiral model” proposed by Risse and Sikkink apply to real-life human rights problems? What roles do NGOs (both domestic and international) play in this process?

2. How much impact can international NGOs have on domestic human rights conduct within states? Is there a certain stage when their impact is most important?

3. Does “naming and shaming” work as a tactic for international NGOs to stop human rights violations in domestic contexts? If so, under what conditions?

**Week 8, March 6: Women’s Rights/ Feminism**

*(Students placed with Commonwealth of Learning will present this week.)*

**Required:**


Recommended:


Discussion Questions:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the women’s movement focusing on women’s rights as human rights as a frame for action?

2. How can NGO activists, both global and local, work successfully to translate feminist principles in ways that resonate in local contexts?

3. Is it possible to build a truly global women’s rights movement? Why or why not?

Week 9, March 13: Humanitarian Relief

*(Students placed with the Asia Pacific Foundation will present this week.)*

Required:


Recommended:


**Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the boundaries of the field of “humanitarian relief”? To what degree should such work take on agendas such as human rights, peacebuilding, or healthcare?
2. Can humanitarian and international development NGOs escape their colonial roots?
3. Why have humanitarian NGOs been unable to maintain their apolitical, impartial character over the past few decades? Is this a positive or negative development?
4. Why has the sector of humanitarian NGOs become more professionalized and bureaucratized? Are there parallels in other NGO sectors?

**Week 10, March 20: International Development**

(Students placed with BC Council for International Cooperation and Seva Canada will present this week.)

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Discussion Questions:**

1. What are the problems of representation related to INGOs’ work in poor countries (both “speaking of” and “speaking for” the Global South)?
2. Is there any way to overcome problems of representation of the South by Northern actors?
3. Are there alternative ways for NGOs to contribute to international development besides relying on traditional donors? Can they escape the pathologies of the traditional “aid chain”?
4. When international organizations or INGOs operating in poor countries pay their local staff much less than they pay their Western workers, is this reasonable based on differing costs of living, or is it exploitation?
5. What are the pros and cons of international development NGOs “mainstreaming” human rights and gender equality goals into their work?

**Week 11, March 27: Environment (Also final advice on presentations and journals)**

*(Students placed with David Suzuki Foundation will present this week.)*

**Required:**


Recommended:


Discussion Questions:

1. What tactics of the global environmental movement have been effective? How could these be transferred to other issues?

2. What is “cultural change” (Wapner) and why is it important? Is it, as he argues, more revolutionary in the long run than changing official laws? Have NGOs in other areas besides environmental issues created transnational cultural change?

3. Is there a resolution to the age-old question of whether NGOs are more effective with cooperative or confrontational strategies in their campaigns against corporate or state practices? Or do campaigns in GCS need to include both approaches in order to attain their goals?

4. What do NGOs gain and lose by pursuing a strategy of professional expertise provision rather than passionate protest by large numbers of people? Are certain issues more suited to one or the other approach?

Week 12, April 3: Final Presentations on CSL Projects

**FINAL REFLECTIVE JOURNALS DUE BY MIDNIGHT APRIL 13 VIA EMAIL TO PROF. SUNDESTROM AND THE TA**
# Thematic Presentation Marking Template

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