

# Undergraduate Research Academy in Human Rights

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Colorado State University

# Mission of the Academy

Human rights have become one of the most powerful ways of envisioning and advocating for a more just, equitable, and peaceful world. Yet, despite the power of human rights as an abstract concept, what exactly is included in those rights — and who or what is responsible for ensuring them — remains contested.

In our research academy, undergraduates learned techniques for identifying and measuring human rights violations. Students will gain exposure to key methods in documenting and analyzing human rights abuses. Students used mixed methods and digital tools to analyze open source materials, such as news articles, photos, and social media relating to their chosen case. Student researchers are currently preparing their findings for sharing to the wider community.

With the Sustainability Grant, we expanded the mission of the academy to focus on fieldwork experience at the intersection of the rights of people and planet.

# Goals of the academy

Deepening an understanding of the linkage between core concepts in international studies, such as human rights, and their practical application via research.

Learn how to investigate human rights abuses with digital tools and mixed methods.

Generating policy recommendations based on analysis; connecting with key actors and agencies in our chosen fields.

Gaining experience sharing out research findings in multiple platforms to diverse audiences (academic, relevant human rights orgs, and the general public).

Gaining independent research experience which can lead to competitiveness for national and international internships, fellowships, and postgraduate opportunities.

Create a community of care in this field, so that we can better accompany those we work as we build our paths forward.

# E-Waste Management in Lagos, Nigeria, Cort Johnson

Storymap:

<https://arcg.is/00qLa1>

## Research Questions:

- How is electronic waste managed in Lagos?
- How does the larger economic model influence management and potential human rights abuses?

## Project Output →

- Storymap describing and analyzing the various factors involved in e-waste management (compilation of findings and foundational research)
- Essay submission to the UNHCR Special Rapporteur on toxics and human rights – broadening research on the life cycle of electronics and their components (cobalt mining in the DRC → corporate strategies to increase consumerism/political ecology of devices → e-waste exports to Nigeria and related impacts on people/environment)

## Key Findings →

- Several human rights issues present, impacting those involved in the industry as well as nearby communities and the environment (right to clean, healthy and sustainable environment, worker's right to health, children's rights and labor rights)
- Role of international corporations and governments in facilitating/maintaining these informal industries
- Solutions shouldn't disable the industry completely, people rely on it for their livelihoods

# Mitigating and Addressing Climate Change in Larimer County, Torrey Egan (and Idaly Alvarez-Zubiate)

- How can we analyze local climate anxiety to create a policy proposal to mitigate these effects?
- What does climate anxiety look like in Larimer County, CO among different demographics?
- What factors of climate change and government intervention contribute the most to local climate anxiety?

## DO YOU WORRY ABOUT THE EARTH'S FUTURE?

### REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Researchers from the College of Liberal Arts at CSU are recruiting participants for a study to help shape future climate action here in Larimer County, CO.

#### Who can join?

- Anyone over the age of 18 that currently resides in Larimer County, CO

#### What will you be asked to do?

- Take a 5-10 minute survey about climate anxiety and local mitigation
- This will result in the automatic entry for the chance to win a \$50 gift card

#### Why should you join this study?

- To be a part of local change to mitigate climate change and anxiety
- To participate in local research that could positively impact the future of Larimer County, CO
- Self reflect on your personal feelings towards climate change and local action

#### How do you join?

- Scan QR code or go to this link  
<[https://colostate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_cAObk4KJ1sfEZGS](https://colostate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cAObk4KJ1sfEZGS)> and complete the survey



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INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
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UNDERGRADUATE HUMAN RIGHTS RESEARCH ACADEMY

# Proposed Output

- The goal of this study is to ultimately create a comprehensive policy proposal that can be implemented in Larimer County to properly address and mitigate climate change effects and therefore climate anxiety.
- This proposal would suggest different areas of policy to prioritize based on the responses from the public.
- If warranted, the proposal could also include specific policy discourse to help support and expedite the policy making process.

