HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Through multi-disciplinary coursework in subjects spanning the field of humanitarian affairs, the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (IIHA) equips students with the tools required to respond thoughtfully and effectively in humanitarian crises. The IIHA combines the theoretical and practical aspects of humanitarian affairs to generate debate, initiate discourse, and encourage information sharing among participants and faculty.

For more information about Graduate-level Humanitarian Affairs, please visit our page on the Fordham website.

Admissions

Requirements

- A statement of interest connecting the student's goals for the program with the expertise and activities of the degree, up to 500 words.
- Official degree transcripts confirming prior degree conferral are required for all applicants, regardless of matriculation status. These should be ordered at least one month prior to the application deadline for your program of interest.
- Resume/CV
- Official GRE scores (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences – Code #2259)
- Writing sample (5 - 20 pages)
- Three letters of recommendation (two of which must be academic, submitted directly by referees)
- English Proficiency for international applicants whose native language is not English. Competitive applicants will have earned TOEFL scores above 100 and/or an IELTS score of 7.5 or higher.

Humanitarian Affairs

Candidates for the M.S. in Humanitarian Studies are expected to have a 3.0 or higher undergraduate GPA based on a 4.0 scale.

International Humanitarian Action

Candidates applying for the Master in International Humanitarian Action must have:

- Successful completion of the International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance (IDHA).
- At least five years experience in humanitarian assistance or a related field.
- GREs are accepted but not required.
- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university is required.

To apply for the MIHA:

- Create an application
- Select "Graduate School of Arts and Sciences."
- Select "Advanced Certificate in International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance"
- Select either Spring, Summer or Fall

To apply to the Advanced Certificate in International Diploma in Operational Humanitarian Assistance:

- Create an application
- Select "Graduate School of Arts and Sciences"
- Select "Advanced Certificate in International Diploma in Operational Humanitarian Assistance"

To apply to the Advanced Certificate in International Diploma in the Management of Humanitarian Action:

- Create an application
- Select "Graduate School of Arts and Sciences"
- Select "Advanced Certificate in International Diploma in the Management of Humanitarian Action"

For more information about admissions to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, please visit their page on the Fordham website.

Programs

- M.A. in International Humanitarian Action
  - Advanced Certificate in Humanitarian Assistance
  - Advanced Certificate in Operational Humanitarian Assistance
  - Advanced Certificate in Management of Humanitarian Action
- M.S. in Humanitarian Studies
  - Communities and Capacity Building Thematic Area
  - Human Rights Thematic Area
  - Livelihoods and Institutions Thematic Area

Courses

HUAF 5000. The Humanitarian Toolbox. (0 to 2 Credits)
This course offers an intensive comprehensive and unified training program suitable for humanitarian aid professionals, allowing them to understand all of the available actors and resources with in a humanitarian crisis. This multi-disciplinary course is made up of lectures, workshops, and case studies.

HUAF 5001. Current Humanitarian Issues. (0 to 2 Credits)
This course will build on what is learned in HUAF 5000 and introduces historical, political, medical, managerial, legal and communication skills.
HUAF 5010. Humanitarian Negotiation. (0 to 3 Credits)
Many humanitarian aid professionals believe that negotiation is perhaps the activity in which they spend most time both in field and headquarters situations. Almost everything that humanitarian workers need to achieve has to be negotiated with donors, host governments, local structures, communities, beneficiaries, other humanitarian agencies and their own staff. This course gives students an understanding of negotiation theory together with practical historical and current applications. All types of negotiation are examined, from road blocks and negotiations in situ for access to negotiations for peace agreements far from the conflict. Theoretical lectures will be supported with group scenario based exercises.

Attribute: PMMA.

HUAF 5012. Contemporary Issues in Humanitarian Action. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the pressing issues and acute challenges of contemporary humanitarian response through three modules on (1) Threats and Vulnerabilities, (2) Accountability in Humanitarian Response, and (3) Innovations in Humanitarian Response. The aim of the course is to examine how the international community forms consensus regarding best practices, and how this, in turn, informs humanitarian practice.

