

**DENNIS DIJKZEUL**

**NOHA-course - Career Advantages in Participating in  
an Interuniversity Graduate Course on Humanitarian Assistance**

Humanitarian professionals operate in extremely challenging working environments. While they try to save lives and uphold human dignity in countries as diverse as Iraq and the Congo, they are confronted with horrific problems, such as war, genocide and refugee flows. A sound education for humanitarian professionals is crucial in order to strengthen humanitarian assistance, upgrade skills, and understand the broader economic and political context of humanitarian crises. The European University Network on Humanitarian Assistance (NOHA) provides such education. It offers a one-year interdisciplinary Master program at seven European universities: Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany; Universidad Deusto-Bilbao, Spain; Uppsala Universitet, Sweden; University College Dublin, Ireland; Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium; Université d'Aix-Marseille III, France; and, finally, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, The Netherlands.

The interdisciplinary program at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum is offered by the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) in close cooperation with independent experts. It consists of four parts:

1. A 10-day Intensive Program at one of the NOHA universities functions as an introduction to the NOHA-program and brings together the students and lecturers of the seven universities to discuss crucial humanitarian themes and meet leading policy makers, practitioners and scholars.
2. The first semester in Bochum starts with an exercise of the *SPHERE Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, which provides an introduction to the five main courses: geopolitics, management, international law, medicine and public health management, and anthropology.
3. It is also possible to intern two or three months at a humanitarian organization.
4. In the second semester, several NOHA students may choose to spend it at one of the partner universities. The second semester in Bochum consists of simultaneous work in project groups on issues related to humanitarian assistance as well as lectures on these issues. The semester ends with an interactive simulation week in which students and

staff perform different roles in order to manage a humanitarian crisis in the country of “Osmania.” Finally, the students complete their education by writing a master’s thesis.

The NOHA program is open to postgraduates with a degree (Master’s or equivalent) in international relations, history, law, medicine, psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, management, geography, spatial sciences or related fields. Working and field experience are considered an advantage.