European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder)

Faculty of Law

Master Program on International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (LL. M)

ADMISSION GUIDELINE
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BACKGROUND

This master’s program covers and offers an advanced study of the international normative and institutional mechanisms in the protection of fundamental human rights. The curriculum integrates general human rights protection in times of peace and war with the special protection of fundamental rights in situations of armed conflict (under international humanitarian law). Such an approach is especially important as the boundary between war and peace has increasingly proven to be, of mere elusive and practically undemarcatable.

Such a trend of intermingling evolvement is the result of many different circumstances that are becoming typical reflexes of the recent-past developments in international law: the rise of terrorism, the diversity in its cause and nature and broad scope of possible reactions to it; the often-unclear boundary between situations of civil war, external aggression, guerrilla movements and even domestic policing; the reliance on both legitimate and legal (Security Council-sanctioned) and unofficial (sometimes invited) peace-keeping forces in a broad range of conflict situations. Confusion in drawing a clear line may even emerge from humanitarian military intervention in the name of the defense of human rights itself. Responses to various forms of civil unrest (often itself provoked by alleged breaches of human rights) or states of emergency (whether of political or natural origin) including, for example, the establishment of a state of martial law, or merely reliance upon domestic or even foreign military forces to assert control or provide assistance expands the range of situations which are challenging to characterize. Beyond this, national intelligence services may conduct operations (whether at home or abroad) with (quasi-) military character but which formally, not invoke the regulatory framework of humanitarian law. Reliance on mercenary forces and other forms of military outsourcing in diverse contexts of belligerency expands this list even further.

The teaching facility for the program consists of highly qualified human rights professors and experts from many different countries and with diversified academic backgrounds.

This advanced masters’ degree provides a full-fledged and comprehensive foundation for a career in the field of human rights, whether in international organizations at a universal and regional level, or in national governmental institutions or non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Master’s course contains a significant practical component aimed at providing a bridge between the academic and theoretical study of human rights and the practice of the profession in the field activity, thus allowing flexible and wide career choice. The internationally qualified composition and experience of the teaching staff and their contacts to many international institutions offer a secure base for diverse human rights internship and career opportunities.
1. LL.M DEGREE, DIPLOMA AND CERTIFICATE STUDY

The IHL program allows for the possibility of three-degree types: the first being

- an **LL.M. program (90 ECTS)** which can be done in both full time or part fashion;
- a **Diploma program (60 ECTS)** which will follow the same courses but will be shorter whiteout the need to complete a thesis or an internship; and the last would be
- **Certificate program (30 ECTS)** which will allow for even shorter circulation but still with the ability to specialize in a specific area.

In other cases, the demands of professional and personal life may allow a student to afford only shorter periods of study for obtaining a postgraduate qualification. For all these reasons, our graduate program also includes the possibility of the award of either a Diploma (two semesters) or Certificate (one semester) in International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law based on shorter periods of coursework study.

2. TYPES OF STUDY (FULL- AND PART-TIME) – WITH COVID-19 CHANGES

2.1. FULL-TIME STUDY LL.M., DIPLOMA, CERTIFICATE

Full-time students will be expected to take part in lectures in Frankfurt (Oder)

- **October** and **middle of December** in the Winter Semester, and
- **April** and **middle of June** in the Summer Semester

Classes start in **the second week of October** (Winter Semester) and in **the second week of April** (Summer Semester).

**Covid-19 Update**

Due to the situation with Covid-19, the Master IHL semester is conducted in a hybrid style having both on-campus and online classes. Students can proceed with both options. Please note that classroom space may be limited. Nevertheless, we will make all efforts to accommodate as many students as is possible. If you are not able to attend courses on-campus, you can attend online.

Only some courses will be taught on campus in Frankfurt Oder due to some of our professors' inability to travel to Germany. Those courses, which will be conducted on-campus, will be streamed and recorded.

The length of presence/online lecture time for full-time students is up to 10 weeks, and part-time is up to 5 weeks (please note that the exact length of time and whether or not the classes you will be taking will sequential very much depends on the schedule). After completion of lecture time, students are expected to take on-campus and/or online exams and write essays.

