



LL.M./J.S.D. PROGRAM INTERCULTURAL HUMAN RIGHTS



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**“It’s Better to Light a Candle
than to Curse the Darkness.”**

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the
Universal Declaration of Human Rights





WELCOME TO STU COLLEGE OF LAW



I welcome you to St. Thomas University. In the Catholic tradition, our university has developed a rich history of working towards fostering respect for the dignity of the human person in our world. We are proud to have facilitated a number of initiatives designed to foster human rights and social justice. Central to our mission is our College of Law's preeminent Graduate Program in Intercultural Human Rights.

Because of our faculty of international acclaim and the STU Law's globally diverse student body, the LL.M. and J.S.D. programs are at the cutting edge of research, study, and advocacy. Committed to intercultural dialogue, we aim to contribute to establishing legal orders that allow for the flourishing of all human beings as they are created in the image of God. We look forward to you joining this quest.

David A. Armstrong, J.D.
President, St. Thomas University

As I admire your commitment to human rights, I very much appreciate your interest in our law school. The law school you choose to study human rights will significantly impact the type of lawyer, advocate and leader you will become. St. Thomas University College of Law is an academic institution which champions social justice and human dignity, and it evidences such dedication in its teaching, scholarship, leadership and diversity.

Princeton Review has described STU Law as “a highly-regarded student centered law school where diversity is cherished, [and] a commitment to human rights and international law flourishes....” Our globally recognized Graduate Program in Intercultural Human Rights encapsulates this commitment. Since 2001, we have welcomed a talented student body from every corner of the world and the United States—all sharing the goal of making this a better world.

I invite you to become part of this unique program and caring community, where faculty and students truly make a difference in advancing ethics, human dignity and justice for all.



Tarlika Nuñez-Navarro
Dean, St. Thomas University College of Law



ST. THOMAS
UNIVERSITY

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS



Human Dignity is Inviolable

These words are easily spoken – and so tough to make a reality. Violations abound, often escalating to the cruelest atrocities. Ideals and laws, however well-intentioned, do not enforce themselves. They need the conveyor belt of human action. Human rights laws remain dry parchment unless they are promoted, created and applied by selfless warriors for the respect of others, most importantly, the vulnerable and the oppressed.

St. Thomas University College of Law offers its unique contribution to this struggle for hearts and minds in its distinctive Master of Laws (LL.M.) and Doctor of the Science of Law (J.S.D.) Programs in Intercultural Human Rights. Its Catholic identity makes it an apt place to work in the vineyard for social justice, a meeting-ground for different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs. It brings antagonists together, searching for a common ground of values that would allow every person on this planet to flourish and to thrive. Its distinguished faculty from all over the globe, experts from the United Nations and eminent universities, engages students in a rich and fruitful dialogue that will forever change their lives.

Professor Dr. iur. Siegfried Wiessner

*Founder & Director, LL.M./J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights
Associate Dean for Scholarship and Faculty Development*

All Humans are Born Free and Equal

“We cannot create a culture of dialogue if we do not have identity,” has said Pope Francis. Our Catholic identity is a shining light in an increasingly fragmented and conflict-ridden world, and it guides us to the construction of a society in which human beings are and feel that they are brothers and sisters, born free and equal, in the likeness and image of God. Our goal is to advance this universal tenet and interact with each other in a spirit of brotherhood, celebrating diversity. We stand up for equal rights and freedoms, for political and social justice, for ethical leadership – all in service of human dignity and the common good.

We designed a master’s program that nourishes the integral development of our students: mind, body and soul. Being an educator is a privilege, and we never lose sight of the responsibility that our work carries: educating “is in the real sense of the word an apostolate [...] and at once a true service offered to society.” I invite you to be a missionary for human dignity and share this majestic journey with me!

Professor Dr. iur. Roza Pati

St. John Paul II Distinguished Professor of Law

Director, LL.M./J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights

Founder & Director, The John J. Brunetti Human Trafficking Academy



THE LL.M./J.S.D. PROGRAM

Master of Laws (LL.M.) Program in Intercultural Human Rights

Do you have an interest in intercultural human rights? Then, without a doubt, this program is for you. Whether you are a lawyer, a government official, a teacher, a human rights activist, or a business person, this unique LL.M. program surpasses expectations because of its structure, content, eminent faculty, and staff.

The LL.M. Program at St. Thomas University College of Law is designed to offer indepth instruction on the critical issue of our time: the protection of human dignity across political, social, economic and cultural lines. All persons with a commitment to this goal are encouraged to pursue this advanced degree in one of the most dynamic fields of international law: intercultural human rights.

The program is designed to allow students to develop the ability to evaluate the major theories, concepts and practices in international human rights law and policy, as well as to conduct effective research and advocacy in the field in a practical and interactive way.

