

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.