Attribute: PMMA.

HUAF 5013. Fundamentals of Humanitarian Action. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the principles of humanitarian action through three modules on (1) Defining Humanitarian Assistance, (2) Management, and (3) Strategic Planning. The aim of the course is to provide an overview of the critical aspects of international humanitarian coordination from an organizational perspective.

Attribute: PMMA.

HUAF 5014. Humanitarian Resource Management and Administration. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the operational aspects of humanitarian response and focus primarily on the role of human resources (HR) and financial management. In response to the continuing professionalization of the humanitarian sector, this course will provide students with a common understanding of hiring practices, budget management, and donor relations in a humanitarian intervention.

HUAF 5015. Information Management. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the principles and strategies behind the effective flow of information in a humanitarian setting. Gathering and managing information is crucial in order to understand the cause of the emergency, identify impacted populations, and determine crisis-affected geographical locations. The aim of this course is for students to understand the components of a successful information management network within a humanitarian intervention and identify how information can contribute to future preparedness.

HUAF 5016. Monitoring and Evaluation in Humanitarian Response. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the principles and theoretical frameworks behind data collection and analysis in the context of humanitarian response. It will cover qualitative and quantitative research methods used in humanitarian program monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The aim is to give students an overview of basic methodologies utilized in the field as well as the tools to determine appropriate M&E strategies in various humanitarian settings.

Attribute: PMMA.

HUAF 5020. Humanitarian Aspects of Migration. (0 to 2 Credits)
Migration, whether forced displacement or economic migration of the poorest, is often a major factor in either escaping from poverty, persecution, and danger, or moving into yet more dangerous situations. In attempting to find livelihoods and safety, people often become victims of smugglers or traffickers. Students will be given an enhanced awareness and understanding of the complex interaction between migration and humanitarian interventions from the point of view of the migrant, the authorities of the host nation or region, and of the humanitarian worker.

Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5025. Cash, Commodities, and Services in a Humanitarian Response. (0 to 3 Credits)
For decades, humanitarian assistance was delivered by the supply of commodities and services, often by international humanitarian organizations. More recently, technological advances have made it practical, and cost-effective, to provide humanitarian assistance through cash transfers. This development has been both welcomed as the new way forward and viewed with some suspicion by others who view it as lacking in accountability. This course will examine the roles played by cash transfers, commodities, and services in response to humanitarian crises, along with the advantages and disadvantages of each. The course will also examine the mechanisms now in place for the further development and regulation of cash transfers.

Attribute: HUCB.

HUAF 5030. Humanitarian Logistics. (0 to 2 Credits)
Logistics is one of the most critical components to successful humanitarian assistance. Delivering the right assistance to the right beneficiaries at the right time requires both skills and an understanding of the supply chain. Logiticians must continually add to their knowledge and learn the latest best practices in the field. This course will explain logistics, explore the ways that logistics can affect humanitarian support, and give students an opportunity to analyze case studies and develop methods for improving delivery of support.

HUAF 5031. Community Participation. (0 to 2 Credits)
The humanitarian aid community must cooperate with the national authorities to build or rehabilitate the basic infrastructure needed for access, shelter and the provision of life sustaining services. This work often has to be carried out on an emergency basis in far from ideal circumstances. This course will provide advanced knowledge of the technical requirements for the infrastructure needed in humanitarian emergencies. Students will be exposed to vital managerial decisions they must consider as they supervise teams of technical experts. Following the implementation of immediate infrastructure needs there remains the responsibility of humanitarian agencies to provide a range of basic services until such time as either the service is no longer required, the population has returned to its place of origin or the governmental agencies have the means and manpower to provide the services. This phase is often known as ‘care and maintenance’. Students will have a clear understanding of the implications of these ‘open ended commitments’ to a population and potential exit strategies.

