Call for Proposals from Undergraduate and Graduate Student Researchers

2nd Annual College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Forum on Human Rights
“Human Rights Locally and Globally”
Spring 2013

March 1, 2013
Virginia Tech

Overview
Through the institutionalization of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the discourse of human rights has had some six decades to spread throughout the globe, largely through a system of state actors. Meanwhile, human beings have wrestled with ideas and practices of human rights for millennia within their respective communities as well as between distinct communities. While some issues focus on international law, state violations, and processes of globalization, others look at individuals, families, and communities that are working to create structures of human rights on the ground. It is clear in the 21st century that human rights are both local and global, are here at home and abroad – each affecting each other. People and communities at home and abroad are inventing their futures in dignity and self-determination. We can learn from them and they can learn from our research. Bringing the best undergraduate and graduate research in the region together for a one-day conference, “Human Rights Locally and Globally,” will serve as a space where we can investigate these issues across multiple disciplines.

Possible topics include, but certainly are not limited to:

- Human rights in our own backyard
- The social psychology of dignity
- The role of human rights in peace and violence prevention
- Human rights cities
- Participatory Action Research and community empowerment
- Date rape and silence regimes
- Societal perceptions of human rights
- New media and political mobilization
- Race and human rights
- Ethics and cognition
- Spaces of human rights
- Writing as resistance
- Human rights in the U.S. election cycles
- Constructing human rights identities
- New social movements
- Agriculture, human rights, and resistance
- Human rights and methodology
Keynote Speaker
The Keynote Speaker will be Keri E. Iyall Smith, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Suffolk University in Boston, MA. Dr. Smith’s research explores the intersections between human rights doctrine, the state, and indigenous peoples in the context of a globalizing society. She has published articles on hybridity and world society, human rights, indigenous peoples and teaching sociology. She is the author of States and Indigenous Movements (Routledge), editor of Sociology of Globalization (Westview Press), co-editor with Judith R. Blau of Public Sociologies Reader (Rowman & Littlefield), and co-editor with Patricia Leavy of Hybrid Identities: Theoretical and Empirical Examinations (Brill and Haymarket). She is a former vice-President of Sociologists Without Borders and co-editor of Societies without Borders: Human Rights and the Social Sciences.

Submission Guidelines
Interested undergraduate or graduate student researchers should submit a proposal to Professor David Brunsma (brunsmad@vt.edu) by December 5, 2012. Proposals should include name, email, university, degree program, year of completion, faculty mentor’s name, and a 250-500-word proposal. The proposal should include purpose statement, research questions, methods, and conclusions, etc., in order that the committee might get a good sense of the research. Proposals will be vetted by the Working Group for the Center for the Study of Human Rights at Virginia Tech. Participants will be notified of the committee’s decision by December 15, 2012. If you are unsure whether your research fits the conference theme, please do not hesitate to contact the organizer, Professor David Brunsma (brunsmad@vt.edu).

The Conference
The 2nd Annual College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences Research Forum on Human Rights, “Human Rights Locally and Globally,” will take place on the campus of Virginia Tech located in Blacksburg Virginia. All the papers and creative works will be presented on Friday, March 1, 2013. Pending funding, lodging may be provided for presenters travelling from other universities. The most promising papers and creative works will be considered for possible publication in Societies Without Borders: Human Rights and the Social Sciences and/or Philologia, the journal of undergraduate research published by the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences at Virginia Tech.

We very much hope you will consider submitting and/or attending this conference.