School of Journalism and Mass Communication  
University of Iowa  
Human Rights, Freedom of Expression & the Internet (19-310, Eko).  
Spring 2012  

Instructor: Lyombe Eko  
E-Mail: leo-eko@uiowa.edu  
Office: E322 Adler Journalism Building  
Telephone: 353 -1926  
Departmental Executive Officer: Professor David Perlmutter.  
Office: E301 Adler Journalism Building  
Classroom: E250 Adler Journalism Building  
Meeting times: TTH 3:30-4:45 p.m.  
Office hours: Mondays & Wednesdays. 1:00-3:00 p.m. or by appointment.  

Course Description:  
The development of the Internet as a global, multi-communication platform, and the rise of the networked social media require a critical re-examination of the concept of the Human Right to communicate (freedom of expression). This course will explore the freedom of expression provisions of the international human rights regime, trace their roots in collective memory, and explore application of these values to the virtual, borderless, multi-communication platforms of online media. The United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth the international standards of human rights. Freedom of expression or the right to communicate is at the core of the post-World War II international human rights regime. However, despite the fact that virtually all countries of the world are signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other instruments that make up the edifice of international human rights, there is no universally acceptable definition of the term “freedom of expression.” Philosophical and cultural differences over freedom of expression and human rights have given rise to specific national, regional and international regimes of public communication. Indeed, different countries and regional political groupings have different, even contradictory,
philosophical orientations towards freedom of expression and the right to communicate. This course will explore how national cultural and regional specificities affect conceptualization of freedom of speech and of the press in real space and cyberspace.

This course will survey the origins of the international human rights regime from a comparative, collective memory perspective. The focus will be on the communicational aspects of international human rights theory, with special emphasis on how different jurisdictions apply human rights ideals to the Internet and its associated networked social media. Topics to be covered will include: the communicational aspects of major international human rights instruments, the rights of children and pedopornography on the Internet, the protection accorded embedded journalists in times of war, the Internet as a tool for the promotion of human rights, as well as human rights and collective memory in real space and cyberspace.

The last part of the course will consist of case studies that illustrate the principles explored in the first part of the course. The case studies will include: the Wikileaks phenomenon and freedom of expression, Danish and French court adjudication of the Mohammed cartoons affair, French court criminalization of Nazi memorabilia hosted on Yahoo!’s servers in California, Google Inc. and Internet censorship in China and India, journalists and drug wars in Latin America, political cartoons and freedom of expression in Africa, as well as “informational activism” and human rights in the “Arab Spring” of 2011. These case studies are exemplars of how different jurisdictions have applied or failed to apply the freedom of expression components of international human rights law in real space and cyberspace.

**Required Textbooks:**


Scope and Purpose:

The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment I, Constitution of the United States (1791).

The First Amendment protects many types of speech in the United States. The nature of the mass media has led the courts to apply the First Amendment to them in different ways. We will compare the application of the free speech clause of First Amendment to the different circumstances of the American mass media (American exceptionalism) with the conceptualization of free speech in other parts of the world.

B. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

The United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets forth the international standard of freedom speech, freedom of opinion and freedom of expression through the media. We will compare and contrast the different traditional media and Internet communication systems that obtain around the world in terms of their adherence to the universal humanistic standards spelled out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)

Article 10 – Freedom of expression

1 Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.

2 The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

The European convention on Human Rights was signed five years after the end of World War II in response to the monumental human rights atrocities and ethnic cleansing that had taken place on the continent before and during the war. Today, the European Court of Human Rights is the foremost enforcer of human rights on the European continent. We will also explore a few of the key decisions of European Court of Human Rights.

The purpose of this course is to enable students to appreciate the universal human right to communication, as well as the diversity of communication systems around the world and to develop an understanding of the powerful political, economic and technological forces that shape our planetary communication space.

Freedom of expression in class.