Attribute: URSIG.
HUAF 5035. Forced Migration: The Humanitarian Challenge of the Decade. (0 to 3 Credits)

亿ions of people worldwide have been forcibly displaced across countries and continents for a wide range of reasons, including armed conflict and natural disasters. Some have become refugees or Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), while others live as irregular migrants. Some have been trafficked and live as victims of modern slavery. All find their futures dependent on political decisions and local perceptions driven by the media. This course will equip students to understand the complexity of forced migration and its relevant legal and protection framework, including International Refugee Law and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. It will also address recent developments and the shift in emphasis from solving the problem of forced migration to the provision of durable solutions. This course is recommended for students who are interested in forced migration or who may wish to work in the areas of protection and response to affected populations. It is also recommended for humanitarian practitioners who are already working in this field and want to improve their knowledge and understanding of these complex issues.

Attribute: HUHR.

HUAF 5040. Communications and Media in Humanitarian Affairs. (0 to 2 Credits)

This course examines the history of representation of humanitarian crisis, and considers the impact of media accounts on the potential for humanitarian action. The role of photojournalism, and the images and narratives of broadcast and press reporting will be evaluated in the context of humanitarian goals and necessities. The dynamics between depiction and public perception, image and empathy, and narratives of compassion and inclusion will be articulated within the larger context of global security and human rights. As conflict, suffering and issue of life and death remain significant global realities, this course details the conditions, practices, messages, obligations, ethics, and limits of telling the stories of those in crisis.

Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5045. Humanitarian Advocacy: Communicating the Need and Motivating the Response. (0 to 3 Credits)

Humanitarians work in hostile environments where people are struggling for survival in situations of armed conflict or natural disasters. In such environments, people may have been forced to flee their homes with few—if any—belongings and may have suffered or witnessed human rights violations. Their plight needs to be communicated to the world in a way that will motivate the deployment of the protection and aid they so desperately need. This course will prepare students for the task of advocacy in humanitarian environments. It will focus on the identification of the most vulnerable members of a large group of survivors and the communication of their needs. It will equip students with the skills required to effectively communicate with local authorities as well as the international donor community. Students will learn to write in a different way than the academic style expected in other courses, focusing on effective advocacy messaging. This course is recommended for students who may envision working directly in advocacy for responding to humanitarian needs. It is also recommended for humanitarian practitioners who wish to prepare for a role in advocacy or are already working in this area.

Attributes: HUCB, PMMA.

HUAF 5055. Human Rights and Human Crises. (0 to 2 Credits)

The course is designed to give students a comprehensive understanding of the foundations and principles of human rights and humanitarian law. Through specific case studies, students will be able to understand the legal aspects involved in humanitarian work, and will provide students with more confidence in their legal abilities when providing humanitarian aid.

Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5060. Disaster Management. (0 to 2 Credits)

The course prepares aid workers for the challenges and difficulties associated with both natural and man-made disasters. Students will study past disasters as well as current disaster management techniques and trends toward potential future disasters. After completing this course, students will have a more complete understanding of the different tools and techniques used to respond to crises.

Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5070. Leadership & Management in HA. (0 to 2 Credits)

Despite humanitarian agencies’ not-for-profit status, they must be managed and administrated on sound business principles. Students learn the managerial methods and skills required to become senior managers and directors of humanitarian organizations.

HUAF 5075. Leadership & Management in Humanitarian Assistance. (0 to 3 Credits)

When responding to humanitarian emergencies, managers need the right skills to work in exceptional, rapidly changing, and sometimes dangerous situations. While some conventional techniques may be employed, having skills that take into account the environment and the emotional impact of emergencies on teams and individuals is crucial. This course will teach students the skills required to manage teams responding to humanitarian crises. For students planning to work in such environments, it is recommended that they reflect on whether they envisage being in leadership roles or might need to understand the role of those under whose management they will work. The course is also recommended for humanitarian practitioners at all levels who want to improve their leadership and management skills.

