

# 2008-2009 IRW Learning Community Scholars

## *The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture*

The Institute for Research on Women (IRW) invites undergraduates to join us in creating a learning community (LC) that builds on the IRW's 2008-09 theme--The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture--to create opportunities for Rutgers juniors and seniors to develop related ideas and projects. The IRW LC is a group of female and male student scholars from different backgrounds drawn together by shared goals and common intellectual interests to participate in the intellectual life of the IRW.

The selected IRW Learning Community Scholars will study the connections and tensions between "rights" and "culture" through a gendered lens: How are debates about human rights shaped by assumptions about gender and culture? Is culture an obstacle to or catalyst for the achievement of women's human rights? How do individuals and local groups draw upon and modify discourses of universal human rights to advance their own struggles for social justice? What alternatives exist to the language of rights for political, economic and cultural struggles?

Through group discussion, participation in the IRW Distinguished Lecture Series, faculty mentoring, and special events, undergraduate scholars will create an intellectual space where they will develop research skills and theoretical understandings in preparation for independent or collaborative scholarship. Members of the Learning Community will have the chance to build networks with scholars, activists and professionals as they develop plans for graduate or professional education and careers.

### **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Meet from 4:30-6:00pm on twelve Thursdays during either the Fall 2008 or Spring 2009 semester at the IRW on Douglass Campus. These times include attendance at three IRW Distinguished Lectures. During other Thursday meetings, IRW LC Fellows will meet to plan related student projects and discuss assigned readings.
- Participate in moderated discussions on a Sakai site dedicated to the IRW Learning Community.
- Produce a group final project for public presentation.

### **Application Requirements:**

- Applicants must be in their junior or senior years during the 2008-09 academic year
- Applicants must have a G.P.A. of 2.5 or higher

**Return all application materials by Tuesday, April 1, 2008, 4:30 p.m. to**

Institute for Research on Women  
Rutgers University  
160 Ryders Lane  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Attn: Abigail Sara Lewis

aslewis@rci.rutgers.edu

**or**

Attach application and other materials to email. In the subject line please type "IRW LC" and your name.

**or**

fax to

(732) 932-0861

Attn: Abigail Sara Lewis

**Confirmation of receipt will be sent via email as applications are received;  
Decisions will be sent via email on April 4, 2008**

The IRW Learning Community is generously supported by  
the Office of the Vice President for Undergraduate Education.

For more on the IRW Learning Community, see <http://irw.rutgers.edu/LC.html>

# Application

## IRW Learning Community Scholars: *The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture*

**Please type.** The application consists of four parts:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1) Completed application sheet
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Essay (see instructions at bottom of form)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Faculty Statement of Support
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4) Resume

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am applying to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ Fall 2008 semester; \_\_\_\_\_ Spring 2009 semester (Please select only one)

Expected Semester and Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_ GPA \_\_\_\_\_

List courses/background/experiences/training relevant to the IRW theme, *The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture*:

The following information is requested for tracking purposes:

Major \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male

How did you hear about the IRW Learning Community? (Please check all that apply)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Targum Ad        | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended LC Info Session | <input type="checkbox"/> Announcement in class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Email                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |

### 2. Required Essay

Please describe your interest in the IRW LC theme, including how the IRW LC theme connects to your larger personal/academic/professional goals in a 300-500 word, typed, double-spaced essay

### 3. Faculty Statement of Support

Fill in the information below identifying the faculty member who has agreed to complete the attached Statement of Support. This individual will need to assess your skills, style, and character relative to your application for the IRW LC. Please fill out the Applicant section of the attached Faculty Statement of Support and give it to the faculty member to complete and return to the IRW.

Faculty member's name \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Resume

Attach a brief resume of your academic, employment, and volunteer experiences.

**Return Completed Applications by Tuesday, April 1, 2008, to**

IRW

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160 Ryders Lane

New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Attn: Abigail Sara Lewis

aslewis@rci.rutgers.edu

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# Faculty Statement of Support

## IRW Learning Community Scholars: *The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture*

APPLICANT: Under terms of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, applicants have the right to review evaluations. Please indicate if you wish to waive these rights.

My signature below indicates that I wish to waive my right to review this reference.

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the IRW Learning Community is to introduce Learning Community members to the work of visiting scholars and distinguished lecturers, promote dialogues between participating undergraduates and the faculty and graduate student participants in the annual IRW Seminar, and stimulate participants to put the resulting insights into action and share the results of their inquiries with a larger audience.

The 2008-2009 IRW theme is *The Culture of Rights/The Rights of Culture* and our selected scholars will study and engage gendered perspectives on culture and rights. Students from all disciplines and backgrounds are encouraged to apply. More information is available at <http://irw.rutgers.edu/LC.html>

Faculty Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate the applicant in each category:

	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unacceptable	No basis for Evaluation
Communication skills	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Flexibility	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Reliability, punctuality	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Maturity	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Self-confidence, assertiveness	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Organizational skills	5	4	3	2	1	NB
Common sense	5	4	3	2	1	NB

Please answer the following questions about the applicant:

1. What do you know about the applicant's interest in gender and culture/rights research?

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2. What intellectual/personal characteristics does the applicant bring to the IRW Learning Community program?

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3. What potential do you see for the applicant in this Learning Community?

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4. Please offer any supportive comments that are not included above.

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