Free speech is the stock-in-trade, nay; the very life-blood of communication in democratic societies. This course encourages the free expression of ideas. All students
are expected to participate and express themselves. The Supreme Court of the United States has held that:

“Under the First Amendment there is no such thing as a false idea. However pernicious an opinion may seem, we depend for its correction not on the conscience of judges and juries but on the competition of other ideas.”


Simply put, all ideas are welcome. Under the First Amendment, the United States is considered a marketplace of ideas (Abrams v. United States, 1919). Therefore, freedom of speech means freedom for all. No idea is too controversial to be expressed in the right context. In this course, students are encouraged to freely express their ideas, even if these ideas are unpopular, unorthodox, unconventional, liberal, conservative, or offensive, provided such ideas are expressed in a civil, professional manner. Since we will be discussing some legal and ethical issues on which most people have very strong personal opinions, and over which reasonable people often disagree, students are to treat their colleagues, even those with whom they differ, with respect.

The other side of the coin of freedom is responsibility. Though Freedom of speech is very important, freedom of thought is just as crucial. The world needs more thinkers and fewer talkers. As Danish philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) put it: "People demand freedom of speech as a compensation for the freedom of thought which they seldom use." One of the aims of education is to help students become independent thinkers who have a thoughtful and critical attitude towards the world and towards popularly accepted ideas.

Academic Honesty

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ policy on academic fraud, dishonesty, and cheating is spelled out in the Student Academic Handbook. Please consult it at http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml. In brief, all assignments must be the result of the independent endeavors of each student. Students who attempt to pass off other peoples’ work, as well as material downloaded from the Internet as their own, expose themselves to academic sanctions as prescribed in
University of Iowa rules and regulations pertaining to plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

Some students have been known to turn in the same or a very similar assignment or paper to two different courses. This is an unethical practice that is unacceptable under university rules and regulations. Turning in an assignment or paper for this course constitutes certification on your part that the paper is the result of your individual endeavors and that you have not turned in the same paper to another course for credit.

**The Iowa Dozen**

This course will adhere to the general principles of journalism education set forth in the Iowa Dozen:

We learn…

–to write correctly and clearly
–to conduct research and gather information responsibly
–to edit and evaluate carefully
–to use media technologies thoughtfully
–to apply statistical concepts appropriately

We value…

–First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
–a diverse global community
–creativity and independence
–truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity

We explore…

–mass communication theories and concepts
–media institutions and practices
–the role of media in shaping cultures.
–the role of media in shaping cultures.
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Policy on Cross-Enrolment & Graduate Students.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has set forth a new policy on cross enrolment. If you are a student in one college and take courses offered by another college, please bear in mind that in matters related to the application or non-application of a specific course to your program of study, the policies of the college in which you are enrolled will be applicable.

ADA Accommodation:

Reasonable accommodation will be made for students with functional limitations and medically certified learning disabilities, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and University of Iowa policies. If you have a learning or functional disability that requires accommodation, please consult the University Disabilities Office and have that office send me official documentation explaining the type of reasonable accommodation needed.

Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook [http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml].

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty
and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Class Etiquette and Student Complaints.

The statement of student rights and responsibilities is set forth in the Student Academic Handbook (found at the College of Liberal Arts Web site: http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml). It includes procedures for student complaints concerning faculty actions. If you have any complaints about this course, please discuss the matter with me first. If you are not satisfied with your discussion, feel free to contact the Director of the School of Journalism.

Understanding and preventing Sexual Harassment

As defined by the Supreme Court of the United States, sexual harassment is an unwanted sexual advance made towards a person of the same or opposite gender. It takes two forms: 1) Creation of a hostile work environment through heterosexual or homosexual sexual jokes, display of pictures of a sexual nature, off-color humor, groping and the like, and 2) quid pro quo (literally, this for that) sexual harassment where a person in a position of power or authority demands sexual favors from subordinates in exchange for a good grade, promotion, salary increase, or other advantage (Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, 523 U.S. 75 (1998)). Sexual harassment is a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It subverts the mission of the University of Iowa and threatens the wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately.

See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at:
Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, Part IV <http://www.uiowa.edu/~our/opmanual/v/16.htm#1614>, 16. See items e, h, and i.)

