

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

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ABOUT THE SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PROGRAM

UW-Platteville students can earn either a Minor or Certificate in Social and Environmental Justice.

The Social and Environmental Justice Program is grounded in the conviction that in a world plagued by conflict, war, and manifold forms of degradation, both human and environmental, “true peace,” as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. put it, “is not merely the absence of tension—it is the presence of justice.”

The field of Environmental Justice recognizes that environmental problems often share the same root as the world’s most pressing social injustices: unequal systems of power that perpetuate various forms of oppression and exploitation. Furthermore, environmental issues such as pollution, natural disasters, climate change, and deforestation, often have unequal effects, exacerbating already existing inequalities for peoples marginalized by race, class, ethnicity, and gender. The study of social and environmental justice recognizes that in order to tackle environmental issues, they must be considered together with social justice issues, with an approach that recognizes and seeks to change the underlying causes of inequalities.

The Social and Environmental Justice Program aims at developing students who are aware of our world’s major challenges—poverty, hunger, disease, inequality, war, slavery, and all forms of human and environmental degradation—and who are committed to addressing these threats to the common good in the most constructive ways possible.

WHO SHOULD STUDY SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Open to students from any major or concentration, the Social and Environmental Justice Minor is designed specifically for students who take seriously the idea that an educated person is one who embodies a sensitivity to the social, ecological, and moral challenges of our time, and who, through structured study and practical applied work, act to make a constructive difference in our world.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Using courses from across a diversity of disciplines, the program focuses on developing the idea and practice of social and environmental justice. Classroom study is followed by an off-campus cooperative experience with an organization or partner involved in on-the-ground social and environmental justice development and/or relief in a location either within the United States or another country.

Field experiences include, but are not limited to, projects in agriculture, community development, education, engineering, health care, job training, reforestation, habitat restoration, and small business development. The field experience involves supervised study and service related to specific development or relief projects and enables students to learn not only about the communities in which they are immersed, but also about the kinds of development that are appropriate within particular cultural contexts.

MINOR

- Social and Environmental Justice Minor (<https://catalog.uwplatt.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts-education/environmental-sciences-and-society/social-environmental-justice/social-environmental-justice-minor/>)

CERTIFICATE

- Social and Environmental Justice Certificate (<https://catalog.uwplatt.edu/undergraduate/liberal-arts-education/environmental-sciences-and-society/social-environmental-justice/social-environmental-justice-certificate/>)