**Special Note:** A student may switch from full-time to part-time, but only once. A formal application to this effect has to be submitted by the latest one month before the beginning of the second semester!
2.2. PART-TIME STUDY

Part-time students will be expected to take part in lectures in Frankfurt (Oder) either in
- **October/November** or **November/December** lectures during the Winter Semester, and
- **April/May** or **May/June** for the Summer Semester.

A part-time student can only take four (4) courses (2 modules) per semester. *Please see Section 3.1.* The total amount of presence time on campus is up to three to four weeks every semester (the semester lasts six months). Between the semesters, students are not required to be present on the campus.

Part-time students shall attend classes together with full-time students. There are no different courses or timetables for part-time students. Part-time students will have six semesters (3 years) to accomplish their studies. Sixteen (16) courses should be taken within four semesters. Those who are in the LL.M. program, semester five (5), and semester six (6) will be devoted to the internship and master thesis components. Provided that the request is substantiated with justifiable reasons, the student may apply for an extension of the study period.

*Please see Covid-19 updates in section 2.1.*

A student may switch from part-time to full time only once. *A formal application to this effect has to be submitted by the latest one month before the beginning of the second semester!*

3. CURRICULUM, INTERNSHIP AND MASTER THESIS

Courses consist of both face-to-face and distance-learning elements. Lectures and seminars which require personal attendance of the student take place at the University in Frankfurt (Oder). Students are expected to prepare for the lectures and seminars and carry out follow-up work through distance learning or library activity to consolidate the materials covered during face-to-face teaching. The distance-learning elements are presented via an internet platform providing for an interactive study.

3.1. PLEASE SEE COVID-19 UPDATES IN SECTION 2.1. COURSES OFFERED BY THE MASTER’S PROGRAM:

**Winter Semester Courses**
- Introduction to the International human rights law (Module I – course A)
- Introduction to the International humanitarian law (Module I – course B)
- Civil and political rights (Module II – courses A and B)
- Economic, social, and cultural rights (Module III – course A)
- Prohibition of discrimination (Module III – course B)
- Conflict prevention/management (Module V – course A)
- Current issues of the law of armed conflict (Module V – course B)
- Mass Violence and Genocide (Module VI – course A)
Responsibility to Protect (Module VI – course A)

**Summer Semester courses**
- Women’s and children’s rights (Module I – course A)
- Rights of minorities and indigenous peoples (Module I – course B)
- Refugees, internally displaced persons (Module II – course A)
- Migration law (Module II – course B)
- Individual (criminal) responsibility (Module III – course A)
- State responsibility (Module III – course B)
- Justice and (criminal) penalties and enforcement (Module IV – course A)
- Democracy, the rule of law and administration (Module IV – course B)

**Workshops and additional courses**
- Introduction to public international law
- Research methods and training
- Legal writing and legal analysis
- Inter-American Human Rights System
- African Human Rights System and others

### 3.2. ON-CAMPUS ATTENDANCE AND TIMETABLE

As mentioned before the program does not require a full-time presence on campus.

Full-time students are requested to attend courses from **April until end of June** in the Summer Semester and from **October until the beginning of January** in the Winter Semester. Courses will be conducted from two to four days per week from **09:00 to 16:00**. Students are provided around ten days between classes to prepare for closed-book exams.

Part-time students are requested to attend courses either in **April and May** or **May and June** in the Summer Semester and or depending on if the student is attending the LL.M., Diploma or Certificate program, **October and November** or **November and December** in the Winter Semester.

**Covid-19 update**

The duration of on-campus courses remains the same. They start at 09:00 and end at 16:00. On-campus lectures will be streamed and recorded.

**Online and Written Assignments**

Eight courses will have online closed- and open-book exams, which last **2 hours**, and eight courses will have written assignments (essays). The essay, for the most part, should not be less than **2500 words** and not exceed **2750 words** the only exception to this rule would be for the essay on Civil and Political Rights module which would require a minimum of 5000 and a maximum of 5500.
Covid-19 update

Due to the inability of all students to be present on-campus, all exams will be administered online until further notice.