# Hypotheses

- Feelings of climate anxiety will be higher in the younger generation (18-35) and among gender identities that aren't cis-men.
- Those who are feeling climate anxiety will be most anxious about increasing GHG emissions and rising temperatures.
- Those who are feeling climate anxiety do not believe that the government is doing enough right now to mitigate its effects.
- Using the findings, I hypothesize we will be able to draw together a concrete policy proposal that we can take to a governing body in hopes of implementation or consideration.

# Summer international fieldwork projects

- Qualitative research on sustainability and gender in Todos Santos, New Mexico.
- Mixed-methods research on culture and sustainability in Japan.
- Students will do fieldwork in early summer and prepare UN inputs in the late summer/ early Fall will also prepare interactive project for display at Academy website with Center for Ethics and Human Rights

## Universal Periodic Review:

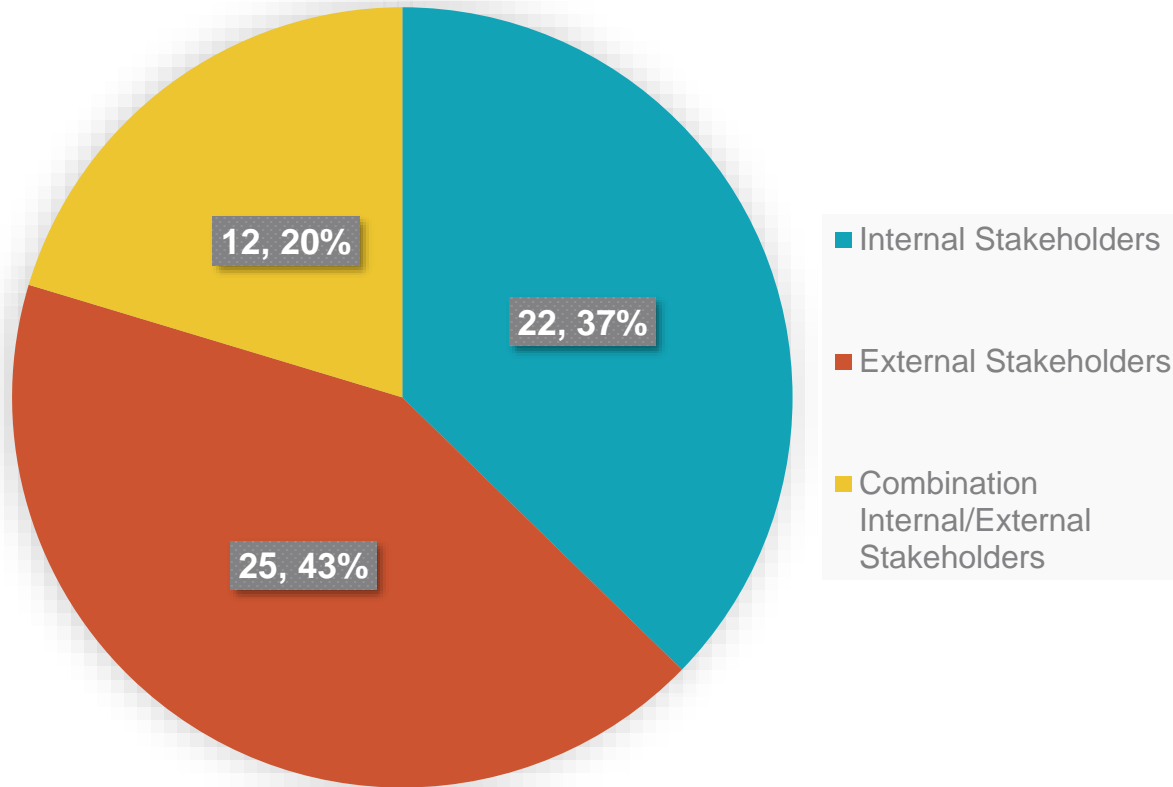
### A Case Study of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Peyton Meyer

- This study analyzes the effectiveness of the United Nation's system of Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in addressing the state of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2019. This case study calls into question the overall effectiveness of the UPR in serving those in need of human rights protection within the examined nations.
- **Who are the stakeholders that have submitted to the UPR (internal, external, or combination internal/external) and to what extent are their demands being addressed in the Report of the Working Group?**
- **It is hypothesized that the needs of external stakeholders will be addressed more frequently than those of internal stakeholders due to UN prioritization and access experienced by European powers; Thus, the legacy of colonialism inhibits the stakeholders within the DRC from addressing the human rights issues experienced most in the country.**

