2010 MILTON WOLF SEMINAR
ESSAY CONTEST

OVERVIEW

The Diplomatic Academy Vienna (www.da-vienna.ac.at) in partnership with the Center for Global Communication Studies (http://www.asc.upenn.edu/) at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania will host a conference from March 17 – 19, 2010 in Vienna, Austria, organized by the American Austrian Foundation (www.aaf-online.org). The conference will bring together a diverse group of individuals representing multiple perspectives and nationalities. Panelists include distinguished print and television journalists, bloggers and social media specialists, NGO actors involved in media outreach, academics, and diplomats.

The conference is organized around the theme: New Media, New Newsmakers, New Diplomacy: The Changing Role of Journalists, NGOs, and Diplomats in a Multimodal Media World. The purpose of the conference is two-fold: (1) to identify the changing role of NGOs, journalists, and diplomats in shaping the international media agenda, and (2) to bring together students, scholars and practitioners from around the world to participate in seminars and break out sessions designed to identify current problems and possible solutions to the challenges raised by this changing communications environment.

The conference organizers have launched an essay competition to identify motivated and thoughtful students of international relations, development studies, communication, journalism, law, and related fields who will enrich the conference proceedings. Seven winning essay writers will win a stipend of up to $1500 each to attend the 2010 Milton Wolf Seminar in Vienna. Vienna, Austria’s historic capital city provides an ideal location for the seminar because it is also home to a broad array of media actors, multilateral organizations, and international NGOs.

The full conference agenda can be found on the AAF, CGCS and the Diplomatic Academy Websites.

ESSAY QUESTION

Particularly in recent years, NGOs have taken on new functions as information intermediaries, working in cooperation with, or even in the stead of, traditional news organizations. How do NGO media strategies affect journalistic and diplomatic practices? What are the principal consequences of this trend for diplomacy and international relations?
SOME FURTHER GUIDANCE

Successful essays should demonstrate originality, cogently address the different debates and perspectives on the issue, and incorporate particular examples that demonstrate strengths and weaknesses of NGOs as news entities.

The essay topic and the Milton Wolf Seminar builds upon the work of a the NGOs and the News Initiative, a joint project of Annenberg’s Center for Global Communications Studies and Harvard University’s Nieman Journalism Lab funded by the Ford Foundation (see Niemanlab.org/ngo for more information). Before formulating your entry, you may want to read the NGOs and the News Initiative article series for an overview of different ethical and methodological debates and for specific examples of NGO news making activities.

ELIGIBILITY

The essay competition is restricted to all currently enrolled full-time graduate students (MA, PhD, or JD) in the fields of international relations, communication, development studies, law and related fields. This is an open call. Graduate students of all nationalities and from all universities may apply.

The top seven essay writers will win a stipend of up to $1500 each to attend the 2010 Milton Wolf Seminar. Stipends must be used to cover the contest winners’ travel costs to Vienna and accommodation at the official seminar hotel.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All essays must be approximately 1,500 words in length (2000 max). They should be typewritten in English, and double-spaced.

Please email all entries in the form of an MS Word or MS Word compatible file to The Center for Global Communication Studies egcs@asc.upenn.edu with the email subject line: Milton Wolf Essay Contest.

DEADLINE: 11.59pm EST, January 20, 2010.

For questions, write to Libby Morgan: lmorgan@asc.upenn.edu

SPONSORS:

The Milton Wolf Seminar and Essay Contest are underwritten by the American-Austrian Foundation.