



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The social justice and social policy (SJSP) minor links an academic curriculum with the university's commitment to social justice. The program provides a common place for students in all disciplines to engage with issues of justice and equity. Our curriculum examines the essential connections between social values and practical policy. The concern with social justice speaks to the core educational commitments of Brandeis. This program carries the search for norms and principles into the wider arena of practical experience. By providing models for critical reflection, it challenges students to articulate their own value commitments in a spirit of constructive debate.

### What makes the program distinctive?

The social justice and social policy program brings together an unusually broad spectrum of faculty and curriculum — combining the academic perspectives of arts and sciences departments with

professional expertise from the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. Students are encouraged to explore policy areas in concrete detail.

## FAST FACTS

**Current number of minors:** 23

**Number of faculty:** 8

**Can you major in this program?** No

**Emphasis within the minor:** close student-faculty interaction, interdisciplinary study

**Popular majors:** history, politics, psychology, sociology

**Website:** [brandeis.edu/programs/sjsp](http://brandeis.edu/programs/sjsp)

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## ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

### Hands-on experience

A central component of the program is the internship, which can involve hands-on social justice research or take the form of a community-based experience guided and deepened by participation in the associated classroom course. A number of funding opportunities are available to support unpaid social justice-related internships.

### Internships

Recent internship placements include Alternatives for Community and Environment, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Facing History and Ourselves, Disability Law Center, Progressive Change Campaign Committee, Rosie's Place, the NAACP's Washington Bureau and the Massachusetts State Senate president's office.

### Social justice and public policy

A new initiative, Advocacy for Policy Change, addresses theories, skills, networks and key players in the reform of public policy. It focuses on policy change at the statehouse level, and participants interact with elected officials and community organizations to advance key legislation affecting social welfare, health, education and economic justice. Students assist legislative sponsors in promoting change, taking into account policy analysis, community impact, legal restraints and political possibilities.

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## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

### Brenda Meehan Social Justice-in-Action Grant Program

The Meehan grant program provides support for student-organized events that bring together academic and activist perspectives on one or more social justice issues. Past awards have supported a weekend-long campus visit by Rabbi Steve Greenberg, the openly gay ordained Orthodox rabbi featured in the award-winning documentary "Trembling Before G-d"; an open forum on international labor practices; and a workshop run by Megan Jo Andelloux, director of the Sexuality Learning and Resource Center in Providence, R.I., which accompanied a student-led performance of "The Vagina Monologues." In 2010, a special round of Meehan grants supported projects that furthered the university's efforts in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti.

### The Social Justice Summit

In 2009, SJSP hosted the inaugural Social Justice Summit, bringing together leaders of a wide range of Brandeis clubs and initiatives. These summit meetings are intended to create lines of dialogue across diverse groups, spark collaborative action, and more fully integrate academic and cocurricular social justice efforts on campus.

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## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### Health policy

Becky Sniderman '10 was accepted into the nationally competitive Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars Program. Sniderman's work with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton extended her senior thesis research on race and health care disparities in Mississippi in the 1950s and '60s.

### Health advocacy

Katy Agule '09 was recognized by the American Cancer Society with a 2008 Excellence in Advocacy Award.

### Community housing

Aaron Finegold '09 received a hopeFound Heroes Award for his work with the hopeFound organization, which provides programs and services that help homeless men and women achieve self-sufficiency and secure permanent housing.

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## AFTER BRANDEIS

### Alumni network

SJSP encourages its students to connect with the many Brandeis alumni pursuing social justice careers. SJSP provides various opportunities to do so, including hosting periodic alumni panels that bring recent alumni back to campus to share their post-Brandeis experiences. In 2010, panel participants included **Paul Adler '04**, a Ph.D. candidate in history at Georgetown University; **Jocelyn Berger '04**, program officer for the American Jewish World Service and AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps; **Ben Brandzel '03**, director of new media campaigns and fundraising for Organizing for America; **Corey Hope Leaffer '04**, coordinator of hospital organizing for United Healthcare Workers East; **Claudia Martinez '07**, coordinator of the Sadie Hill Nash Leadership Project's after-school program; and **Andrew Slack '02**, executive director of the Harry Potter Alliance.