3.3. STUDY TRIPS

Master’s Program students have the opportunity to join per semester 2-3-day study trip. Where they would be able to visit intergovernmental and international organizations in Haag, Strasbourg, and Geneva. Depending on the city, we will make visits to the International Criminal Court, the European Court of Human Rights, or the United Nations.

Study trips are terminated until further notice due to Covid-19.

3.4. INTERNSHIP AND MASTER THESIS

Internship/Accreditation of experience

Students enrolled in the Master’s program should complete 450 hours of practical training and experience by working as interns either in international or local organizations established and actively involved in missions relevant to the subject matter. Hence, the student needs to conduct his/her internship in institutions that are active in the field covered by the Master’s program or with direct relation to it. The student is expected to organize her/his internships. To this end, the Master’s Office would also provide the necessary assistance.

If you have extensive practical experience in human rights and humanitarian law or legal expertise, you may be accredited your expertise instead of undertaking an internship in the frame of the study. This should be discussed with the Master’s Office.

Masters Thesis

As a requirement of the successful accomplishment of the LL.M. program, the student has to write a thesis on a topic formally approved. The thesis has to be supervised by one or more supervisors assigned upon approval by the Examination Board. The master thesis should not exceed 22,000 words. No oral defense is required, but it can be subject to change under the respective amendments to Master IHL Program Regulations.

4. TUITION, ENROLMENT, SEMESTER TICKET FEE AND SCHOLARSHIP

The tuition fees for the Diploma and Certificate Programs are € 5.580 and € 2.790 respectively.

The Master’s Program is subject to a tuition fee. The fee for the LL.M program is € 6.100 (both for the full-time and part-time study). This cost covers the entire program. The enrolment fee should be paid separately every semester (Summer Semester starts in April and ends in September; the Winter Semester begins in October and ends in March).

The tuition fees for the Diploma and Certificate Programs are € 5.580 and € 2.790 respectively.
The full amount of tuition fee must be paid before the beginning of the study.

The tuition fees stipulated in paragraphs one (1) and two (2) do not include the university administration fee and the semester ticket fees. Hence, students are required to make the payment for these services separately, the amount of which should be transferred one month before the beginning of the semester. The current university enrolment and semester ticket fees can be found here [https://www.europa-uni.de/de/studium/informationen/semesterbeitrag.html](https://www.europa-uni.de/de/studium/informationen/semesterbeitrag.html)

**Return Policy**

A paid tuition fee shall be refunded to a student whose application for Visa is formally rejected by the German Embassy. In this case, the student must send the rejection announcement letter and full bank details to the IHL Master’s Office with a formal request for refunds of the money. The final decision in regards to the refund will be taken by the concerned financial and administrative bodies of the University.

Scholarships, stipends, or other forms of financial assistance may be available from external sources. Applicants in financial need are therefore strongly advised to make their efforts and inquiries (especially with relevant public institutions, NGOs, foundations, and large private institutions, both here in Germany and their own country).

Below is the non-exhaustive list of German Foundations that offer scholarships:

**DAAD, KAAD, Heinrich Böll, Friedrich Ebert, Konrad Adenauer, Rosa Luxembourg Foundation**


5. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

5.1. ONLINE APPLICATION AND DEADLINES

The program holds the application process twice a year; that is for the Summer Semester and the Winter Semester.

The application deadline for:

- The application for admission in the Winter Semester run until **1 September** (all applicants).
- The applications for admission in the Summer Semester run until **1 of March** (all applicants).

*The program does not accept applications other than those submitted online. Hence, only online applications are deemed formally submitted.*

Online applications can be found under [www.rewi.europa-uni.de/master-ihl](http://www.rewi.europa-uni.de/master-ihl)

**DOCUMENTS TO BE UPLOADED FOR ONLINE APPLICATION**

1. The applicant’s scanned copies of all diplomas and transcripts (If it is not in English, please provide a copy of a certified translation). **If the applicants already have a Master’s Degree, both the Bachelor’s and Master degree diplomas as to be compiled in one PDF file and uploaded under the Diploma Section of the online application.**
2. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
3. English language proficiency (Please see section 5.1. B)
4. The photo will be used for the student’s ID upon admission.
5. Passport (only the first page of the passport where a picture is placed)
6. Referees’ recommendation letters. After you insert the referees’ email, referees will receive a link to upload a letter. Sometimes this email ends up in the junkmail or spam folder, please ask your referees to check this.

