



Institute on Disability and Public Policy

Networking » Leadership » Accessibility » Inclusion

Contact: Maya Aguilar

+1.202.670.4143

maya.aguilar@aseanidpp.org

For Immediate Release:

World's First Virtual Master's Program on Disability and Public Policy Increases Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities in the ASEAN Region

Bangkok, Thailand (13 July 2011) – [The Institute on Disability and Public Policy \(IDPP\)](#) offers the world's first virtual Master's program on disability and public policy. The IDPP's first global cohort from the ASEAN region—which has one of the world's highest proportions of disabled people as estimated by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific—will gather for a [two week residency](#) in Bangkok, Thailand, beginning on 18 July to launch the inaugural cohort. Bangkok's Mahidol University and the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability are hosting the residency, including students who are blind or visually impaired; deaf or hard of hearing; and/or mobility impaired. During the residency, the international IDPP faculty will introduce students to ASEAN affairs, cross-cultural communication, research methods, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

[Dr. Derrick L. Cogburn](#), Executive Director of the IDPP; Associate Professor at American University's School of International Service; and Director of the Center for Research on [Collaboratories and Technology Enhanced Learning Communities \(COTELCO\)](#), says, "The IDPP is an attempt to increase inclusion for persons with disabilities. The Master's program will provide further access to higher education for a traditionally underrepresented population." The IDPP's goal is to cut across geographic boundaries and time zones via its [cyberinfrastructure](#) to allow faculty to teach students entirely online using both synchronous and asynchronous approaches. Cogburn states the IDPP will achieve its goals "through a network of outstanding universities and accessible cyberlearning techniques, enabling students to become leaders on international disability policy in the public, private, and NGO sectors."

The IDPP Master's degree is offered by [American University's School of International Service](#), and is the first entirely online degree offered at American University. The degree program uses a blended, accessible cyberlearning environment, and specifically focuses on the complex intersection of disability studies and public policy. The rigorous, intensive one year [Master's of International Affairs in Comparative and International Disability Policy](#) consists of 39 credits designed to facilitate the emergence of a cadre of leaders who will be prepared to develop disability-inclusive public policy in their respective home countries of the ASEAN region.

Supported by a substantial grant from The Nippon Foundation, the IDPP is a partnership among American University; 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); the University of Indonesia (Jakarta, Indonesia); the University of Malaya (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia); De La Salle Philippines; and Ateneo de Manila University (Philippines). The IDPP is supported by COTELCO, a joint research center at American University and Syracuse University; the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability in Bangkok; and the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment.

A press conference will take place on 18 July from 11:00-12:00 at the [Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability's Training Building](#). Students will be present, and press are invited to attend the opening ceremony following the press conference.

###