Negotiating Human Rights Solutions in Business
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Course: UGBA 192N.4  Semester: Fall 2018  Units: 1

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Today’s business leaders are faced with human rights dilemmas on a daily basis. They are potentially sourcing from clothing factories with poor working conditions, building mining operations where indigenous communities might live, and developing algorithms that, despite their best intentions, might discriminate against certain populations. In short, “business as usual” can involve human rights impacts at every turn. Addressing such complex and systemic human rights issues through multi-stakeholder initiatives (MSI), which join businesses, governments, and human rights organizations, has proven to be a collaborative approach that leads to practical and effective solutions.

This experiential learning course will provide a hands-on opportunity for students to acquire critical skills and learn the challenges and promise of MSI through role play. Throughout this one-credit, eight-week course, students will work in assigned project teams to explore the multifaceted dimensions related to the topical issue of fake news, as well as the at times conflicting stakeholder perspectives. Key aspects covered during the class will include:

- An overview on business and human rights, covering international frameworks, the scope of responsibility for business, and key examples;
- An exploration of the issue of fake news as it relates to the universal human right to freedom of expression, its adverse impacts (misleading consumers, influencing elections, increasing the propagation of hate speech, etc.), and recent developments around the globe;
- An overview of MSI, how they have been used to effectively solve business and human rights issues, factors for success and drawbacks, as well as examples and guest speakers on their experience;
- An MSI role-play exercise on the issue of fake news, with representative teams from business, governments, and human rights organizations. Project teams will be tasked with working together to develop practical, real-life solutions that can be used to solve this growing global issue;
- An opportunity for project teams to refine their practical approaches via direct consultation with “lifeline” expert practitioners (1.5 hours commitment via phone).

COURSE OBJECTIVES
- Foster awareness and sensitivity around human rights-related issues and challenges that the private sector faces, using a deep-dive on fake news to teach the complexities associated with these issues.
- Impart to students an understanding on how MSI work, along with key factors for success and challenges;
- Provide an opportunity for students to practice soft skills such as teamwork, negotiation, empathy, and compromise.
- Empower students to use their analytical and problem-solving abilities to propose practical solutions that could have real-life applications.

Marissa Saretsky is Associate Director at Article One, where she advises multinational companies on their human rights strategies. Previously, Marissa served as Program Director of the Human Rights and Business Initiative at the Center for Responsible Business at Berkeley-Haas, and held the role of Manager in Business & Human Rights at Gap Inc. where she developed strategies and programs to mitigate human rights risks across the apparel company. She also spent 5 years with the Climate Change & Sustainability Services practice at Ernst & Young in both Paris and San Francisco. Marissa received her Master’s degree in Sustainable Development from the Institut d’études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po), and holds a BA in International Relations and French from New York University.