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation in Discussion (10%)

Class attendance is a professional expectation. If you are going to be absent, please send the instructor an e-mail to that effect. Each student will take turns leading a discussion of the readings in a given module. Students are expected to do their readings, including additional research, and lead the discussion on their assigned module. The rest of the class is to demonstrate familiarity with the material. Discussion leaders are free to distribute additional material in class.

2. Reading Reports/Responses (25%)

Students will be assigned readings throughout the semester. Each student will be required to provide one page report/response for the assigned readings as stipulated in the syllabus. The format of the response is as follows: List the title and author of the article, explain the main theoretical perspective (if any), list aim of the article and the research question(s). Provide a specific quote that illustrates what you consider the most important point of the article. Explain why you consider this the most striking point of the article. How does the reading contribute to your understanding of collective memory and human rights in real space and cyberspace? Do you agree or disagree with the main point/findings of the article? These reading reports are designed to help students prepare the literature review for their term paper. Please print a hard copy of each reading report and turn it in when it is due.
3. Power Point Presentations (15%).

Each student will be expected to choose one of the topics in the table below, research it and make a 15-20 minute Power Point presentation for the class. The focus must be on the communicational aspects of human rights (broadly defined), freedom of expression, collective memory and the Internet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites of Memory</th>
<th>Issue Area Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Wikileaks and the Media</td>
<td>Freedom of Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The Internet: Digital Archives, Virtual Exhibits.</td>
<td>Freedom of Expression/Human rights</td>
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<td>3. The Internet as Site of Memory</td>
<td>Digital (Lieux de Memoire).</td>
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<td>4. Tiananmen Square</td>
<td><em>Site of Memory in real space and cyberspace (photography)</em></td>
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<td>5. Tahrir (Liberation) Square, Egypt</td>
<td>Human Rights/site of online and offline memory.</td>
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<td>6. Abu Ghraib photos</td>
<td>Site of online and offline memory/freedom of information/photography</td>
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<td>7. Al-Jazeera</td>
<td>Site of Memory</td>
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<td>8. September 11 (9/11) site/Pearl Harbor</td>
<td><em>Site of Memory/freedom of expression/rhetoric</em></td>
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<td>9. Images of Women on Tahrir square, Egypt: Rape and virginity tests, etc.</td>
<td>Human Rights &amp; the Media/Religion</td>
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<td>10. Facebook</td>
<td>Specific Sites (Mohammed Saeed)</td>
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<td>Digital Memorials: The Holocaust, Spielberg’s Project, Yale Video Archive</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>The Nobel Prize for Peace &amp; Human Rights: Burma, China, Tibet, Menchu, etc.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Crazy Horse Memorial, South Dakota</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Photography and Collective Memory</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Mass Mediated Memory Culture</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>The “Great Firewall of China”</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Youtube</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Hurricane Katrina</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>The Olympic Games</td>
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4. **Term Paper (50% of course grade)(Due April. 24th):** Each student is required to write a 20-25-page term paper on any topic or subtopic of human rights, communication, collective memory and the Internet. Choose a topic from the list above. **You can use the same topic as your class Power Point presentation.** If you prefer to choose a different topic, please clear it with the instructor.

   a. **Abstract of the paper: Due April 3rd, 2012.** Before you write the term paper, you are required to research the topic and write a **one-page abstract** of what your term paper will be about. Your abstract must contain a creative title, and must indicate what the aim of your paper will be. Your reading responses
should provide the bulk of your literature review. I want to see evidence that you have done some preliminary research and that your topic is original and viable. **The aim of this research project is to put together a number of competitive research papers that will be submitted to ICA or other professional research conferences.**

**All term papers are required to follow the following outline:**

1. Have a descriptive Title (on a separate title page).
2. Introduction (Present the topic, state its significance, define terms, what theoretical perspective are you going to be using?).
3. Literature Review (Summarize what has been written about your topic & theory).
4. Aim of the paper and statement of the research question (What is the aim or objective of the study? What do you intend to do?)
5. Methodological issues: What is the method of your study?.
6. Body of paper (Data analysis). Do what you said you were going to do.
7. Findings/analysis/results
8. Conclusion (a recapitulation of what your research questions were, what you found, and the significance of your findings).
9. Have References.
10. Use APA style.

