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Jackson School director discusses goals of new International Policy Institute

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News and Information

The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington has announced the creation of a new International Policy Institute. Reşat Kasaba, Jackson School director, answered a few questions about the new institute and its work.

Q: What will be the main mission of the new International Policy Institute?

A: We are the only West Coast school and the only public institution among the five grantees announced by the Carnegie Corp. We are very pleased and proud. Sixteen centers and programs that are housed in the Jackson School have all been involved in international policy but in a somewhat unconventional way.

We work with the members of our highly globalized region and address issues of tremendous importance such as environmental problems, global health, cyber-security and human rights.

We have demonstrated that in today's world, foreign policy is no longer made exclusively by the government or foreign policy establishment. Nongovernmental agencies, foundations, and even wealthy individuals shape our agenda and influence the priorities of our government in significant ways. With the Carnegie grant we aim to bring
our local resources in conversation with the governmental agencies and serve as a medium for an interaction that will benefit both parties.

**Q: You’ve noted elsewhere the goal of helping Jackson School faculty better communicate their knowledge to nonacademic audiences. How do you hope to accomplish this?**

**A:** We will form working groups where visiting practitioner experts, our faculty, and students will work on one of four areas we have identified.

1. Asian governance in the regional and global order.
2. Religion and human security.
3. The Arctic and international affairs.
4. International relations, outer space and cyberspace.

These groups will generate papers and memos, hold webinars and seminars, and participate in conferences designed for audiences of policy makers.

**Q: The Jackson School has been awarded a $1 million grant from the Carnegie Corp. of New York for this project. How will the money be spent?**

**A:** Our main goal is to lay the foundations of a policy institute that will be home to research groups and will generate papers that address important issues of our time.

We plan to host one senior and two junior fellows a year who will devote all or part of their time to planning and participating in these groups. We will host two major conferences; one in Seattle and one in Washington, D.C., and series of webinars to share the results of our work. We will also support graduate students who will participate in the working groups.

**Q: How will students of the Jackson School be involved with and benefit from this work?**

**A:** We plan to include graduate and undergraduate students who are majoring in international studies in the working groups. This will give them very important practical experience and introduce them to a network of scholars and experts. We will also arrange for the visiting scholars and experts to teach seminars that will be open to UW students. We will incorporate the papers and other material that is generated by the working groups in our classes.

**Q: The Jackson School has a history of working with Pacific Northwest organizations to address international challenges. What are some examples of this work?**

**A:** In the past years our students participated in a Task Force that explored the labor conditions in the garment factories in Guatemala where the Husky apparel was being produced. The results of this work helped change the UW relations with these production sites.

Our students also participate in applied research projects that are supported by Microsoft, Starbucks and local nongovernmental organizations addressing topics such as implementing diversity globally, cyber-security, and empowering local communities around the world. These projects generate papers that address topics with specific proposals for the company or the nongovernmental organization we partner with.
We're also pleased that the grant coincides with the launch of our new accelerated one-year Master of Arts in Applied International Studies, a program designed for professionals that emphasizes connecting the resources of the Jackson School to the world of policy and decision making. It's offered in collaboration with a council of multidisciplinary international affairs players based in Seattle, including Microsoft, Starbucks and the Gates Foundation.

Q: Finally, what would you like to see the new International Policy Institute doing by then?

A: We hope to develop and strengthen the new institute so that in five years it will be a permanent part of the Jackson School.
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