



Institute on Disability and Public Policy

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For Immediate Release:

Application Opens for World's First Virtual Master's in Disability Policy

Washington, DC, 7 October 2011 – Students from around the world can now apply to become part of a global cohort pursuing the world's first virtual Master's degree in disability studies and public policy. The [Master's of International Affairs in Comparative and International Disability Policy](#) (CIDP), offered by the [School of International Service at American University](#), is the centerpiece program of the [Institute on Disability and Public Policy](#) (IDPP) for the ASEAN Region. The IDPP is a partnership network among nine academic institutions and two outreach partners, funded by The Nippon Foundation. The degree is taught in a blended cyberlearning environment, and focuses on the analysis and understanding of public policy for persons with disabilities (PWDs).

“Through a network of outstanding universities and accessible cyberlearning techniques, we enable students to become leaders on international disability policy in the public, private, and NGO sectors,” states Dr. Derrick L. Cogburn, IDPP Executive Director and Associate Professor at American University's School of International Service and Syracuse University's School of Information Studies. [Fifteen full fellowships](#) each year are awarded by The Nippon Foundation, with preference given to students from the ASEAN region who are blind, deaf, and/or mobility impaired.

At the forefront of technological innovation, the IDPP promotes an inclusive, barrier-free, and rights-based ASEAN region by providing increased access to higher education for a traditionally underrepresented population of PWDs. The program's cyberinfrastructure cuts across geographic boundaries, allowing faculty to teach and students to be taught entirely online.

Led by the [Center for Research on Collaboratories and Technology Enhanced Learning Communities](#) (COTELCO), a joint research center at American University and Syracuse University, the IDPP is a collaborative effort among the School of International Service at American University (Washington, DC); Ateneo de Manila University (Philippines); De La Salle Philippines; Mahidol University (Bangkok, Thailand); the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore; the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, New York); Royal University of Phnom Penh (Cambodia); University of Indonesia (Jakarta); and University of Malaya (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia). Outreach partners are the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability in Bangkok and the International Council on Education for People with Visual Impairment. Also collaborating with the IDPP are the ASEAN Studies Center, Intercultural Management Institute, and Disability Student Support Services at American University, and the Burton Blatt Institute: Centers of Innovation on Disability at Syracuse University.

The Master's program will begin with a two-week residency in Bangkok from 13-24 August 2012, where an international faculty will present to students on ASEAN affairs, cross-cultural communication, public policy analysis, and the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Students will subsequently disperse to their locations of residence for the duration of the program.

The Asia Pacific region has one of the world's highest proportions of PWDs, estimated at 400 million by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. These individuals continue to face significant barriers in accessing information, education, and employment. The IDPP is designed to address these issues.

Please visit <http://aseanidpp.org/> to access the online application.

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