Attributes: HULI, PMMA.

HUAF 5080. Accountability in Hum Act. (0 to 2 Credits)

This course will explore the concept of accountability within humanitarian intervention. In particular, it will look at the contemporary significance of accountability and what specific events have led to a shift from donors and recipients of aid as the agents of accountability.

HUAF 5081. Holding Humanitarian Responders Accountable. (0 to 2 Credits)

The ability to handle external relations successfully has a growing impact—particularly at higher levels of management—on the ability of organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance. In this course, students are given the knowledge and skills to respond to the various external relationships that enable humanitarian agencies to operate successfully in a competitive and often hostile environment. Through case studies, the course teaches techniques for dealing with politically motivated and highly stressed interlocutors.
HUAF 5085. Delivering Humanitarian Response in Dangerous Situations. (0 to 3 Credits)
This course is designed to prepare humanitarians—individual practitioners, managers, and security staff—to work in high-risk environments. Students completing this course will be able to identify the most common security threats and trends in these risks, allowing them to be proactive in reducing their exposure. They will understand the organizational duty of care, learn how to develop compliant security plans, and conduct a security risk assessment. The concept of acceptable risk will be presented, as will the idea of balancing security risk with program delivery. Upon gaining an understanding of security planning, students will be introduced to techniques for critical incident management to reduce the impact of such events. In the final module, students will be taught how to better protect themselves during high-risk events to increase their chance of survival.
Attribute: PMMA.

HUAF 5090. Ethics of Humanitarian Assistance. (0 to 2 Credits)
Humanitarian aid professionals are confronted with ethical questions in every area of their work. This course will explore these ethical questions, examine alternative ethical grounds for action, and seek to provide humanitarian professionals with a framework for evaluating practical ethical issues that arise, especially through past and current case studies.

HUAF 5095. Strategic Issues in Humanitarian Action. (0 to 2 Credits)
The theory and practice of humanitarianism continuously evolves in response to changes in the international political and economic environment and ongoing evaluation of humanitarian efforts. This course explores humanitarian affairs throughout the past century as a base for evaluating recent developments that will play a vital role in shaping humanitarian action in the future. High-level representatives from the political, international, military, religious, medical, legal and academic sectors contribute to lectures and discussions. Students discuss and develop strategies for responding to and mitigating complex emergencies.

HUAF 5100. Civil Military Cooperation. (0 to 2 Credits)
This course will give students an understanding of the practical workings, opportunities and constraints involved in the cooperation between the military and humanitarian organizations in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The course begins with the study of the legal, political and structural bases for Civil Military Cooperation which is focused on the practical, rather than the theoretical application. Faculty and students will have the opportunity to share their experience of working in Civil Military situations and the teaching part of the course will culminate in a series of case studies in which the actual working of Civil Military Cooperation in a wide range of types of military deployments will be compared. Students will participate in a half day simulation exercise in which they will gain experience in the outworking of a Civil Military Cooperation in the context of a prepared scenario.
Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5150. Mental Health in Complex Emergencies. (0 to 2 Credits)
This is a 12-day training course for mental health professionals and program staff who wish to establish mental health or psychosocial programs in a humanitarian context within conflict and post-conflict areas. The course will aim to provide a practical orientation and training, including how to conduct rapid assessments, designing and setting up mental health services or psychosocial programs (exploring the differences between them), clinical work and therapeutic approaches in non-western contexts. It addresses the issues of cultural validity, conflict resolution and negotiation, taking care of oneself and dealing with burnout. The course will also introduce potential field workers to essentials such as personal security, logistics, and practical aspects of humanitarian work in the field.
Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5155. Education in Emergencies. (0 to 2 Credits)
30 million children live in conflict-affected countries. The program looks at the design and implementation of education projects from the emergency phase to post conflict situations, with a special emphasis on the mechanisms required to improve the quality of education during and after humanitarian crises.
Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5160. Urban Disaster, Vulnerability and Displacement: Humanitarian Action and Response. (0 to 2 Credits)
Explores global urbanization trends and the challenges created by urban disasters. The course focuses on the hurdles faced by vulnerable and displaced populations in cities and urban settlements and examines how the humanitarian community can better respond to man-made and natural disasters in both formal and informal urban settings. Discussion and debate with experts on urban disaster and populations at risk. Emphasis on humanitarian best practices and potential opportunities to increase resiliency and sustainability in complex urban settlements.
Attribute: IHUA.

