



**Course Code:** M.A. (DLB)0681  
**Course Title:** Humanitarian Response to Conflict  
**Programme:** Cross Elective [BA & MA]  
**Semester:** Spring 2026

### **Course Information**

Course Duration: 15 weeks  
Credit Hours: 45 hours  
Meetings: 15 hours of office meetings  
Location: JGU Campus  
Prerequisites: Students interested in international humanitarian action, armed conflict, humanitarian Protection  
Equivalent Courses: Humanitarian Theory and Practice; Humanitarian law  
Exclusive Courses: International Humanitarian Law; Armed Conflict and Humanitarian Response

### **Instructor Information**

**Instructor:** Rita Iorbo

**Biography:** Rita Iorbo is a Sociologist with interests in peace and conflict studies, forced displacement, human security, and human rights. She holds a doctorate in Behavioural Sciences of the O.P. Jindal Global University, India; a Master of Arts in International Peace Studies of the United Nations-mandated University for Peace, Costa Rica and Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from Benue State University, Makurdi-Nigeria. Her doctoral research focused on the Social Inclusion and Psychosocial issues of internally displaced persons. She is an Assistant Professor in the Jindal School of International Affairs (JSIA) of the O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat, India and an Affiliate of the Refugee Law Initiative (<https://rli.sas.ac.uk/people/rita-iorbo>), at the University of London.

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## 1. Course Description

Humanitarian Response to Conflict explores the principles, practices, and challenges of humanitarian response in conflict settings. The course develops in students, practical knowledge, and skills to distinguish between the types of armed conflict using international humanitarian law, international protection of affected populations. The course explores professional humanitarian principles that guide humanitarian conduct and response to humanitarian emergencies. With case studies, video analysis, group presentations and interactive sessions, the course helps students to understand the humanitarian cost of armed conflicts and ways in which humanitarian actors can respond to human suffering. Students will examine the complexities of humanitarian crises, the needs of affected populations, and the roles of various stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, NGOs, and local communities.

## 2. Course Intended Learning Objectives(Aim)

Course Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Activities	Assessments/ Activities
Have theoretical and practical understanding of armed conflict; humanitarian crisis; humanitarian principles and practice	Class-led seminars Storytelling Video Screenings and Analysis	Quizzes Case studies
Develop analytic skills for conflict analysis		Research paper take home assignment
Develop analytical understanding of the changing role of State Sovereignty and State and International Community responsibility in humanitarian action		Quizzes, midterm closed book exams
Develop skills for humanitarian assistance, strategies for post-conflict transition for development and peacebuilding		Group case presentations, end term exams

## 3. Scheme of Evaluation and Grading

Assessment	Weightage	Remarks
<b>Internal</b>	<b>70%</b>	
In class Activity*	<b>Internal</b> 10 Marks	<b>Internal</b> Two in class activities of 5 marks each over various concept of the module
Research paper	20 Marks	Take home paper
Mid-term exam*	20 Marks	Closed book assessment.
Case Study	20 Marks	Group paper project to reflect selected case study analysis based on the learning design
<b>External</b> <b>End Semester Examination</b>	<b>External</b> <b>30%</b>	<b>External</b> There will be an end semester examination for all students to analyse the theoretical reasoning and case analysis over the modules (closed book timed examination).

## Grade Definition

COURSE LETTER GRADES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION			
Letter Grade	Percentage of Marks	Grade Points	Interpretation
O	80 and above	8	<b>Outstanding:</b> Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability.
A+	75 - 79	7.5	<b>Excellent:</b> Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability.
A	70 - 74	7	<b>Very Good:</b> Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyse existing material and originality in thinking and presentation.
A-	65 -69	6	<b>Good:</b> Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills.
B+	60 - 64	5	<b>Fair:</b> Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B	55 - 59	4	<b>Acceptable:</b> Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of the study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B-	50 - 54	3	<b>Marginal:</b> Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials, and poor critical and analytical skills.
P1	45 - 49	2	<b>Pass 1:</b> Pass with Basic understanding of the subject matter.
P2	40 - 44	1	<b>Pass 2:</b> Pass with Rudimentary understanding of the subject matter.
F	Below 40	0	<b>Fail:</b> Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course.

## 4. Academic Integrity

*Academic Honesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism.*

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words OR ideas without proper acknowledgement. Any idea, sentence, or paragraph you take from a web source or from printed material must be credited with the original source. If you paraphrase or directly quote in the exam or essays, the source must be explicitly mentioned. You should not plagiarize content, be it from scholarly sources (i.e., books and journal articles) or from the Internet.

## Plagiarism Penalty Structure

### Penalties

- Level 0:** Similarities up to 10% - Minor Similarities, no penalty.
- Level 1:** Similarities between 11% to 20% - Such student shall receive a reduction of 5 marks.
- Level 2:** Similarities between 21% to 29% - Such student shall receive a penalty of 10 marks.
- Level 3:** Similarities of 30% and above -Award of Fail Grade

## Participation/Attendance Policy

**Class participation:** Active participation and 75% attendance are required for this class. The student is expected to actively engage in class discussions and demonstrate understanding of concepts, theories and application.