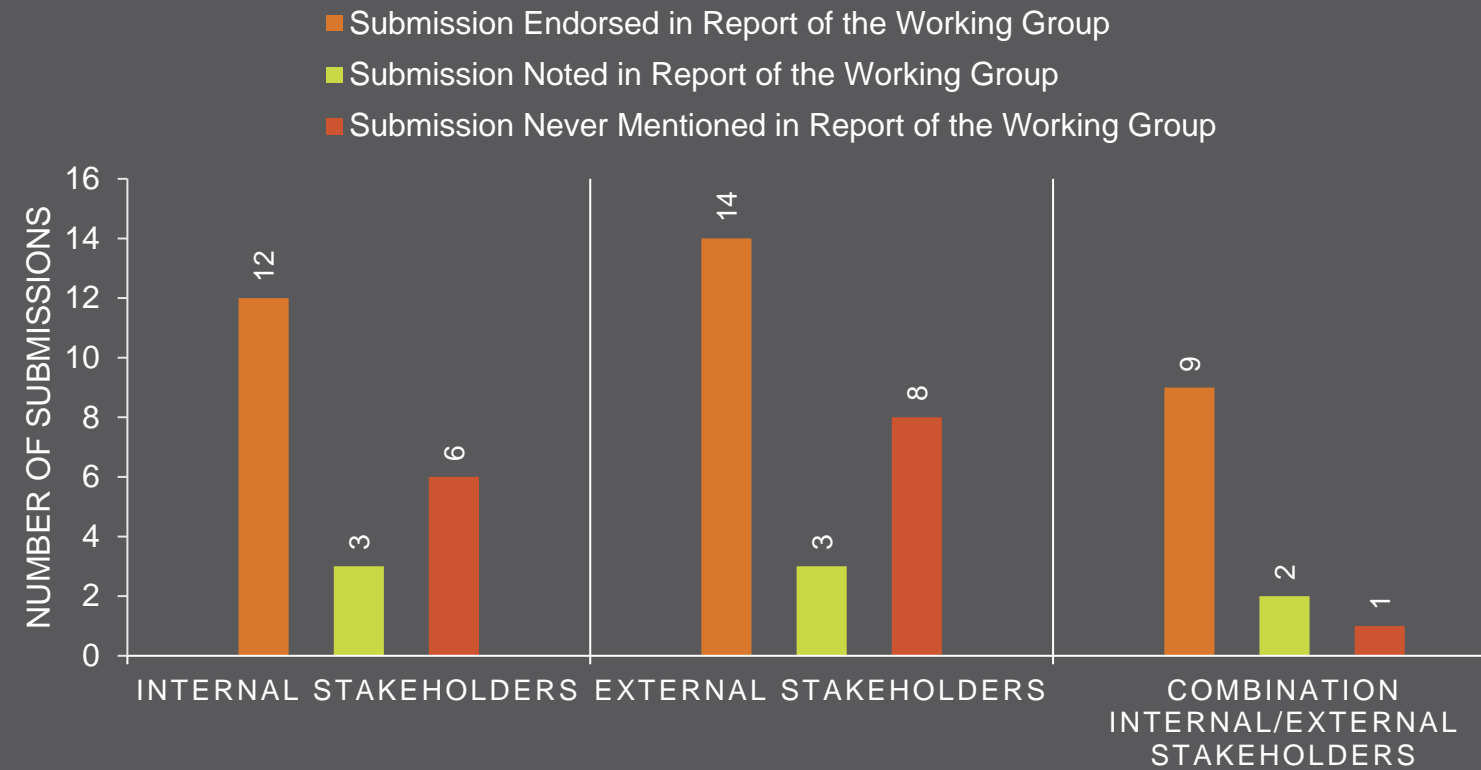


# Findings

## Stakeholder Submissions



## REPRESENTATION AND ENDORSEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS



The interests of outside stakeholders are represented and endorsed at a higher quantity than those within the DRC which prioritizes outside interests over the human rights needs of people who experience these injustices.



Thank you!