HUAF 5200. Protection for Vulnerable Populations. (3 Credits)
This course will provide students with a comprehensive introduction to international practices and norms concerning the protection of vulnerable populations in humanitarian emergencies. The past 20 years of international humanitarian interventions has given rise to standardization of humanitarian activities, with a particular emphasis on protection practices. Students will gain an understanding of the landscape of organizations and entities involved in designing these frameworks and assess their efficacy and continued relevance to protecting vulnerable groups.
Attribute: HUHR.

HUAF 5210. Access to Education During Crisis and Conflict. (3 Credits)
This course will provide students with an introduction to the growing field of education in emergencies. With as many as 40 million children living in countries affected by crisis and conflict it has become increasingly important for humanitarian practitioners to understand the complexities of planning and implementing educational programming in these settings. Building on the theoretical frameworks covered in the course, students will evaluate the relationship between education, international development and humanitarian aid through the use of theoretical texts and case studies from around the globe.
Attribute: HUHR.
HUAF 5300. International Responses to Migration. (3 Credits)
This course will provide students with an enhanced awareness and understanding of the complex interaction between migration and humanitarian interventions from the point of view of the migrant, national authorities, and the international humanitarian community. With the crisis in the MENA region, particularly in Syria, and the mass migration to southern Europe it is imperative for students to understand the different motivations and determinants of action from regional (EU), national and local stakeholders as well as the diverse circumstances of the migrating populations. Students will be encouraged to critique the influence and motivations of mass and social media on the understanding of the economic, political, legal, and cultural factors of migration.
Attributes: HULI, PMMA.

HUAF 5310. Urban Disasters and Displacement. (3 Credits)
This course will provide an overview of global urbanization trends and explore the challenges created by urban disasters, particularly in areas that receive a high number of displaced and unregistered populations. Students will analyze the current humanitarian response within these urban settings, while discussing existing best practices and potential opportunities to increase the resilience of affected communities in both formal and informal urban settlements.
Attribute: HULI.

HUAF 5400. Disaster Risk Reduction. (3 Credits)
This course will provide students with a comprehensive overview of the phases of humanitarian action in order to understand strategies for disaster risk reduction (DRR). Emphasis will be placed on the multifaceted nature of disasters and complex emergencies and the need for community participation as well as the need for local, regional, and international coordination. Students will be introduced to and encouraged to critique both current DRR guidelines and the implementation of past guidelines as well as recognize the sources of organized best practices.
Attributes: HUCB, PMMA.

HUAF 5410. Gender Integration in Humanitarian Action. (3 Credits)
This course will introduce students to the myriad ways in which gender impacts the experience of both the humanitarian crises and subsequent intervention. Students will explore the legal, political, cultural, and economic frameworks that contribute to gender inequality as well as those that provide support for vulnerable groups. Emphasis will be placed on the tension between international guidelines/norms, program implementation, and unanticipated consequences of gender programming.
Attribute: HUCB.