Students will graduate from the LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights after the successful completion of 24 academic credits, which includes all required and elective courses. Honors graduates of the LL.M. program are eligible to apply for admission into the highly selective J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights.





Doctor of the Science of Law (J.S.D.) Program in Intercultural Human Rights

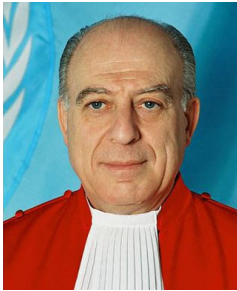
The J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights provides a premier opportunity for new and experienced scholars to make a lasting contribution to the dynamic and action-oriented field of human rights. J.S.D. candidates conduct research on a pressing issue of their choice, analyze it in a comprehensive, interdisciplinary way, and offer solutions to the problem at hand.

This doctoral program is an intensive research-based academic endeavor that seeks to contribute an innovative perspective, knowledge, academic insight and guidance in the field of human rights. J.S.D. candidates will graduate after submitting a publishable manuscript of no less than 75,000 words on a chosen dissertation topic, passing an oral defense, and publication of their thesis. All candidates are expected to complete the program requirements during a minimum period of two (2) years, and a maximum of five (5) years.

The best theses may be published in the series entitled Studies in Intercultural Human Rights at the top-of-the-line publishing house, BRILL/Martinus Nijhoff in the Netherlands.

UNIQUE FACULTY

The distinctive characteristic of our LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights is its globally recognized faculty. Our teachers and guest lecturers come from the highest echelons of academia and practice, sharing their unique experiences and expertise with our students and offering them unique access to their related networks. They include top officials of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and its treaty bodies; United Nations Special Rapporteurs; Judges of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia; U.S. Ambassadors and Representatives to the United Nations; Inter-American Commission of Human Rights; European Court of Human Rights; distinguished scholars from Yale, Harvard, Cambridge, U.K., Milan, Siena, Bucharest and Mexico City; human rights officials from The Vatican; and leading officials of The World Bank – to mention but a few members of our illustrious team.



The Honorable Fausto Pocar

Professor of Law Emeritus, University of Milan, Italy
President, UN Human Rights Committee (1991-1992)
President, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (2005-2008)



Professor Nora V. Demleitner, J.D., LL.M.

President, St. John' College, Annapolis
Former Dean, Washington and Lee School of Law
Member of the American Law Institute and Fellow of the European Law Institute



Dr. Ana Maria Suárez Franco

Secretary General, FIAN International
Permanent Representative of FIAN, United Nations, Geneva



Prof. Dr. W. Michael Reisman

Myres McDougal Professor Emeritus of Law, Yale Law School
Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science
Former President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States

Innovative LL.M. Courses and Curriculum

The Master of Laws in Intercultural Human Rights degree program is designed to be completed in 24 credits over two semesters, and offers a wide variety of courses for students to choose from. Four required LL.M. courses comprise eleven of these 24 credits; eight other elective one-week courses were developed specifically for the LL.M. program. In addition, students have to fulfill a writing requirement generally completed by enrolling in a related two-credit J.D. seminar, and they may take up to twelve elective credits from a variety of international and domestic law courses offered in the J.D. curriculum as recognized by the Program.

Required LL.M. Courses

- International Law
- The International Bill of Rights
- Regional Systems of Human Rights Protection
- Armed Conflict and Individual Liability

Elective LL.M. Courses

- Ethical Moorings: Philosophical and Religious Foundations of Human Rights
- The Protection of Refugees
- The Right to Integral Human Development
- Human Rights Lawyering
- Human Rights and the Environment
- International Economic Law and Human Rights
- The Right to Water and Sanitation
- Women's Rights and the Rights of the Child
- The Right to Self Determination
- Human Rights and Terrorism
- Human Rights and Religion
- LL.M. in Intercultural Human Rights Thesis



HOW TO APPLY

LL.M. Admission & Application Requirements

Enrollment for the LL.M. degree is open to holders of a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree or similar foreign qualifications in the field of law.

On a highly selective basis, admission may also be granted to holders of a bachelor's degree or its foreign equivalent, who have shown an outstanding commitment to the cause of human rights and human dignity. Non-lawyers participating in this program are advised that the program does not prepare or qualify its students to engage in the practice of law and that the program is not intended to qualify students to take a bar examination.

Students may apply for full time or part-time status.

