The course will begin with a rigorous and critical introduction to the history, foundation, structure, and operation of the human rights movement. While the course will begin with an introduction to the full range of international human rights, the primary focus will be on the critical connection of housing and land rights to the ethical dimensions of planning and the role of planners in tackling the current global crisis of urbanisation and urban and rural poverty. Requires familiarity with global affairs or ethics and social justice issues.

The course is part of the MIT Displacement Research and Action Network (DRAN) http://displacement.mit.edu/ and will draw on the considerable documentation and methodological resources of the Network. One such resource is the mapping exercise developed by MIT students in the August 2014 Practicum in New Delhi, India (11.S943). The course will include a brief overview of this work as well as a discussion on the practical application of such methodologies across the world.

The course will also include the participation of eminent scholars and activists and eminent experts (including United Nations Special Rapporteurs) as guest lecturers.

A number of field visits in the greater Boston area are planned with local activists to gain a deeper understanding of both the negative impact that planning has had on particular communities and positive change that has resulted from people’s participation in the planning process.

Throughout the course we will take a close look at both how professional planners have had, through their practice, contributed to the violations of human rights and how planners have, through the formation of national and global alliances, attempted to promote social justice and human rights.
A preliminary outline of the course is attached here. Within the broad parameters of the course outlined below, the nature and content of the classes can be adjusted to accommodate the different perspectives the students would like to pursue.

The class will also attempt, through a collective exercise, the drafting of a Planners Oath that attempts to infuse the foundations and principles of social justice and human rights into the planning profession.

The course will follow an interdisciplinary approach and will, therefore, be of interest to students in politics, sociology, geography, human rights and law.

**Class 1: September 9**

*Introduction to the origins of Human Rights and the United Nations*

**Class 2: September 16**

*Introduction to the UN’s global human rights monitoring mechanisms*

**Class 3: September 23**

*What are Housing and Land Rights? Do Planners have a role in the realisation of these human rights?*

**Class 4: September 30**

*Country Case Studies on Planning and its impact on Housing and Land Rights*

**Class 5: October 7**

*Housing, Health and Planning: The inextricable link*

**Class 6: October 14**

*The impact of the master and regional planning process in the dispossession of people and communities*

**Class 7: October 21**

*Displacement, upgradation and the role of Planning*
Class 8: October 21
Public Participation and Planning: Why a human rights approach is essential

Class 9: October 28
Planning and the Right to the City: New Theories, New Practice

Class 10: November 4
Planning and its critical, yet unrealised, role in confronting the challenges of urbanisation

Class 11: November 25
Class Exercise: Towards a Planners Oath

Class 12: December 2
Class Exercise: Towards a Planners Oath

Class 13: December 9
Class reflections and wrap up