

POVERTY, JUSTICE AND HUMAN CAPABILITIES

Contact Information

Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities

<https://pjhc.rice.edu/>

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Diana Strassmann

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The Program in Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities (PJHC) provides students with a multifaceted understanding of human well-being, and enriches their understandings of poverty and inequality in the US and internationally. The minor encourages its students to build lifelong commitments to supporting the well-being of all people and to become leaders in solving local and global problems.

This interdisciplinary minor emphasizes a “capabilities approach,” which considers what people are able to do and to be — for example, live to old age and engage in social, economic, and political activities — rather than focusing strictly on their access to basic necessities.

Although impediments to human well-being take many forms, barriers to the capabilities of women, girls, and ethnic and racial minorities persist across societies. These groups are therefore disproportionately represented among the poor and those unable to attain their full capabilities. The academic component of the program, including the content of core and required coursework, acknowledges gender inequality, systemic racism, and the legacy of colonialism and postcolonial disparities as powerful influences on human well-being, both in the US and around the world.

The PJHC minor combines high-caliber undergraduate courses with service-learning experiences that help people in disadvantaged communities in Houston, throughout the United States, and abroad. Students are placed with organizations where they work directly with clients and gain experiential knowledge that broadens their perspectives on human lives and capabilities. Through these academic and experiential learning opportunities, students explore deeper understandings of the structural factors underlying poverty, human well-being, and potential policy solutions. The program further aims to promote dialogue among all disciplines about strategies for addressing challenges to human well-being.

Minor

- [Minor in Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities \(https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/humanities/poverty-justice-human-capabilities/poverty-justice-human-capabilities-minor/\)](https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/humanities/poverty-justice-human-capabilities/poverty-justice-human-capabilities-minor/)

Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities does not currently offer an academic program at the graduate level.

Director

Diana Strassmann

Directors of Undergraduate Studies

Moramay López-Alonso

Kerry Ward

Advisors

Moramay López-Alonso

Diana Strassmann

Kerry Ward

Steering Committee

Elias K. Bongmba

Vivian Ho

Moramay López-Alonso

Diana Strassmann

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For Rice University degree-granting programs:

To view the list of official course offerings, please see [Rice's Course Catalog \(https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata\)](https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata)

To view the most recent semester's course schedule, please see [Rice's Course Schedule \(https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat\)](https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/!SWKSCAT.cat)

Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities (PJHC)

PJHC 238 - SPECIAL TOPICS

Short Title: SPECIAL TOPICS

Department: Poverty Justice & Human Capab

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Independent Study, Internship/Practicum, Laboratory, Lecture, Lecture/Laboratory, Seminar

Credit Hours: 1-4

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level

Description: Topics and credit hours may vary each semester. Contact department for current semester's topic(s). Repeatable for Credit.

PJHC 275 - NARRATIVES OF AMERICAN POVERTY

Short Title: NARRATIVES OF AMERICAN POVERTY

Department: Poverty Justice & Human Capab

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

Course Type: Seminar

Distribution Group: Distribution Group I

Credit Hours: 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level

Description: This course analyzes influential 21st-century narrative accounts of American poverty. The course content is organized around three central themes: poverty & home, poverty & work, and poverty & identity. By engaging with these themes and developing their own interventions, students will become more effective advocates against different forms of poverty.

PJHC 300 - DIGITAL STORIES III: REFLECTION AND PRODUCTION**Short Title:** DIGITAL STORIES III**Department:** Poverty Justice & Human Capab**Grade Mode:** Standard Letter**Course Type:** Seminar**Credit Hour:** 1**Restrictions:** Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.**Course Level:** Undergraduate Upper-Level

Description: This course is designed for students returning from a summer internship experience undertaken to fulfill the PJHC service-learning requirement. Students will reflect on their experiences in an academic context, and, drawing from photos, videos, and oral materials, will create polished digital reflections of what they have witnessed and accomplished. Together with the two other one-credit courses that comprise the Digital Stories course arc, this course is mandatory for students using a summer internship to satisfy the minor's service-learning requirement. Students must be declared PJHC minors and have completed PJHC 298, PJHC 299, PJHC 371, and PJHC 394. Instructor Permission Required. Mutually Exclusive: Cannot register for PJHC 300 if student has credit for HUMA 300.

PJHC 371 - POVERTY, JUSTICE, AND HUMAN CAPABILITIES**Short Title:** POVERTY, JUSTICE, CAPABILITIES**Department:** Poverty Justice & Human Capab**Grade Mode:** Standard Letter**Course Type:** Seminar**Distribution Group:** Distribution Group I**Credit Hours:** 3**Restrictions:** Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.**Course Level:** Undergraduate Upper-Level

Description: This course provides an introduction to the study of poverty, justice, and human capabilities. The course examines diverse approaches towards improving human well-being in the US and internationally. Drawing from fields ranging from philosophy and economics to history and sociology, readings address material deprivations and inequalities, racial and ethnic disparities, gender, sexual orientation, health status, education, human rights, and political freedoms. Mutually Exclusive: Cannot register for PJHC 371 if student has credit for HUMA 371/SOCI 371.

PJHC 470 - ADVANCED SEMINAR IN POVERTY, JUSTICE, AND CAPABILITIES**Short Title:** ADVANCED SEMINAR PJHC**Department:** Poverty Justice & Human Capab**Grade Mode:** Standard Letter**Course Type:** Seminar**Distribution Group:** Distribution Group I**Credit Hours:** 3

Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to students with a minor in Poverty Justice & Human Capab. Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.

Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level**Prerequisite(s):** PJHC 371

Description: Through interdisciplinary readings and media, this seminar explores how global, national, and domestic structures influence human lives and capabilities, and critically examines the role of activists and policymakers in confronting social inequities. In considering the ethical and cultural considerations of representing the voices and needs of others, the course explores various mediums of communication oriented towards amplifying voices that are often silenced. The semester culminates with each student producing a digital story about a community issue relating to their service learning experiences. Students need to have completed the minor's service learning requirement by the end of the semester. Students who have taken PJHC 300 will have a modified assignment. Recommended Prerequisite(s): Students will need to have completed the minor's service learning requirement by the end of the semester in which they take this course. Mutually Exclusive: Cannot register for PJHC 470 if student has credit for SWGS 470.

PJHC 477 - SPECIAL TOPICS**Short Title:** SPECIAL TOPICS**Department:** Poverty Justice & Human Capab**Grade Mode:** Standard Letter**Course Type:** Independent Study, Internship/Practicum, Laboratory, Lecture, Lecture/Laboratory, Seminar**Credit Hours:** 1-4**Restrictions:** Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.**Course Level:** Undergraduate Upper-Level**Description:** Topics and credit hours may vary each semester. Contact department for current semester's topic(s). Repeatable for Credit.

Description and Code Legend

Note: Internally, the university uses the following descriptions, codes, and abbreviations for this academic program. The following is a quick reference:

Course Catalog/Schedule

- Course offerings/subject code: PJHC

Department (or Program) Description and Code

- Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities: PJHC

Undergraduate Minor Description and Code

- Minor in Poverty, Justice and Human Capabilities: PJHC

CIP Code and Description ¹

- PJHC Minor: CIP Code/Title: 42.2808 - Environmental Psychology

¹ Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2020 Codes and Descriptions from the National Center for Education Statistics: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/>