HUMANITARIAN STUDIES

Humanitarian action, those international endeavors that attempt to relieve the suffering of populations in crisis, and its ideological counterpart, humanitarianism, are powerful notions that cut across many aspects of contemporary life. Even as humanitarianism makes compelling moral claims, its actions are often shaped by political interests, expediency, and a technocratic approach to addressing suffering, all of which have potential to harm the world’s most vulnerable populations. The academy has a vital role to play in both understanding humanitarianism and improving contemporary humanitarian practice. The major in international humanitarian studies allows students to examine technical innovation and undertake theoretical critique of humanitarian activities across a range of crises and actors.

In considering international responses to suffering, undergraduates in this major will draw upon a wide array of intellectual tools and academic frameworks. Ethical, moral, cultural, and spiritual considerations confront logistic, economic, scientific, and geo-political modes of thought in circumstances of vast complexity: violent conflict (including gender-based violence), famine, and natural disaster. The major will also contribute to central aims of Fordham’s mission: research and education that assist in the alleviation of poverty, the promotion of justice, and the protection of human rights as part of a cosmopolitan education that prepares students for leadership in a global society.

An interdisciplinary undergraduate minor that offers students a comprehensive understanding of issues central to contemporary humanitarian affairs, especially as seen through the academic lenses of history, sociology, philosophy, theology, political science, and international studies. Students will examine the global impact of natural and man-made disasters, disease, poverty, conflict, human rights violations, and government and intergovernmental policies on international human communities. The international humanitarian affairs minor offers an in-depth analysis of the humanitarian field that will enable students to acquire theoretical and practical knowledge.

For more information
Visit the Humanitarian Studies institute web page.

Programs
• Humanitarian Studies Major
• Humanitarian Studies Minor

Courses

Our Courses

HUST 2001. INTRODUCTION TO GLOBAL HEALTH. (4 Credits)
Multi-disciplinary examination of the modes of thought and forms of knowledge that inform contemporary global health practice including: colonial medicine, tropical medicine, international health and the emergence of global health as a discipline; the emergence of public health, epidemiology and demography in the west; the therapeutic revolution and the modern pharmaceutical industry: derivation and uses of the main international health metrics (QUALYS, DALYS AND others). The course will take a bio-social approach to the study of health, and will draw on the biological and statistical methods as well as anthropology, political science, history, moral philosophy, theology and others. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: ASSC, ENST.

HUST 3001. HUMANITARIAN ACTION WORKSHOP. (1 Credit)
Fordham University, in coordination with the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (IIHA), conducted the First National Workshop of the Jesuit Universities Humanitarian Action Network (JUHAN) this summer. Approximately 160 Undergraduate students from 20 member Institutions of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) attended this Workshop to broaden their knowledge and understanding on global humanitarian initiatives and the challenges it faces. The three-day Workshop consisted of a main plenary session each day focusing on contemporary topics followed by breakout sessions- where students were given an opportunity to attend lectures on cross-cutting and sectorial issues as well as participate in sessions to develop their skills required to be effective in this field. On the final day of the conference, the students met in teams to utilize the knowledge they gained from the workshop and draw an action plan on what initiatives/projects they would implement on their home campuses. The Academic Director of the Institute will meet with the Fordham delegation periodically in the Fall semester to help implement the proposed action plans.

HUST 3500. FAMINE, FOOD SECURITY, AND NUTRITION. (4 Credits)
Increasing global inequality, the effects of climate change, violent conflict and many other factors mean that currently almost forty million people worldwide are in need of food assistance. Starvation and hunger are vast and complex global issues with medical, political and moral importance. This course will examine the wide range of humanitarian attempts to help people suffering from food and nutrition crises, from individual clinical interventions to treat childhood starvation, through to regional attempts to predict the timing and severity of famines and respond to them, and innovative approaches like cash transfer schemes. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Prerequisite: HUST 4001.

HUST 4001. HUMANITARIAN ACTION. (4 Credits)
This course will consider both theoretical and applied approaches to Humanitarian Action and will be centered on ways of thinking and actions that bridge these two responses. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

Attributes: INST, MEST, PJST, URST.
HUST 4002. International Humanitarian Action and New York City. (4 Credits)
Fordham has long been a world leader in the academic study of humanitarianism and in professionalizing aid work. This course examines international responses to humanitarian crises. We explore the range of actors in emergencies, including faith based organizations, secular international NGOs, United Nations agencies and more. We will examine their motives, capabilities and histories using case studies of the various problems to which they respond: violence, genocide, famine, and displacement and human rights abuses. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

HUST 4200. FORCED MIGRATION AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION. (4 Credits)
Forced migration is a central issue in the provision of humanitarian and assistance. This course will examine the causes of forced migration, including violent conflict, natural disasters, development projects, human trafficking and others, and will use a variety of case studies to examine international responses to forced migration, the migrant experience, legal and human rights around migration, and the role of human agencies and NGOs in responding to forced migration. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

HUST 4500. IHA FOREIGN SERVICE PROG. (5 Credits)
HUST 4501. HUMANITARIANISM AND GLOBAL HEALTH. (4 Credits)
This course examines the way in which international actors (including humanitarian actors, development institutions, states, private companies and major foundations) respond to health crises through case studies of major issues in global health including epidemic disease, food security and human rights. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

HUST 4800. INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN INTERNSHIP. (4 Credits)
The Undergraduate course on Humanitarian Action: Theory and Application offers an introduction to humanitarian aid work and provides an understanding of the complexities and challenges the key actors face in an applied context. The course focuses on teaching the common principles of the world of humanitarian affairs, with a cross-cutting, interdisciplinary perspective that also analyzes gender, age differences, human rights frameworks, and indigenous cultural approaches to conflict and post-conflict phenomena. In addition to these teach topics, students would have an opportunity to intern at prominent international humanitarian organizations in New York. These would help them gain the necessary exposure and understanding of the dynamics of such organizations and their mission. Students would be required to meet with, and relate their experiences with the professor periodically and be mentored on how best to utilize the skills they gain to further advance their interests in humanitarian aid work. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

HUST 4888. SENIOR THESIS SEMINAR. (4 Credits)
The seminar is designed to assist Humanitarian Studies Major students through the main stages of their thesis: formulating appropriate questions; undertaking effective research to answer those questions; organizing, analyzing and communicating findings and arguments. The seminar is a single-semester course, taken in students’ senior year. The students will meet weekly to discuss problems of common interest under the guidance of faculty members from a variety of disciplines drawn from the major committee. Four-credit courses that meet for 150 minutes per week require three additional hours of class preparation per week on the part of the student in lieu of an additional hour of formal instruction.

HUST 4999. TUTORIAL. (1-4 Credits)