The Social Justice and Human Rights (SJHR) concentration in the Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies program is flexibly designed to allow you to focus your studies around the issues to which you are most committed. This program provides a deep theoretical foundation for understanding the social, political, cultural, historical, and economic implications of an array of social injustices and human rights issues. It emphasizes a global and intersectional approach while engaging students in imagining and applying strategies for creating and sustaining a more equitable, just, and humane world.

Experiential Learning
Students will seek out or create an opportunity for experiential learning that deepens their understanding of social justice or human rights. Experiential learning opportunities can include internships, service-learning, consulting projects, and field studies or research (including overseas). The experiential learning requirement should be met through an opportunity that advances the student’s understanding of their chosen emphasis. Students pursue a range of internship and experiential learning opportunities with organizations focused on racial justice, domestic violence prevention, human trafficking abolition, youth unemployment, environmental justice, and education.

Who’s in the Program
Students range from recent college graduates to mid-career professionals. They pursue research and activism on topics such as racial and environmental justice, human trafficking, disability rights, immigration, and human rights. Students in the program come from a range of disciplines and professional backgrounds, including education, political science, criminology, sociology, women’s and gender studies, African American studies, and social justice activism, to name a few.

Career Paths
Current and former students have focused on issues such as racial justice, educational rights, (dis)ability rights, indigenous rights, animal rights, the abolition of human trafficking. Others have focused on regional contexts such as the Middle East, Central Europe, East Africa, or Central America. Many students go on to pursue careers in human rights and non-profit organizations, social justice activism, higher education, and public policy.
Why Mason
The Washington, D.C., area is a strategic place to study social justice and human rights. You will have opportunities to meet and work with activists and organizations who are putting contemporary understandings of social change into action.

Degree Requirements - 36 Total Credits
Required Courses - 14 Credits
MAIS 796 ProSeminar
MAIS 797 Interdisciplinary Studies Proposal
INTS 540 Contemporary Issues in Social Justice Human Rights
INTS 537 Critical Race Studies
WMST 602 Queer Theory or WMST 630 Feminist Theories
Social Justice and Human Rights Issues and Movements (chosen from a selection of courses) - 3 credits
Emphasis Courses - 6 Credits
Courses with an emphasis on a specific social justice or human rights issue; the theme of the emphasis courses should be reflected in the student's experiential learning project.
Experiential Learning - 3 Credits
Research Methods Course - 3 Credits
Capstone Project or Thesis - 1 or 4 Credits
Elective Courses- 6-9 Credits

How to Apply
Along with the completed Application for Graduate Admission and application fee, applicants should submit:
• Official transcripts from previous institutions of higher education attended
• Goals statement
• Two letters of recommendation
• Resume
• Formal writing sample of at least 1,000 words

See chss.gmu.edu/admissions for complete details on the application process.

An Accelerated Master's pathway (BAM) is available to current undergraduates. For more information about this program, visit: chss.gmu.edu/accelerated-masters/about

Faculty and Research
You will be taught by an interdisciplinary team of faculty who combine contemporary theoretical and philosophical frameworks in critical race theory, feminist and queer theory, and social justice and human rights with the knowledge and strategies of past and present change-makers. Faculty are engaged in social justice work worldwide, including in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and in our own community.

Available Degree Paths
Computational Social Science - Energy and Sustainability
Individualized Studies - Religious Studies - Social Entrepreneurship
Social Justice and Human Rights - War and the Military in Society
Women and Gender Studies

Contact Information
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