

*Barry expects all members of our community to accept social responsibility to foster peace and nonviolence, to strive for equality, to recognize the sacredness of Earth, and to engage in meaningful efforts toward social change. The University promotes social justice through teaching, research and service.*

—From “Core Commitments,” Barry University

Social justice is the movement of society toward more equality, support for diversity, economic fairness, nonviolent conflict resolution, and participatory democracy. Social justice is grounded in the affirmation of human dignity and commitment to the common good.

At Barry, the Center for Community Service Initiatives (CCSI) promotes social justice through service-learning experiences. Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates relevant community service with course work and critical reflection to enrich the learning experience, foster social responsibility and civic engagement, and strengthen communities.

The CCSI develops and coordinates reflection activities for students. These activities prepare students for roles as agents of social change.

### Promoting Social Justice through Service-Learning

- Service-learning challenges students to move beyond charity to social change.
- Service-learning projects can foster a sustained commitment to promoting fairness and equality.
- The curriculum should be designed to facilitate analyses of root causes of social problems and the interplay of inequality, powerlessness, and marginalization.
- In the syllabus, faculty should outline course goals that intentionally include social justice-related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students are expected to develop.
- Students should conduct research and participate in discussions that will help them understand social issues and the historical, sociological, cultural, and political contexts from which these issues emerge.
- Students should critically examine their own values and beliefs, attitudes and actions.
- Rather than “How can we help these people?” students should ask, “Why are conditions this way?” and “How can we help to change the system?”
- Students should propose systemic solutions to social injustice, including sustainable policy solutions and necessary changes to social structures and institutions that perpetuate injustice.
- Students may engage in advocacy (e.g., letter-writing campaigns and petitions) and social action (e.g., voter registration drives and lobbying) on behalf of populations who have been disadvantaged, discriminated against, and disempowered.

# Barry University

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