Application

An LL.M. application file is ready for review when it includes:

- A Completed and Signed LL.M. Application Form
- A Current Resume (Curriculum Vitae)
- A Personal Statement
- Official transcripts, diplomas, or certificates must be sent directly from the issuing institution to St. Thomas University College of Law, LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights. Foreign credentials must be translated into English, certified or notarized, and evaluated by LSAC (www.LSAC.org) or a NACES member (www.NACES.org)
- Two recommendation letters, preferably one from a present employer and one from a professor
- Two passport size photos [optional at this stage]
- Interview in person or conference call
- \$50 Non-Refundable Application Fee

Please Send Your Completed Application To Or Email It To: humanrights@stu.edu

Admissions Committee
LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights
St. Thomas University College of Law
16401 NW 37th Avenue
Miami Gardens, FL 33054, U.S.A.

Graduation Requirements

- Completion of 24 academic credits of the LL.M. course of study.
- Thirteen credits are earned through required courses.
- The other eleven credits may be earned by choosing among a wide variety of elective human rights courses as well as from selected courses of the general J.D. curriculum. Both doctrinal and skills courses, including internships, are available.

Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Graduation with honors depends on achievement of cumulative grade point average for summa cum laude (with highest honors); magna cum laude (with great honors), and cum laude (with honors) for honors designation. Students graduating with honors are eligible to apply for the J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights.

Two Degrees, Save Time and Money

St. Thomas University College of Law and its Graduate Program in Intercultural Human Rights offer an exceptional opportunity for our J.D. students. J.D. students can take LL.M. classes as elective courses. After completion of their J.D. program they may transfer into the LL.M. program, have up to 12 of their LL.M. elective credits recognized in the LL.M. Program, and thus save considerable time and money.

“Peace is built in the heart
and from the heart.”

- Pope Leo XIV, May 16, 2025



Certificate in Intercultural Human Rights

As a J.D. student at St. Thomas University College of Law, you can take 12 credits from among the courses of the LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights as electives, and graduate with a Certificate in Intercultural Human Rights.

DEVELOPING NOTABLE SCHOLARS AND WORLD LEADERS

General J.S.D. Admission Requirements

Honors graduates from our LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights are invited to apply for the J.S.D. In rare cases of highest scholarly achievement and promise, LL.M. graduates from other institutions may be admitted as well, subject to certain conditions.

Candidates for the J.S.D. Program in Intercultural Human Rights must submit:

- A Completed and Signed J.S.D. Application Form
- LL.M. Transcript
- A Writing Sample (e.g. LL.M. thesis, seminar paper)
- A Description of the chosen Topic—including an Outline, with an articulation of the topic's novelty; an initial Bibliography; and a Timeline for the stages and places of research, and completion of the manuscript
- A Letter of Acceptance of Candidate and Topic by Supervising Faculty Member
- One Letter of Recommendation
- \$100 Non-Refundable Application Fee

The completed application will be submitted for decision to the J.S.D. Admissions Committee consisting of the Directors of the Graduate Program in Intercultural Human Rights and other members of the St. Thomas University College of Law faculty who hold a J.S.D., S.J.D., or Ph.D. degree or their foreign equivalent. Applicants with the strongest academic records, original proposals and the highest promise of achievement are admitted to the Program.

Please Send Your Completed Application To Or Email It To: humanrights@stu.edu:

Admissions Committee
LL.M. Program in Intercultural Human Rights
St. Thomas University College of Law
16401 NW 37th Avenue
Miami Gardens, FL 33054, U.S.A.



Graduation Requirements

Submission of a publishable manuscript of no less than 75,000 words on the candidate's chosen topic (the dissertation) to his or her supervisor.

Successful rigorosum (thesis dissertation defense) and satisfactory grade point average (determined in equal parts by the supervisor's grade, the grade from a second evaluator, and the rigorosum) and publication of thesis.

INSIGHTS

“This program at St. Thomas University is unique, as it has a group of professors, that not only bring their expertise, but also real-life experiences. That makes them great conduits for the knowledge that the students get in the classroom. You have people that not only have studied and taught international law, and international human rights law, but have been judges and members of committees and leading practitioners in the field. Students will get hands-on experience on how international human rights law works.

I think that the students are also unique themselves. I have had students that had PhDs in economics and were professors in their own countries, prosecutors and ministers. The university has been able to attract such a varied group of students - from different religions, and social and educational backgrounds. All that diversity and depth of knowledge and experience makes discussions and the learning process much more interesting. It gives students the opportunity to learn from people that are excellent in their field. It also gives the students the opportunity to learn from their peers, which also have remarkable lives and careers. It's been a very dynamic, interesting and engaging journey for me as a professor. In this profession, I applaud the commitment of students and the professors who pursue human dignity.”

Viviana Krsticevic, Esq.

Executive Director, Center for Justice and International Law
Washington, D.C.