## Use of phone/ texting/ laptop

Electronic devices are not permitted. Students are advised to use notebooks during classes.

## 5. Keyword Syllabus

International humanitarian law. Armed conflict. Humanitarian Crisis. Humanitarian response

## 6. Course Material

### Textbooks

Humanitarian Innovation Fund. (n.d.). Humanitarian Architecture. <https://higuide.elrha.org/humanitarian-parameters/humanitarian-architecture/>

OCHA. (1998). The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

The Sphere Project. (2011). Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response.

<https://www.ifrc.org/docs/idrl/i1027en.pdf>

UNHCR. (2015). Reference module for cluster coordination at country level.

UNHCR. (2015). Reference module for cluster coordination at country level.

UNHCR. (n.d.). Convention and Status relating to the Status of Refugees:

[https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A\\_CONF.2\\_108.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.2_108.pdf)

UNHCR. Emergency book. <https://emergency.unhcr.org/protection/protection-principles/humanitarian-principles>

### Reference books

None

### Web Sources

How is the Term "Armed Conflict" Defined in International Humanitarian Law?

<https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinion-paper-armed-conflict.pdf>

International Armed Conflict (IAC): [https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0001#:~:text=International%20armed%20conflict%20covers%20all,unilateral%20\(ICRC%2C%202016\).](https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0001#:~:text=International%20armed%20conflict%20covers%20all,unilateral%20(ICRC%2C%202016).)

International Commission on Prevention and State Sovereignty (2001). The Responsibility to Protect. "Report". *The International Development Research Centre*. <https://www.globalr2p.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2001-ICISS-Report.pdf>

Non-International Armed Conflict (NIAC): <https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0002>

Norwegian Refugee Council. (2016). Humanitarian principles in practice.

<https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/position-papers/humanitarian-principles-in-practice/2016-humanitarian-principles-in-practice.pdf>

## 7. Session Plan

Session (with Date)	General Topic	Readings	Approach/Pedagogy
<b>Week 1</b>	Introduction and scope	Videos	Video screening, analysis and discussion
<b>Weeks 2-5</b>	Armed Conflict and Types	International Armed Conflict (IAC): <a href="https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0001#:~:text=International%20armed%20conflict%20covers%20all,unilateral%20(ICRC%2C%202016">https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/terminology/hips/so0001#:~:text=International%20armed%20conflict%20covers%20all,unilateral%20(ICRC%2C%202016</a>	PPTs, discussions, video analysis, case study
	Humanitarian Intervention Responsibility to Protect	Non-International Armed Conflict (NIAC): <a href="https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-">https://www.undrr.org/understanding-disaster-</a>	Interactive teaching, quiz and case studies

	Children and Armed Conflict  Humanitarian Crisis	<p>risk/terminology/hips/so0002</p> <p>How is the Term "Armed Conflict" Defined in International Humanitarian Law?  <a href="https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinion-paper-armed-conflict.pdf">https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/opinion-paper-armed-conflict.pdf</a></p> <p>International Commission on Prevention and State Sovereignty (2001). The Responsibility to Protect. "Report". <i>The International Development Research Centre</i>. <a href="https://www.globalr2p.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2001-ICISS-Report.pdf">https://www.globalr2p.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2001-ICISS-Report.pdf</a>  United Nations. <i>The Responsibility to Protect</i>. <a href="https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/responsibility-protect">https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/responsibility-protect</a></p> <p>Anderson 2018: Intro to humanitarian emergencies. (pp 1-6)</p>	
<b>Week 6</b>	Humanitarian principles in Practice	Norwegian Refugee Council. (2016). Humanitarian principles in practice. <a href="https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/position-papers/humanitarian-principles-in-practice/2016-humanitarian-principles-in-practice.pdf">https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/position-papers/humanitarian-principles-in-practice/2016-humanitarian-principles-in-practice.pdf</a>	Readings, class discussions, case studies, video analysis
<b>Weeks 7-8</b>	Revision Mid Semester	In class revisions, discussions. Closed book assessment	Teachings, videos, discussions.
<b>Weeks 9-11</b>	Protection of forcibly displaced persons: - Internally Displaced Persons - Refugees  - International Humanitarian Organisations: The Cluster System and Responsibilities	<p>The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement Convention and Status relating to the Status of Refugees:  <a href="https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.2_108.pdf">https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_CONF.2_108.pdf</a></p> <p>UNHCR. (2015). Reference module for cluster coordination at country level.</p> <p>Humanitarian Innovation Fund. (n.d.). Humanitarian Architecture. <a href="https://higuide.elrha.org/humanitarian-parameters/humanitarian-architecture/">https://higuide.elrha.org/humanitarian-parameters/humanitarian-architecture/</a></p>	Video screening, reading materials, discussions
<b>Weeks 12-13</b>	• Group case presentation	To promote teamwork and group learning, students would be paired in groups to research and present work on humanitarian response in different contexts	Group class activity
<b>Week 14-15</b>	Revision End Semester		