

The American University
School of International Service

“Senior Capstone: Children in International Affairs”

SISU-419-008

Fall 2015, Thursdays 2:35 P.M. – 5:15 P.M., SIS 233

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3-6 PM, or by appointment

Course Objectives:

The Senior Capstone course is specifically designed to provide the summative academic experience for undergraduate students. Capstone courses are topical; they are not specifically linked to any one thematic area. A Senior Capstone class is integrative, while also giving students the opportunity to work on a summative project of their own. Capstone projects enable students to integrate their previous coursework and demonstrate the skills and competencies they have gained during their time with us. For some students this may be a research paper; for others, a documentary film; for still others, a piece of international service on which they reflect in a systematic way.

This course examines the role of children and childhood in international affairs, and is broken into three parts. Part I is an introduction to a set of theoretical and conceptual tools to be used in analyzing childhood and international affairs. This will include classic works on the history of childhood, childhood as a social construction, children in international political economy, child rights, the political child, the uses of children in the media, and a discussion of child participation and research with children. In the second part of the course we will read a series of book length case studies on various topics related to children and international affairs. The choice of case studies will be driven by the interests of students, but may include child soldiers in Sierra Leone, children born of wartime rape, transnational adoption, or child migrants in U.S. Immigration custody. The third part of the course will be focused on the capstone projects, and will allow for peer feedback on first drafts as well as oral presentations of final projects.

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking as evidenced through both written work and oral presentation.
2. Understand and apply theories and models drawn from appropriate disciplines, including political science, history, and economics to international affairs.
3. Apply their ability to create a research design, execute their chosen project and present their results and findings, which builds upon what students learned in their SISU-360 Advanced I.S. Research course.

Assignments and Grading:

- Participation. Showing up to class regularly and engaging in class discussion. (10%)

PART I: THEORY AND CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

- Written analysis and in-class sharing of artifact. *Due 9/10.* (5%).
- Take-home midterm exam on theories covered in Part I. *Distributed 10/8, due 10/12.* (15%)

PART II: BOOK LENGTH CASE STUDIES

- Group presentation of a case study book. Your group (of around 5 people) will create discussion questions and/or other classroom activities related to your book. You will lead the classroom discussion that week. There will also be a chance for you to report back to me anonymously on group dynamics. (15%)

PART III: CAPSTONE SCAFFOLDING

- Annotated bibliography of at least ten sources related to your project. For each source, give both a summary of the main argument and a description of how the source will be useful to your capstone project. *Due 10/29* by e-mail. (10%)
- First draft shared with a group of peers online to be discussed in class 11/19/15. *Due 11/15* by midnight. (I won't read it at this point, but it's worth 5% of your grade to turn something in).
- In class presentation of Capstone Project, either *12/3* or *12/10.* (10%)
- Capstone Project. Due at time of presentation. (30%)

Required Texts:

Wells, Karen. (2015). *Childhood in a Global Perspective.* Polity Press.

Watson, Alison. (2013). *The Child in International Political Economy.* Routledge.

Case Study Texts:

Kim, Eleana J. (2010). *Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging.* Duke University Press.

Shepler, Susan. (2014). *Childhood Deployed: Remaking Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone*. NYU Press.

Terrio, Susan J. (2015). *Whose Child Am I?: Unaccompanied, Undocumented Children in U.S. Immigration Custody*. University of California Press.

Carpenter, Charli (ed.) (2007). *Born of War: Protecting Children of Sexual Violence Survivors in Conflict Zones*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Other readings are available on Blackboard.

CLASS MEETINGS:

9/3/15: Introduction to the Course.

Complete “getting to know you” survey

PART I: THEORY AND CONCEPTUAL TOOLS

9/10/15: History of Childhood, childhood studies

Due: 1-2 written analysis of the artifact you choose to bring to class to be posted on blackboard by 7:00 AM

In-class assignment: Bring in a toy, children’s book, article from a parenting magazine, ad for baby gear (aimed at 0-7 years of age) and be prepared to discuss what this tells us about contemporary American constructions of childhood. Consider how this artifact is shaped by class, gender, race or ethnic differences.