All submitted documents in a language other than English should be translated into English and need to be certified.

A. UNIVERSITY DEGREE IN LAW OR AN EQUIVALENT QUALIFICATION

A university degree in law or equivalent qualification is required. The equivalent is university degrees in any field with legal reference, e.g., international relations, political science, social science, and European studies.

Applicants who are not certain of, whether their degree meets the requirement of equivalency to a law degree or not, may send a copy of their transcript to app-master-ihl@europa-uni.de and request for affirmation before submitting their formal application for admission to the program.

* Please note that if you do not meet the 210 ECTS points required for obtaining entrance to the LL.M program you can take an oral exam as a part of your application process. If successfully passed you would earn 30 ECTS points to be counted for your necessary, the total for entry to the program.

B. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Prospective students should have adequate aptitude in English, both spoken and written, to be able to read academic literature, write academic papers, and engage competently in academic discourse; this can be satisfied by:

- a test result of at least 93 in TOEFL IBT, 180 Cambridge Advanced Certificate (C1) or IELTS grade of at least average 7, but no less 6,5 for each component; or
- school education in English of at least four years’ duration; or
- equivalent evidence, e.g. school education, studies, or professional career in English.

For further details about the required statement in proof of English as the media of instruction during your bachelor study, see infra Section 7 of this guideline.

German language proficiency is not required to take part in the program.

C. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Applicants shall have professional experience of at least 12 months (twelve months) at the time of submitting her/his application. The fulfillment of such a requirement must be demonstrated by submitting an appropriate certificate or other confirmation issued by the respective employer.
or organization. Volunteer/internship work may also be considered and accepted as a professional experience provided that confirmation to such exposure is formally substantiated.

Depending on the circumstances of each case, the requirement for the 12-months professional experience may be exempted by the Admission Board.

D. MOTIVATION LETTER

Applicants shall submit a motivation letter composed of 500 -750 words justifying her/his application for admission.

E. RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

Student’s application for admission shall be supported by two independent referees from different institutions or organizations. Each of the referees shall directly upload recommendation letters. To this effect, their email addresses shall be inserted in the student’s online application, based on which they shall receive a link to upload the recommendation letter. In case, the referees are unable to upload the reference letters through the link; they may send them to app-master-ihl@europa-uni.de

An applicant who intends to change her/his referee may send an email request to this effect to app-master-ihl@europa-uni.de

7. ACCEPTANCE LETTER AND OFFICIAL INVITATION

The Admission Board meets twice a month. Once the Admission Board decides on each case, the applicant receives either a letter of acceptance or rejection. If the applicant is admitted to the program, she/he receives, alongside the acceptance letter, updated and detailed information about the tuition fee and the payment mechanisms. The applicant has to confirm the receipt of the acceptance letter.

The acceptance letter does not serve to obtain a visa. Visa can only be processed only after receiving a letter of confirmation of the payment from the financial department of the University and a letter of the official invitation, which should be submitted to the German Embassy to obtain a visa.

8. DORMITORY AND LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS

You can request a room in the dormitory from Studentenwerk they are the body in charge of all student accommodations in the university. Here is a link http://www.studentenwerk-frankfurt.de/2011/index.php?lg=en&rt=Alle&ct=Start&sct=Home&city=Home&city=Frankfurt

If you are wanting to make other arrangements like getting a shared flat/apartment in Frankfurt (Oder) or Berlin, please refer to the international guide offered by the international office. You can also check these well-known online platforms:

http://www.wgberlin.net/
https://www.wg-gesucht.de/
https://www.wg-suche.de/wg-zimmer/deutschland-berlin
9. CONTACT INFORMATION

Admission Office

Linda Aguilar (LL.M.)
Farangis Zikriyaeva (LL.M, M.P.P)

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