**2018-2019 Regional Academy on the United Nations:**

‘Innovations for Development: Towards Peaceful, Sustainable & Inclusive Societies’

**Mentor**: Dr Bernhard Knoll-Tudor, Adjunct Professor

**Academic Unit:** School of Public Policy, Central European University

**Semester/term, year:** Spring term 2018 – Winter term 2019

**Course level (MA, PhD):** MA

**# of credits:** 4 CEU credits (to accrue in winter term 2019)

**Pre-requisites:** n/a

**Course e-learning site:** http://ceulearning.ceu.hu/

**Office hours:** to be scheduled in advance

1. **Course description**

The Regional Academy on the United Nations (RAUN) is an international and multi-disciplinary program that trains young scholars in issues related to the United Nations and international affairs. Since 2012, RAUN provides young scholars with a platform to broaden their knowledge about the UN, contribute to policy discussions at the United Nations through recommendations from their topical research projects that are directly linked with the priorities of the United Nations. RAUN allows participants to work closely with UN experts, representatives of governments, civil society and academia; raise their cultural awareness and openness about the issues of importance to the global system; and offer a forum for networking and intellectual exchange.

Since its creation, RAUN has trained over 200 young scholars from more than 40 countries who have continued their endeavors in academia, government institutions, the UN system and other international organizations. The Academy was endorsed by the United Nations Secretariat through the Former UN Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson and the United Nations Information Service (UNIS Vienna).

With its program of meetings in several countries and its flexible multi-national teams of a total of 40 students working together to address challenges for global governance, RAUN offers a model of how to encourage collective solutions to global problems. In addition to the academic program and their team work on topics selected by UN clients, students will also sharpen specific transferable skills (e.g. policy analysis, presentation and communication skills, teamwork, working in an international intercultural environment, accuracy and brevity of writing, accessible writing styles).

1. **RAUN theme 2018-19**

The 2018-2019 Regional Academy will take place at a critical time as the world is faced with persisting poverty, conflicts, inequality, lack of opportunities, and environmental issues. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, new approaches and innovations are required to fully address the multiple dimensions of development including, among others, the provision of safe and clean environments, good health and well-being, quality education, decent work and economic growth, and peaceful and secure societies – all of which are closely linked to poverty issues. RAUN sessions will be dedicated to innovations for development, as advocated, promoted, and implemented by UN agencies and their partners that seek to improve the lives of humans worldwide.

More concretely, participants will deal with a variety of themes, such as: How to

* eradicate poverty in a way that leaves no one behind;
* ensure sustainability and protection of the planet;
* build peaceful societies and prevent violent conflicts;
* implement inclusive development policies;
* manage risks and improve disaster response; and
* advance gender equality and women’s empowerment?

1. **Session venues, dates and organisers**

The Academy follows a unique format combining special lectures and interactive workshops with practical hands-on research experiences. The program consists of three sessions starting in May until January that take place in different participating countries and include lectures and interactive workshops on various topics relevant to the United Nations. All lectures are given by high-ranking experts and practitioners who also share their rich experience with participants in an informal setting. Apart from course-work during the sessions, participants will work on research projects in cooperation with different UN agencies on the 2018-2019 theme. Through their group work, participants will be able to develop their research skills and to form strong networks with like-minded peers, academics, and experts from various fields in an environment that fosters diversity, tolerance, cultural learning and understanding.

The 2018-2019 RAUN will be held in three sessions that will take place in Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna:

* **9-11 May 2018** (Bratislava & Vienna);
* **12-14 September 2018** (Budapest);
* **15-18 January 2019** (Vienna).

During the program, participants have the opportunity to visit UN institutions in Vienna as well as Permanent Missions and embassies in other countries. The results of the research projects will be presented during the final RAUN session at the UN Headquarters in Vienna in January 2019. At the end of the program, participants receive certificates of successful completion of the Academy.

1. **Target group and selection process**

In general, RAUN 2018-2019 is open to students currently enrolled in Master or PhD programs in Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland and Slovenia. Current partner universities are

* Faculty of Social Sciences / University of Vienna;
* University of Economics Prague;
* Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences / Comenius University;
* CEU School of Public Policy, Budapest

We will offer spaces to **five to seven 1st year SPP MPA students** with an interest in an interdisciplinary program with a focus on development policy, international cooperation and the United Nations system. In the course of the registration procedure, preference will be given to students who are seeking opportunities for engagement within a globalized world with the UN at its center. The selection will be merit-based with priority given to SPP students from fields closely related to sustainable development. Female students are particularly encouraged to apply.

