

# HUMANITARIAN ACTION

In response to the increasing number, scope and intensity of humanitarian emergencies, the field of humanitarian action has grown dramatically over the last 25 years, along with diverse career opportunities. The minor complements other fields of study at Fairfield University's College of Arts and Sciences, and schools of business, engineering, and nursing with the fundamentals of humanitarianism and cross-cutting concepts, theories and skills to meet humanitarian needs at home and around the world, including through internships with leading humanitarian organizations. The minor is led by faculty with expertise in an array of disciplines, such as anthropology, economics, ethics, engineering, environment, health, history, nursing, management, and international affairs.

This unique interdisciplinary minor prepares students to:

- Learn, reflect and respond to humanitarian needs.
- Advance moral commitments and ethically grounded action.
- Serve as men and women for others.
- Alleviate human suffering and protect human dignity.

Students minoring in humanitarian action have opportunities to develop leadership skills and gain field relevant experiences through immersion trips and co-curricular activities, such as mapping humanitarian crises, running humanitarian simulations, and meeting with United Nations Officials. Participation in the student-led Humanitarian Action Club and service as Humanitarian Action Fellows raises awareness on campus about humanitarian issues and builds strategies for responding to humanitarian crises. The minor also offers a semester abroad option in Athens through Global Fairfield which includes coursework and an internship in a humanitarian-related non-profit. In addition to the program in Greece, students can take humanitarian action elective classes as well as an internship in many of Fairfield's other study abroad locations.

The minor also offers students specialized career advising in humanitarian affairs. Former students have found career paths at such agencies as Americares, FEMA, Concern Worldwide, American Red Cross and with the U.S. Department of State. Alumni have worked with AmeriCorps, pursued Fulbright fellowships as well as postgraduate degrees in a variety of fields, including law, international development, public health, biology, business, humanitarian affairs, and psychology.

## Programs

- Humanitarian Action Minor

## Courses

### HUAC 3980 Humanitarian Action Internship 3 Credits

**Attributes:** HASM Humanitarian Action Minor Skills/Method Course  
Students gain first-hand experience through placement with a relevant international organization, non-profit, media and business, or government agency focused on humanitarian crises and disaster response.

Typically, an internship requires 10 to 15 hours per week on site. Other requirements include an e-portfolio containing reflections about readings, meetings with internship coordinator and peers and a final reflection paper. An on-site supervisor and Humanitarian Action professor evaluate student work. Open to juniors and seniors only, by permission of the minor director. Requires an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher.

### HUAC 4999 Humanitarian Action Seminar

3 Credits

**Prerequisites:** At least two courses in fundamentals in different disciplines, one additional fundamental or one cross-cutting theme course, and one skills and methods course; junior or senior standing. This seminar is a culminating experience that helps students to integrate their learning across courses they have taken in the Humanitarian Action minor and to explore its relationship to their other fields of study and career objectives. While a main outcome is a research paper or project allowing students to examine in greater depth key questions on humanitarian action and actionable steps, the seminar also emphasizes leadership skills and ethical commitments to humanitarian work. Seminar sessions include guest lectures by program faculty, experts from local, national or international organizations, and Fairfield alums in the humanitarian action field to facilitate mentorship for career development.

## Faculty

### Director

Mughal (Center for Social Impact)

### Associate Director

TBD

### Advisory Committee

Babo (Sociology and Anthropology, International Studies)  
Balaji (Electrical and Biomedical Engineering)  
Crandall (School of Education and Human Development)  
Gerard (Nursing)  
McFadden (History)  
Nantz (Economics)  
Planas (Nursing)  
Quan (Center for Social Impact)  
Schmidt, D. (Applied Ethics)

### Affiliated Faculty

Aksan (Economics)  
Babo (Sociology)  
Crawford (Sociology and Anthropology)  
Downie (Politics, Environmental Studies)  
Franceschi (Economics)  
Garcia Iommi (Politics)  
Lacy (Sociology and Anthropology)  
Strauss (Management)  
Planas (Nursing)  
Vásquez Mazariegos (Economics)  
Vavilov, Stanislav (Management)  
Zhao, Wen (Communication)

### Lecturers

Day (Applied Ethics)  
Schmidt, N. (Applied Ethics)  
Sobocinski (English)