**Grading: Papers will be graded according to the following criteria:**

a. Importance/significance of topic
b. Clearly stated aim/research questions
c. Proper use of an organizing theoretical framework.
d. Findings based on evidence in the data
e. Quality of writing, style, grammar, etc.

**Please note that I or incomplete grades will be given only in extreme cases that satisfy University of Iowa rules and regulations pertaining to emergencies.**
# Course Modules

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1  | 1. General Introduction: Origins of Human Rights  
2. The International Human Rights Instruments and the Right to Communicate | **For next class: 1/24**  
International Human Rights Instruments  
1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).  
2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, Arts 18 & 19).  
**Assignment:** a) Write one-page analysis of the **communicational provisions** of these instruments & b) write one-page reaction paper on:  
Soyinka (2004), *Climate of Fear: The Quest for Dignity in a Dehumanized World.*” |
**Assignment:** a) Write one-page reaction paper on each reading (due Thursday 1/26)  
**Assignment:** a) Write one-page reaction paper on each reading (due/2/2). |
<table>
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<th>4</th>
<th>4. The Internet and Human Rights</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong> Write one-page reaction paper on each of the readings.</td>
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<th>5</th>
<th>5. Children, Human Rights &amp; Communication in Real Space and Cyberspace</th>
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<td><strong>Assignment:</strong> Write one-page reaction paper on this reading.</td>
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<td><strong>Research possibilities:</strong> Media Refraction of the FBI’s Innocent Images Initiative. <a href="http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/innocent-images-1">http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/innocent-images-1</a></td>
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<th>6</th>
<th>6. National Human Rights Instruments (Communicational Aspects)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789);</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The First Amendment (1791)</td>
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<td>3. The European Convention on Human Rights (1950) (Articles 9 &amp; 10)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong> Write a) one-page reaction paper on Ignatieff &amp; b) one-page analysis of the freedom of speech and expression provisions of these instruments.</td>
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| 7-8 | 7. Transferring Human Rights from Real Space to Cyberspace  
9. Internet Surveillance Systems: Carnivore, SORMII & the Great Firewall of China, the IT Wheel of India.  

**Video:** Jiang Zemin and Tiananmen Square. |

**Assignment:** Write a) one-page analysis of Deibert & Soldatov, Yunchao & Biswas Porter (due 3/1). |


**Assignment:** Write a) one-page reaction to Xhi-xu and one page response on Eko, Kumar & Yao (Due 3/8). |
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<tr>
<th>11-12</th>
<th>11. The Internet, Human Rights Issues and Collective Memory</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Assignment:</strong> Write one-page reaction paper on each reading (<strong>Due 3/29</strong>).</td>
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<th>13</th>
<th>12. Journalism, Human Rights &amp; Collective Memory</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment:</td>
<td>Write one-page reaction paper on Yang &amp; Hariman (Due 4/19).</td>
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## Appendix

**Sites of Human Rights and Memory**

[http://humanrightsmuseum.ca/](http://humanrightsmuseum.ca/)  
[http://humanrightsmuseum.ca/virtual-exhibits/media_photo/all](http://humanrightsmuseum.ca/virtual-exhibits/media_photo/all)
6. Israel: Yad Vashem (Holocaust Museum Archives)


8. South Africa: South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, Republic of South Africa

9. Taiwan: The Jing-mei Human Rights Memorial & Cultural Park
http://jmhrmcp.cca.gov.tw/e/about.aspx?id=51&menuid=51

10. United States:
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Online exhibits).
http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/#propaganda

11. National Center for Civil and Human Rights (Atlanta)
http://echrpartnership.org/

http://americanhistory.si.edu/exhibitions/exhibition.cfm?key=38&exkey=1674
(links to flickr).