**Phase 1** of the selection process - undertaken by SPP’s Global Policy Academy - involves a screening based on the participation requirements. During **phase 2**, applicants who fulfill the general requirements are evaluated based on their CVs, motivation letters, university grades, and the submitted research paper. During this phase, applicants are shortlisted and invited for personal interviews. **Phase 3** consists of a competency-based interview during which candidates’ credentials are assessed. After the interview, successful candidates are provided with further information about the program.

1. **Application process**

Interested **1st year SPP MPA students** should send the following documents to [gpa@spp.ceu.edu](mailto:gpa@spp.ceu.edu) by **26 March 2018**:

* Updated CV (2 pages) in English with photo;
* Motivation letter (one page) in English;
* Completed expression of interest form (download it [here](http://www.ra-un.org/uploads/4/7/5/4/47544571/2018-19_raun_expression_of_interest_form.docx));
* Sample of written academic paper (in English): this could be a BA or MA thesis, a course or conference paper, a proposal for a MA or PhD thesis, etc.;
* Transcript of records/overview of university grades;
* Two names of professors or former employers as references who may be contacted. Before submitting the required documents for your application, please read carefully the information provided in the [RAUN handbook for applicants](http://www.ra-un.org/uploads/4/7/5/4/47544571/2018-19_raun_handbook_for_applicants.pdf).

All documents should be put together and sent as **one single PDF file** to [gpa@spp.ceu.edu](https://spp.ceu.edu/gpa@spp.ceu.edu) by 26 March 2018. The name of the file should be named and sent as **“Country you are applying from\_first name\_last name\_RAUN application.pdf”**. Example: Hungary\_Bernhard\_Knoll\_RAUN application.pdf.

Shortlisted SPP applicants will be notified and invited to participate in a final round of Skype interviews. Once accepted into the course, they will be added to Infosys.

1. **Method and learning outcomes**

The course will provide a firmly research-oriented framework within which specific subjects will be approached under the guidance of academic mentors and UN agencies. Guest lecturers will provide input, expert guidance and mentoring support for group research projects and group presentations. Participants are also provided with the opportunity to participate in various conferences in Vienna on issues covered by the Academy. The academic responsibility for the program will be carried by the project manager headquartered at the UN Vienna in conjunction with SPP’s Global Policy Academy.

The composition of guest lecturers from the IR and international legal community will reflect the interdisciplinary aspect of the Academy and change from session to session according to the composition of the group and their field of research. Lecturers will be current and former high-ranking representatives of UN agencies and various international organizations specialized in different fields of the international system (UNIDO, UNODC, UNWOMEN, IOM, UNHCR, etc) and representatives of foreign ministries. Upon successful completion of the research tasks, students’ papers will be reviewed by experts in the field, which will give them a competitive edge when publishing their papers in peer-reviewed journals.

More specifically, at the completion of this course, students will

* have developed advanced knowledge in respective fields, as related to their field of study and the field of governance and international affairs;
* have connected and integrated theoretical knowledge and conceptual complexity on policy situations that require advanced practical thinking;
* have practiced and developed methodological tools for specific research questions in international affairs and global governance depending on subjects of study; and
* have reflected and analysed - on an advanced level - ethical considerations with regards to research for different settings in policy-oriented environments.

1. **Course grading**

The course will be assessed through

* attendance (10% of overall mark - obligatory attendance of all 3 workshop sessions as well as the ACUNS Vienna UN Conference);
* written individual session reports (20%);
* written group project (30%);
* oral presentation of group projects in front of an expert group (40% of the overall mark).

1. **Reading**

The overall framework for the course consists of two publications:

* UNDP (2017): [Report | Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/innovation/Version%2024%20web%20friendly%20-%20August%202%20-%20%20Annual%20Report%202016%20V17.pdf);
* UN General Assembly (2015): [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E).

Further mandatory readings are selected in advance of each session. Generally, these include texts of resolutions and conventions, outcome of high level conferences, articles from well-known publishing institutions on the topic, working papers, and books in related fields.

1. **Costs**

Selected SPP students will need to cover train travel and accommodation for the three blocks. A request for the provision of travel subsidies is currently being reviewed by SPP.

1. **Partners and supporters**

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