

POVERTY, JUSTICE, AND HUMAN CAPABILITIES

THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, THE SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND THE GEORGE R. BROWN
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

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DEGREES OFFERED: NONE

The Program in Poverty, Justice, and Human Capabilities (PJHC), which is housed in the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, provides students with a multifaceted understanding of human well-being, both in the U.S. and internationally. The PJHC program has collaborated with a number of departments to offer Rice undergraduate students a minor in poverty, justice, and human capabilities. This unique interdisciplinary minor emphasizes a “capabilities approach,” which considers what people are able to do and be—for example, live to old age and engage in economic and political activities—rather than strictly what they have or don’t have. The program also acknowledges the central importance of a variety of additional influences on well-being beyond income, such as gender, racial and ethnic disparities, health status, education, human rights, political freedoms, and material necessities like food and shelter. A key goal of the PJHC program is to enrich students’ understanding of poverty and inequality, so that, regardless of their choice of occupation, they will maintain a longstanding commitment to enhancing the well-being of all people. More generally, the program aims to train Rice students to be future leaders in solving global problems in human well-being.

The PJHC minor combines high-caliber undergraduate courses with internship experiences for students to work in the summer or as part of a study abroad program with agencies that help disadvantaged communities and people. The students are placed with organizations where they work directly with clients and gain experiential knowledge that broadens their perspective on human lives and capabilities. Through these academic and experiential learning opportunities, students explore a deeper understanding of the structural factors underlying poverty and human well-being and potential policy solutions. Furthermore, the program aims to promote dialogue among all disciplines about how to address issues of poverty alleviation and human well-being with a sophisticated understanding of the challenges and sound strategies for moving forward.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MINORING IN PJHC

Students must complete three required core courses, three elective courses, and participate in either a PJHC summer internship or in a study abroad service learning experience that has been explicitly approved for the minor.

REQUIRED COURSES

- HUMA 280/ SOCI 280 *Introduction to Poverty, Justice, and Capabilities*
- SWGS 422 *Gender and Global Economic Justice* or SWGS 250/POLI 250 *International Political Economy of Gender*
- SOCI 470 *Inequality and Urban Life* or POLI 338 *Policy Analysis*

After taking HUMA 280/SOCI 280 and at least one approved elective or one of the required SWGS gender-related courses, students are eligible to apply for the minor and to participate in a service learning internship program approved for the minor. Although they do not receive academic credit for the internship, they must undertake an approved internship program as part of the minor.

Students may choose either SOCI 470 *Inequality and Urban Life* or POLI 338 *Policy Analysis* as the final required capstone to the minor. The capstone course provides students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in other courses and the internship experience to develop a substantive paper or project on a real-world policy problem. Students must develop their capstone projects on a topic directly relevant to the themes and concerns of the PJHC minor and must get advance approval for their topics from one of the PJHC minor advisors, as represented in a detailed prospectus they will be required to submit for such approval.

ELECTIVE COURSES

Students must choose three electives, including at least one course from the PJHC non-Western elective list, one course from the Race and Ethnicity elective list, and a third from a broader list that also includes the non-Western and Race and Ethnicity lists. A complete list of the approved elective courses may be found at www.rice.edu/pjhc.

ADMISSION

All PJHC minor courses are open to all Rice students, including those not pursuing the PJHC minor. The key core courses will be offered each year. The introductory course, HUMA 280/SOCI 280 will be capped at 28 students, with preference given to students who plan to complete the PJHC minor. Students will be required to seek instructor approval through the submission of a brief questionnaire.