

**Field Experience in Health and Human Rights:  
Winter Session 2007  
PIH 268**

***Purpose:***

This course will allow students to acquire the basic skills in applying a human rights framework to health issues in a developing country through direct experience in settings where such skills are used. The experience is designed to create opportunities to learn of potential employment in settings where health and human rights are practiced. Specific skills will vary among organizations and locations.

***Conditions of participation:***

Enrollment is limited to 15 students in good standing at HSPH or HLS. There is a preference for students with academic and experiential background in human rights, such as having enrolled in one of the human rights courses offered at the school or having worked in this field. Students admitted without such background will be expected to prepare themselves through the short course and supplemental reading.

Students will use the Common Application Form for PIH WinterSession field Courses and comply with the deadline of October 6, 2006. It is not necessary to have settled on the placement institution by that date but you should obtain the agreement of the host institution by the notification date of October 16, 2006.

***Methods:***

In the *preparatory stage*, students will work in Boston during the Fall2 quarter to conduct a literature search, read previous reports on health and human rights in the country, and gather background information on human rights and on the country.

In addition, a short course on health and human rights will be offered by Professor Marks to provide a general introduction to the human rights framework and its applications to public health. Two evening sessions of two hours will be scheduled for this purpose. The session will allow you to review the possible tasks to be performed in the field settings and potential problems to be encountered.

In the *field phase*, students will spend 3-4 weeks working at an institution under qualified supervision. The work may involve collecting data, visiting sites, conducting interviews, preparing draft reports and proposals, and assisting in developing the analysis of the health and human rights situation. The time in the field will vary according to the needs of the host institution. This phase will normally be the entire month of January.

If any student thinks he or she may be engaged in research involving human subjects, such as focus groups, individual interviews and similar activities, they must apply to the Human Subjects Committee for appropriate authorization.

In the *reporting phase*, students write a report of approximately ten (10) pages (double spaced) consisting of (a) a description of the institutional and geographical setting, (b) the supervision and tasks performed, (c) an assessment of how the organization was operating, its goals, means and impact, as well as (d) the extent to which a health and human rights framework was applied. The report should also contain, if appropriate, (e) recommendations as to how the organization could improve its projects and better integrate a health and human rights framework. Finally, if appropriate, it can include (f) an assessment of whether future students should consider going to the same project as part of field experience in health and human rights

### ***Cooperating institutions:***

Students will be assigned to an appropriate outside organization. Students have been placed in all regions of the world. Institutions where PIH 268 students have been placed recently or that have agreed to accept students in 2007 include:

- Association Francois-Xavier Bagnoud (AFXB): locations are in India (21 projects), Myanmar (2 projects), Mongolia (1 project being set up), Rwanda (2 projects), Uganda (3 projects), South Africa (3 projects), Uruguay (1 project), (Brazil (1 project), Colombia (1 project), and Bolivia (1 project)
- Center for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT), Mumbai, India
- Civic Exchange, Hong Kong
- Doctors for Global Health, Estancia, El Salvador
- Gaza Community Mental Health Program
- Hôpital Albert Schweitzer, Haiti
- International Labour Organization (ILO), Jamaica & Trinidad
- International Service for Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland
- Legal Resources Centre in Accra, Ghana. Up to six students can be placed with the Realizing a Right to Health of LRC, which deploys them to three locations.
- Medical Relief Committees (Palestine)
- Médecins sans Frontières (MSF)
- National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), Maharashtra, India
- Palestinian Consulting Centre (mental health), West Bank
- Physicians for Human Rights (PHR)
- Schistosomiasis Control Initiative, London
- Stop Trafficking, Oppression, and Prostitution of children and women, New Delhi, India
- Uganda Human Rights Commission, Kampala
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNWRA)

Other collaborating institutions are being be considered. Students are encouraged to identify other institutions already familiar to them or to research appropriate institutions that are (1) engaged in work that may be valuable to the student's professional development, (2) function within or in relation to the public health sector, and (3) use a human rights framework or are exploring the ways and means of doing so.

***Credit:***

Faculty may grant 1.25 (on a pass/fail basis) or no credit depending on the amount of work the student performs and the student's preference.

***Faculty supervision:***

In principle, Professor Marks will supervise the students. With the assistance of a course coordinator, he will interview students for selection into the program, make the contacts with the supporting NGO, review the methods and products of the student's efforts and evaluate each student's performance. If the nature of the preferred placement would make it advantageous to involve other PIH faculty, arrangements will be made on a case-by-case basis according to faculty availability and interest in the county and issues addressed.

***Administrative arrangements and logistics:***

Unlike the other field trips during winter session, PIH 268 requires a pro-active involvement by students. In addition to participating in selection the locations for the field work, students will be required to make their own travel and visa arrangements. Before leaving for their destination all students complete the student tracking form on which they provide information regarding their placements, the project, and some logistical matters.

***Safety:***

No student will be sent to the field unless their security is assured to the satisfaction of the student, the School, the cooperating institution and the Department of State. Students sign an "Acknowledge of Risk" form and check that all insurance, visa and other matters relating to liability and safety have been attended to. Students are required to communicate with the secretariat of the course to confirm where they are living, what they are doing and indicate any practical or programmatic problems they may be having.

***Costs:***

Students are responsible for travel and insurance. Exceptionally, the cooperating institution sometimes has resources to cover part of the HSPH student's travel or to provide local accommodation. The School will provide 25% of the airfare and a stipend of between \$75 and \$100 per week to defray part of the travel and living expenses, in accordance with the arrangement for all students engaging in field work during WinterSession.