"I have always desired to live in a way that reflects my worldview that all people bear an equal and inherent right to not just live free of oppression and discrimination, but to thrive. The Intercultural Human Rights Program gave me the tools to live this out to a greater degree. It pushed me to stare directly into the injustice that people experience every day, both throughout history and today, and to recognize my own responsibility to be the voice that speaks up for those who can't. This program gave me the information and tools I needed to make that a reality. I didn't just learn about human rights; I lived them through intercultural conversations and legal perspectives that reshaped my view of justice. I now use what I learned from this experience every day. Thank you, Professors!"

Kayla Hall | LL.M. '24
United States of America



"Enrolling in the Intercultural Human Rights program at St. Thomas University was, without a doubt, the best experience of my life. The professor's dedication to creating a space where law meets humanity changed the course of my academic and professional path. Because of them, and the incredible faculty they assembled, I not only deepened my understanding of human rights law but discovered my voice as a fighter for those most often overlooked. I am profoundly grateful for this experience and would recommend this program to all. With this degree, I'm honored to be part of a legacy that champions justice through intercultural understanding."

Roberliza M. Torres | LL.M. '25
Dominican Republic

"The program sharpened my understanding of international legal frameworks and amplified my commitment to equity, justice, and the power of advocacy to uplift marginalized communities. Throughout the LL.M. program in the College of Law, I explored the intersections of human rights, systemic inequality, and cultural identity and engaged in research that echoed the lived realities of those historically excluded from decision-making spaces. I learned alongside diverse scholars from all around the world, and mentors who affirmed both my intellectual rigor and my voice, as they helped me shape a legal perspective rooted in truth, inclusion, and change."

Dellon Dellop | LL.M. '25
J.S.D. Candidate, Jamaica



"As a foreign lawyer admitted in this LL.M. program at St. Thomas University, working with a diverse group of scholars helped me better understand international law and cross-cultural communication. The program challenged me both academically and culturally, pushing me outside my comfort zone. I improved my legal thinking, built stronger language skills and terminology, and learned to see international law from new perspectives. These challenges didn't hold me back; they helped me grow. The directors and all the faculty that made this possible truly care about the students. I'm forever grateful to all the professors and admissions staff who supported me along the way. It is because of their insight, I'm now more thoughtful, adaptable, and committed to fair legal solutions around the world. I would recommend this program to everyone that I meet."

Mayte Morillo' | LL.M. '25
Venezuela

IMPACT

"The great British writer, C.S. Lewis, has been quoted to have said that '*the task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts.*' I strongly believe that the capstone degree in law, the J.S.D. that I earned at St. Thomas University College of Law under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Roza Pati, fulfills this commitment. The program has had a most profound impact on both my career and personal intellectual development. It strengthened my analytical skills, shaped my academic character, empowered me with the tools to express myself with confidence, clarity, precision, and authority. The program with its multiple components and opportunities to get engaged sharpened by leadership skills, and today I not only teach law, but I also serve as the Vice Dean of the College of Law at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia — the youngest person to hold this position in the history of the College of Law.

The LL.M. and the J.S.D. program also laid the foundation for me to become a strong legal researcher and scholar. I have published three legal research papers in a short time, inspired and guided by the outstanding training and support I received from the STU faculty. The seminar classes, where students gained practical research, writing and presentation skills using the problem-solving methodology of the New Haven School of Jurisprudence, the deep probing analysis of the societal problems and cutting-edge global legal issues was one of most challenging and memorable academic experiences. On a more practical side, a thoroughly impressive aspect of the program was the annual specialized summer course on human trafficking law and policy, accessible to St. Thomas students free of charge. The Human Trafficking Academy brings together global experts, researchers, practitioners who examine real-world cases, propose legal solutions, raise awareness on the issue and help master advocacy for change in service of human dignity.

Now, as I teach my students, I try to apply what I learned at STU Law -- engage with my students to kindle in them the inquisitiveness, the desire to explore and acquire knowledge, the motivation to participate in meaningful analysis and discussions, and to empower them to be ethical and compassionate leaders in our ever-changing societies. STU has not only shaped my academic path — it has helped me find my voice in the world, and this is a most rewarding experience. Thanks St. Thomas!"

Professor Dr. Mona Abdulaziz Almelhem | J.S.D. '24

Vice Dean of the College of Law, King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia





Ideal Location

Miami serves as the ideal environment to benefit immensely from its array of intercultural diversity, which complements the academic components of our program. It is a cultural melting pot, with robust international communities, stunning nature, water, air and field sports, and a cuisine that feeds the soul.

As a global center for business and trade, Miami has a significant international legal community. The Miami Metropolitan Area houses the offices of most prominent national and international law firms. Miami, as well as the nearby cities of Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach are center hubs for trade, business, and policy.



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305.474.2403 • humanrights@stu.edu • www.stu.edu/humanrights

APPLY!

