University of BRISTOL

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLEMENTATION CENTRE

Distance Learning Short Course on the African Human Rights System

Guidelines for Students

Welcome to the online course on the African human rights system at the Human Rights Implementation Centre Bristol Law School!

We hope that you find the course stimulating and educational. This document outlines how the course will operate and what is expected of you.

1. Overview of the distance learning short course

The Human Rights Implementation Centre is offering the following 4 week distance learning short course:

- The African Human Rights System

The emphasis of the course is on providing students with a practical insight into their subject and a thorough understanding of the most recent developments. The course is aimed at students, academics, non-governmental and inter-governmental staff, representatives from governments, and legal professionals, as well as others for whom knowledge of the subject is important to their work or who are embarking on a career in human rights.

2. Course Structure and Teaching Method

A course takes place over a four week period and on average involves 25 hours of work in total (approximately 5 hours per week for the first three weeks and 10 hours for the essay writing in the fourth week). This will include reading, participation in online discussions and an essay writing assignment of 2000 words. You should aim to have done the reading for each week in advance of that week to enable you to participate fully in the online discussions.

A course is structured in the following way:

- Week prior to the course. Please ensure you familiarise yourself with the online system. You should also consider reading this week to prepare yourself for online discussions to start the following week.
- Weeks 1 to 3: Reading and online discussions on set topics.
- Week 4: Essay writing on a topic chosen from one of the list of possible subjects.

Online discussion forums:

For weeks 1 to 3 students will be required to complete the reading for each topic and to engage in the online discussions. Students will have access to all the course materials and an online discussion forum via 'Blackboard' the University of Bristol's online learning environment.

The online discussions will be initiated by the course teachers at the beginning of each week by the posting of several questions for discussion on Blackboard. The teachers will continue to facilitate and engage in the online discussions throughout the week. External experts will also be involved in the forum discussions and through the provision of material for participants in the course. In order to be considered as having successfully participated in the online discussions each student must post one original detailed comment on each of the questions for that week. One sentence is not enough. But neither are you required to write a long essay for each question. The aim should be to get your ideas down, test your knowledge of what you have read with the tutor and fellow students, and to generate discussion.

In order to be considered to have successfully completed the course you must:
- **Post** a comment to **each** of the questions by **Wednesday of each week;** and
- **Respond** to at least one substantive comment on **each** of the questions by the end of the week.

The intention is to have an online discussion so the more you are able to interact with each other, the better the level of debate is likely to be and the more you are likely to learn.

For some of the weeks you will be joined by an external expert who will initiate some further discussion with a written paper which will be posted at the same time as the questions. The external expert will also be available online for part of the week to pick up on some of your discussions.

You do not need to schedule a particular time to be available for the online discussions and can participate whenever they are able. When participating in the online discussions please consider the following:
- Participate in online discussions as you would in face-to-face discussions.

- Please be professional and courteous.
- Post comments and responses that build upon the reading and comments of other students.

Essay writing:

In week 4 students will be required to write an analytical essay taking one of the questions posed throughout the previous three weeks. The essay must not be more than 2000 words long. The essay must be submitted electronically to the course teachers by Friday of week 4.

Feedback:

Detailed feedback will be given to all students on an individual basis within a fortnight of the end of week 4 of the course.

3. Completion of the course

At the end of the course students who have met the online discussion forum participation requirements and have successfully completed the essay assignment will be awarded a Certificate of Attendance for the course. The course is CPD accredited by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and the Bar Standards Board.

4. Teachers

The course is taught by staff at the Human Rights Implementation Centre who have a wealth of experience in international human rights law. (See http://www.bris.ac.uk/law/research/centres-themes/hric/staff/ for details of the staff's areas of interest and expertise.) The moderator for the course is Professor Rachel Murray: Rachel.Murray@bristol.ac.uk. If you have any problems throughout the course please feel free to email Professor Murray directly.

Other leading and distinguished experts in international human rights from the United Nations, regional human rights bodies, national human rights institutions and non-governmental organisations will at times contribute to the delivery of the course and its content. The names and profiles of these individuals are provided in the course pack, which will be sent to you prior to the commencement of the course.

5. Teaching Materials

All the reading material and other supporting documents will be made available to students. Prior to the course students will receive a course handout and details of how to access the teaching materials online via the University of Bristol's 'Blackboard' online learning service. All the readings and course materials will be available to view and download from the Blackboard site.

6. Start dates

The course start on **Monday 4 November and finishes on Friday 29 November 2013**. You will be sent login details and instructions prior to the commencement of the course and it would be advisable to test that you are able to login and familiarise yourself with the online system before the course starts. If you have any problems login into or using the online system then please contact Debra Long at the email address given below.

7. Course Fees

A course costs £350. Full payment of fees is required prior to the commencement of the course. Payment of the fee for the course should be made through the University online shop using the link below:

http://shop.bris.ac.uk/browse/product.asp?compid=1&modid=1&catid=654

8. Requirements

The course will be taught in English and therefore applicants should have an adequate level of English to follow and understand the course materials and be able to provide written work in English.

You will also need access to a computer with internet connection and be able to commit to participate actively on a weekly basis for the duration of the course.

9. Further information

If you need any further information either before the course commences or throughout the course itself please do not hesitate to contact us:

Professor Rachel Murray, Director of the Human Rights Implementation Centre and moderator African human rights system (Rachel.Murray@bristol.ac.uk)

Ms Debra Long, Course organiser, (Debra.Long@bristol.ac.uk)

Mrs Cecilia Smith, administrator of the HRIC (Cecilia.Smith@bristol.ac.uk)