Student fellowship Initiative

The Center for Global Justice is seeking four student fellows for two separate research and advocacy projects pertaining to global justice issues. The fellows will conduct multi-tiered activities under the supervision of the director and other interested faculty. The activities include interdisciplinary research, writing, advocacy, organizing speakers series, conferences, and symposia. The student fellows’ research and advocacy projects as well as their profiles will be featured on the Center’s website. Interested students should contact Junsen Ohno via email ohnoj@seattleu.edu or phone (206) 398-4283.

a. Project 1: Drafting model domestic legislation on corruption for the African Union

i. Project Description

The African Corruption Convention entered into force on August 5, 2006. The Convention calls for the establishment of an Advisory Board. The Board is now in the process of being established. The Board’s responsibilities include the monitoring and harmonization of domestic corruption laws. The Board does not currently have model domestic legislation that it can use to carry out its harmonization task. This project is designed to assist this Board in drafting a model domestic legislation.

The Center will select two fellows to work on this project. The fellows will begin their studies by looking at the domestic legislation of some of the African Union Corruption Convention signatory states. They will create a chart of each provision of the Convention and compare it with selected provisions of the identified domestic legislation. By broadening the inquiry, they will also survey the domestic corruption legislation of some members of the Organization of American States including the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of the United States. They will chart and organize the information obtained through this inquiry. They will then draft model legislation under the supervision of the director and other interested faculty.

Once the draft is written and the survey organized into presentable format, the Center will invite comments on the draft. Some of the commentators may be invited to speak at the law school. The fellows will facilitate the commentary process. Finally, if circumstances allow, student fellows and faculty will make a presentation to the Advisory Board and officially share a copy of the draft and results of the survey. If circumstances allow, involved faculty will publish the model along with scholarly commentary.

ii. Timeframe

Work can begin immediately. The project will last until the end of the Spring semester.
b. Fellows Project 2: Review of Prime Minister Tony Blair’s Africa Commission Report

1. Project Description

a. Background

In 2004, the then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, brought together 17 prominent people and commissioned them to “define the challenges facing Africa, and to provide clear recommendations on how to support the changes needed to reduce poverty.” The Commission carried out its task and issued a 461-page report in March 2005. The Report is comprehensive, and beautifully written. While it is essentially a political document, it endeavors to outline the root causes of Africa’s problems and proposes pointed remedial measures. There is no agreement among policy makers, scholars and other interested persons on everything the Commission concluded. Although it has yet to receive the attention it deserves, the Commission’s report is an excellent resource for scholarly work.

b. Specifics of the project

The Commission’s work was predicated on the premise that “Globalization must also mean justice on a global scale.” The Commission’s report puts the existing circumstances in historical and comparative context. The introductory language is very instructive. It reads:

The world is awash with wealth, and on a scale which has never been seen before in human history. Unlike the opulence of the past, which belonged to a handful of privileged individuals and elites, this wealth is shared by unprecedented number of ordinary people across the planet. Growth and globalization have brought higher living standards to billions of men and women. Yet it is not a wealth which everyone enjoys. In Africa millions of people live each day in abject poverty and squalor. Children are hungry, their bodies stunted and deformed by malnutrition. They cannot read and write. They are needlessly ill.

More specifically the Commission pointed out that while in the rest of the world scientists map the human genome, in Africa about 250,000 women die of pregnancy complications. Each day 40 million African children are not able to go to school.

The Commission made two interesting comparisons. The first compared the average income of an African with agricultural subsidies in the developed world: “We live in a world where every cow in Europe has received almost $2 a day in subsidies – double, grotesquely, the average income in Africa. And Japanese cows US $4.” The second comparison related to the Tsunami that affected the Indian Ocean some years back. Having noted that about 300,000 people died because of the tsunami, and praising the unbelievable amount of humanitarian aid provided to the survivors, it went on to state: “There is a tsunami everyday in Africa. But its deadly tide of disease and hunger steals silently and secretly across the continent[continent?]. It is not dramatic, and it rarely makes
the television news. Its victims die quietly, out of sight, hidden in their pitiful homes. But they perish in the same numbers.”

In terms of intercontinental comparison, the Commission offered the following: “Comparison between Africa and Asia are revealing. For 30 years ago the average income in sub-Saharan Africa was twice that of both South and East Asia. The story is similar in South Asia, Latin America and Middle East. African [Africa?] is the only continent in the world which is stagnating.” And asks the question: “Why has Africa fallen behind?”

To answer this question, the Commission identified and analyzed a number of interrelated factors that contributed to Africa’s predicaments. It also outlined possible remedial measures. Based on this, the main objectives of this proposed project would be: (1) providing a detailed and informed commentary to the Commission’s report, and (2) independently assessing the causes and proposed solutions. The legal aspects of the causes and the solutions will, of course, be given more emphasis.

The Center will involve student fellows to work on this research project for a period of few years. At least two fellows will work on at least two of the topics listed below each semester in association with interested faculty.

c. Specific Topics

While most of these topics are directly covered by the Commission’s report, some are not addressed in the specific manner outlined below. Although the topics largely relate to the causes, the corresponding proposed solutions will also be part of the inquiry. Student fellows may select any one or more of the following topic areas.

   i. Colonialism, and colonial boundaries
   ii. Geography and the environment
   iii. Culture and diversity
   iv. Conflicts
   v. Post conflict justice
   vi. International legal and political order
   vii. Trade
   viii. International monetary institutions and policy
   ix. International organizations
   x. Non-governmental organizations
   xi. Corporate activity
xii. Foreign aid

xiii. Governance and the rule of law

xiv. Corruption

xv. Race relations

xvi. Proliferation of arms and arms control

xvii. The media