

Academic Workshop – Health-Care in Danger

Instructions

Overview:

- Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the Health Care in Danger (HCiD) issue and of the importance of compliance with the applicable legal framework.
- Students will acquire greater knowledge of the main rules applicable to the protection of health care in conflict, in particular the rights and responsibilities of parties to the conflict and of health-care personnel and issues related to the use of the emblems.
- Students will gain a better understanding of the application of such rules in practice and of the practical consequences when they are not respected.
- Students will gain familiarity with the main ethical dilemmas pertaining to health care in conflict.
- Students will engage in a critical analysis of this issue and develop their own position and arguments concerning the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL) provisions on the protection of health care.
- The speaker/teacher will have the opportunity to focus on a specific area of international law and to expand his/her skills through additional research.

Specifics:

I. Reading list:

Several days before the workshop, students will receive a package of essential material to prepare before the seminar. They will in particular have the opportunity to go through the module structure, including the compulsory and optional reading list. Compulsory references include the case studies and fact sheets with questions. The purpose of this is to allow students to familiarize themselves with the topic and to think about practical issues before attending the workshop. The optional reading list, on the other hand, is intended to provide students and teachers with material for further research and in-depth analysis. Finally, students will also receive a document containing all the relevant legal provisions on the topic for reference during home reading and in-class discussion.

II. Watching a film as introduction to the topic:

A visual introduction is a good way for students to get a general understanding of the topic. The film will help them to:

- visualize the topics they encountered in their reading and make them more real;
- contextualize the theoretical information they will receive throughout the subsequent presentation.

Before starting the presentation, a few minutes should be spent brainstorming about the issues touched upon in the film. The speaker could use a flipchart or a whiteboard to note down the main topics raised in the brainstorming. During the subsequent presentation, the speaker should then refer back to those topics in order to encourage students to make the connection between theory and practice, abstract information and images.

III. Theory – PowerPoint presentation:

The purpose of the PowerPoint (PPT) presentation is to make students understand the main legal obligations and rights surrounding the protection of health care during armed conflict. To help the speaker convey the message effectively, the following features have been incorporated:

- Content: Part one focusses on the practical issues in the field, while part two explains the applicable legal framework. The aim is to make students understand the link between humanitarian issues and the need for regulation.
- Structure: A PPT presentation helps the speaker and students to focus on the main points during the explanation.
- Speaker notes: These contain the essential information related to the slide. Their purpose is to guide the speaker, not to be the text of the presentation itself. Speakers are encouraged to conduct their own research and to adapt the content of the presentation to their academic needs.
- Pictures: These help the speaker to contextualize information and to continually link the theory to practical issues in the field. In addition, pictures help students to visualize information and to memorize the ideas linked to the pictures.
- Quizzes: The PPT contains three quizzes, whose purpose is threefold: a) to introduce new obligations through interaction with students; b) to allow students (and speakers) to take a short break from the face-to-face lesson; c) to encourage students to be more involved in the presentation and to think about the reasoning behind certain rules.

IV. Questions and discussion concerning the presentation

Before moving on to the practical side of things, students will get the opportunity to clarify their doubts, ask questions and explore issues that have not been touched upon during the presentation.

V. Case studies

The main objective of this second part of the workshop is to allow students to apply theory to practice. Through the analysis of practical case studies, students will tackle controversial legal issues related to health care in danger and come to understand the complexity of the issue. Based on the legal approach of the IHL reference publication *How does law protect in war?*, the purpose of this workshop is to allow participants to identify which rules of international humanitarian law could or should have applied in practice. The discussion will therefore only address legal issues and arguments.

A. Introduction to the cases and questions

To make sure that all the students are familiar with the case studies and understand the facts correctly, the speaker/teacher will briefly review the cases with the students. It is advisable to make this an interactive session and to ask for volunteers to share their understanding of the cases.

B. Group discussion (three groups)

The class is then split into three groups; each group works on a specific case and is assigned some questions to discuss. Such small-group discussions allow students to focus on fewer questions and to have a more efficient discussion. It is easier for them to speak up and to take part in the wider discussion if they first have the opportunity to share their views with a few other classmates.

C. Group report and discussion

The results of these group discussions are then shared with the whole class so that the other students have a chance to participate in the debate and share their points of view. Each group summarizes the conclusions of its discussion and invites other students to rebut them or bring new issues to the table. This plenary session allows all students to become familiar with the main legal issues surrounding the other cases that they did not address in their small groups. Moreover, the speaker/teacher and the students have the opportunity to address other issues that were covered in the group session.

Observation:

The ideal target audience for which this workshop has been conceived are students with a legal background. However, the issue of health care in danger could also be relevant to students of international studies, including international relations and development, and to students of health-related subjects. For this reason, speakers/teachers are strongly recommended to adapt the content of the workshop to their audience and to encourage students with a non-legal background to complete the ICRC's online IHL modules beforehand.