HUAF 5500. Mental Health in Complex Emergencies. (0 to 3 Credits)
Over the past several years, the IUIHA has run a popular 12-day course largely for mental health professionals. We will now be offering a distance learning course covering similar materials over a 15-week semester. This is a training course for mental health professionals and program staff who wish to establish mental health or psychosocial programs in a humanitarian context within conflict and post-conflict areas. This course is also open to Fordham graduate students in humanitarian studies or other relevant disciplines. It will aim to provide practical orientation and training, including how to conduct rapid assessments, designing and setting up mental health services or psychosocial programs (exploring the differences between them), and clinical work and therapeutic approaches in non-Western contexts. It will address the issues of cultural validity, conflict resolution and negotiation, taking care of oneself and dealing with burnout. This course will also introduce potential field workers to essentials such as personal security, logistics, and practical aspects of humanitarian work in the field.
Attributes: HUCB, PMMA.

HUAF 5801. Humanitarian Internship. (1 to 3 Credits)
Students will have an opportunity to intern at prominent international humanitarian organizations, helping them gain the necessary exposure and understanding of the dynamics of such organizations and their mission. Our location enables students to pursue internships at and exposure to various United Nations agencies, diplomatic missions, international nongovernmental organizations, and prominent research and think-tank institutions. Students will complete an internship tutorial that matches their concentration area.

HUAF 5990. Master’s Thesis Research I. (2 Credits)
Students should develop a thesis topic with a Fordham faculty advisor and a reader who has significant practical experience in humanitarian affairs, ideally after completing Module 2. This project is the culminating demonstration of the knowledge and skills gained throughout the MIHA coursework. The thesis will focus on practical examples of past mistakes, contributing possible solutions to the existing literature. The research methods necessary to writing the thesis are taught within the context of each module. Thesis projects should incorporate learning from previous MIHA courses, followed by final editing, defense and approval.

HUAF 5991. Master’s Thesis Research II. (2 Credits)
This project is the culminating demonstration of the knowledge and skill gained throughout the MIHA coursework. The thesis will focus on practical examples of past mistakes, contributing possible solutions to the existing literature. The research methods necessary to writing that thesis are taught within the context of each module. Thesis projects should incorporate learning from previous MIHA courses, followed by final editing, defense and approval.

HUAF 5992. MS/SP Thesis. (2 Credits)
In order to successfully complete the M.S. in Humanitarian Studies, students will be expected to synthesize the cumulative knowledge gained from their coursework, additional research, and internship experience (if appropriate) to write an original, substantive, and academic final thesis. The subject will be agreed upon between the student and their faculty advisor in conjunction with a humanitarian aid professional recognized by the Institute for Humanitarian Affairs.

HUAF 6000. International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance. (0 Credits)

HUAF 6020. Int Emergency Relief. (3 Credits)
The course will be centered on presenting, discussing and reflecting on the main questions faced by the humanitarian community, examining these issues from a multi-disciplinary approach, finding new and creative answers and recommending practical tools to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action. The meaning, methodological challenges, and ethical dilemmas of humanitarian action will be cross themes of the course so that by the end of the program, the students should have: An understanding of the main challenges and dilemmas facing the international humanitarian community through its practice in the field. A comprehensive knowledge of the history of the humanitarian practice, its main actors, and terms-relationships in place to configure the landscape of the complexity around this profession. A creative approach to discover the relationship between humanitarian response and the long-term development perspective. An appreciation of the complexity of this human reality in a specific case study. The ability to identify the main ethical dilemmas faced by any humanitarian response.
HUAF 6030. Humanitarian Innovation. (0 to 2 Credits)
This course offers an in depth analysis of the strategic processes governing data and innovation strategies in modern humanitarian organizations, the first course of this kind in New York City. The course will introduce participants to a comprehensive understanding of how to select and adopt tools, strategies and techniques for data and innovation management. Topics covered include innovation portfolio creation and management, date management and processing, data ethics, real time data analytics, humanitarian technology design, and integration of GIS systems in project implementation. Participants will develop the core skills required by modern humanitarian organizations to be competitive and effective even if compared to corporate standards.

HUAF 8999. Independent Study. (1 to 3 Credits)
This is a graduate tutorial/independent study registration for humanitarian studies.