Readings:

- Ariès, Philippe. (1960). “The Ages of Life”, “The Discovery of Childhood”, and “Children’s Dress,” in *Centuries of Childhood*. (on Blackboard)
- Stephens, Sharon. “Introduction,” in *Children and the Politics of Culture* (on Blackboard)
- Wells, Chapter 1, “Childhood in a Global Context”

9/17/15: Child Rights, Children and International Organizations

Readings:

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (on Blackboard)
- Wells, Chapter 2, “Policy and Practice”
- Marshall, D. (2002). Humanitarian Sympathy for Children in Times of War and the History of Children’s Rights, 1919-1959. *Children and War: A Historical Anthology*. J. Marten. New York, New York University Press: 184-199.
- Boyden, J. (1997). Childhood and the Policy Makers: A Comparative Perspective on the Globalization of Childhood. *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood:*

Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood. A. James and A. Prout. London, Falmer Press: 190-229.

- Wells, Chapter 10, “Rescuing Children and Children’s Rights”

9/24/15: The Child in International Political Economy

Readings:

- Watson, the whole book (except the appendices)
- Wells, Chapter 5, “School and Work”

10/1/15: The political child, images of children in the media

Readings:

- Wells, Chapter 7, “Children and Politics”
- Moeller, S. (2002). “A Hierarchy of Innocence: The Media’s Use of Children in the Telling of International News.” *Press/Politics* 7(1): 36-56.
- Pupavac, V. (2001). “Misanthropy without Borders: The International Children’s Rights Regime.” *Disasters* 25(2): 95-112.
- Watson, Alison M.S. (2011). “Guardians of the Peace?: The Significance of Children to Continued Militarism.” Chapter 2, in *The Militarization of Childhood: Thinking Beyond the Global South*. J. Marshall Beier, Ed. Palgrave Macmillan. Pp. 43-60.

10/8/15: Children’s participation, Research on and with children

Readings:

- Hart, Roger. (1992). “Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship.” UNICEF, Innocenti Research Center.
- Hart, J. (2004). “Children’s Participation in Humanitarian Action: Learning from zones of armed conflict.” Oxford, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford.
- *Doing Research with Children and Young People*, (2004), Sage Publications. Chapter 6, “Power”; Chapter 7, “Ethics”; and Chapter 8, “Involving Children and Young People as Researchers.”

Take-home midterm distributed in class. Due by e-mail 10/12.

PART II: BOOK LENGTH CASE STUDIES

10/15/15: Case Study 1: Transnational Adoption

Reading: Kim, Eleana J. (2010). *Adopted Territory: Transnational Korean Adoptees and the Politics of Belonging*. Duke University Press.

Optional: Wells, Chapter 4, “Children and Families”

10/22/15: Case Study 2: Child Soldiers

Reading: Shepler, Susan. (2014). *Childhood Deployed: Remaking Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone*. NYU Press.

Optional: Wells, Chapter 8, “Children and Youth at War”

10/29/15: Mobilizing Children and Youth in Violence and Peacebuilding

Guest Lecture by Mark Hamilton

Capstone Project annotated bibliography due by e-mail.

11/5/15: Unaccompanied Child Migrants

Reading: Terrio, Susan J. (2015). *Whose Child Am I?: Unaccompanied, Undocumented Children in U.S. Immigration Custody*. University of California Press.

Optional: Wells, Chapter 9, “Children and Migration”

11/12/15: Children Born of Wartime Rape

Reading: Carpenter, Charli (ed.) (2007). *Born of War: Protecting Children of Sexual Violence Survivors in Conflict Zones*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

PART III: CAPSTONE FEEDBACK AND PRESENTATIONS

First draft of Capstone Project due to your peer group on Blackboard, 11/15

11/19/15: Peer Feedback on Capstone Drafts

12/3/15: First Set of Capstone Presentations.

12/10/15: Second Set of Capstone Presentations

Messages from our sponsors:

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please don't hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/regulations/reg80.cfm>). As the code states, "By enrolling at American University and then each semester when registering for classes, students acknowledge their commitment to the Code. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their rights and their responsibilities. In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, examinations of whatever kind, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Students are responsible for learning the conventions of documentation and acknowledgment of sources. American University expects students to complete all examinations, tests, papers, creative projects, and assignments of any kind according to the highest ethical standards, as set forth either explicitly or implicitly in this Code or by the direction of instructors."

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (www.prepared.american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.