

TR 537 Justice: Social, Legal, Economic
United Theological Seminary – Fall 2009
Thursday, 8:15-11:30 am

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Course Description

In this seminar we will explore different conceptions of social justice, and how law and economics, dominant conveyors of justice in today's society, might reflect and express these different conceptions. In the first section of the course, we will read and discuss the theology and theories of liberal justice, and its communitarian and feminist critiques. In the second section of the course, we will examine theories of human rights, legal expressions of justice. Finally, we will examine how economic systems reflect concepts of justice and morality.

Course Objectives

1. To understand and reflect theologically on some concepts of social justice, including utilitarian, liberal, communitarian, and feminist perspectives on justice.
2. To understand and articulate how human rights theory reflects particular conceptions of justice.
3. To understand how economic theory reflects particular conceptions of justice.
4. To think critically and theologically about issues in justice, law and economics.
5. To formulate the student's own perspectives on justice, and how it might be expressed in law and economics.

Required books:

1. Brubaker, Pamela, Peters, Rebecca Todd, and Stevers, Laura A. eds. *Justice in a Global Economy* (Westminster John Knox, 2006) (BPS).
2. Lebacqz, Karen. *Six Theories of Justice* (Augsburg, 1986).
3. Perry, Michael. *Toward a Theory of Human Rights* (Cambridge, 2007).
4. Rawls, John. *Political Liberalism* (Columbia, 1996)
5. Van Til, Kent. *Less Than Two Dollars a Day* (Eerdmans, 2007).

Chapters or articles from the following books (you may decide to purchase these texts, or borrow them from the reserve shelf in the library):

1. An-Na'im, Abdullahi ed. *Human Rights in Cross Cultural Perspective* (University of Pennsylvania, 1992)
2. Jarl, Ann-Cathrin. *In Justice: Women and Global Economics* (Fortress Press, 2003).
3. Posner, Richard. *The Economics of Justice* (Harvard, 1981).
4. Tucker, Robert C., ed. *The Marx-Engels Reader* (Norton, 1978)
5. Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion and Embrace* (Abingdon, 2000).

Recommended:

1. Michael Sandel, Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do? <http://justiceharvard.org/>

Course Requirements

1. Regular and punctual attendance in class, timely reading, and thoughtful participation in class discussions. More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade (one grade level per absence). 20% of grade
2. Two seminar papers, to be prepared on a selected reading and presented for class discussion for that day. This paper, to be no longer than 6 pages double spaced, should summarize the main arguments and/or themes of the reading and suggest several questions to guide discussion. It is due at the beginning of the class period for which the reading is assigned. You are not responsible for a reading report on the day you present your seminar paper. 20% of total grade each.
3. In lieu of one of the seminar papers, above, participate in Michael Sandel's on-line course in Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do? 20% of total grade.
4. One final paper, on a topic related to the course, of the student's choosing. This is typically a research paper on an issue of interest to the student. It could be inspired by a current event, a theory encountered in class, or a reflection on an ongoing question or concern of the student's. It should show familiarity with the content of the course, as well as additional research. The paper should be approximately 10 pages, double spaced. Group projects or papers, and other types of individual papers/projects, may be negotiated with me in lieu of the individual research paper. 40% of total grade.

Course Assessment

Expectations for grade:	Course materials	Discussion	Written work
A <i>Requirements are cumulative of B and C</i>	Nuanced understanding of concepts in readings and lectures, Ability to use internal critique of the materials,	Reflective and <i>thought out</i> contributions	Ability to write and analyse clearly and succinctly, Excellent grasp of English grammar

B <i>Requirements are cumulative of C</i>	Competent grasp of concepts in readings and lectures, Good ability to relate to the course materials honestly and responsibly	Thoughtful contributions	Clear writing, Good organization in paper and Good use of English grammar
C	Basic grasp of issues in course material, Able to accurately portray content of course material, Able to relate course material to issue at hand Academic honesty	Sincere contributions without dominating the class Regular attendance in class	Basic grasp of English grammar, Basic organization of paper, which includes thesis statement and coherent outline Follow instructions

Course Policies

1. Please treat this course, your instructor, and your fellow students with respect by attending class and participating thoughtfully in the discussions. In fact, attendance and participation in class are required to pass this course. More than two unexcused absences will result in a penalty of one grade level per absence. Coming to class late or leaving early may count as an absence.
2. All papers are to be double-spaced, and typewritten. I will not accept emailed papers, but you may fax papers to me at 651-633-4315.
3. All work submitted must be your own, and done specifically for this course.
4. Please see the seminary-wide policies on academic integrity, inclusive language, and sexual harassment, articulated in the student handbooks.
5. The current UTS policy on extensions is as follows:
The work for a course is terminated at the end of the final class session. The performance in the course is evaluated on the basis of the work submitted by that time, unless an exception is made by the instructor, in which case an extension must be agreed to by the instructor by the end of the final class session and the student must complete a formal petition to be submitted in lieu of a grade. If the student is unable to negotiate the extension by the end of the final class session due to critical health issues, the student is responsible for seeing that the professor is notified as soon as possible, and then negotiating the extension promptly.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic and Reading Assignment
1	9/17/09	What is Justice? Introductory lecture Discussion
2	9/24/09	Overview of different theories of justice Lebacqz, chs. 1-3, Jarl ch. 6
3	10/1/09	Liberal justice Rawls, both introductions
4	10/8/09	Liberal justice Rawls, Lectures I and IV
5	10/15/09	Liberal justice Rawls, Lectures V and VI
6	10/22/09	Theological perspectives on justice Lebacqz, chs. 4-end, Volf, ch. V
	10/29/09	Reading week
7	11/5/09	Human rights Perry, Intro. – ch. 7
8	11/12/09	Human rights Perry, chs. 8-9, An-Na'im, chs. 1, 4
9	11/19/09	Overview of theories of economic justice Posner, chs. 3-4 (“Utilitarianism, Economics and Social Theory” and “The Ethical and Political Basis of Wealth Maximization”) Marx, selections from “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844” (in Tucker pp. 70-81, 93-105) Jarl, ch. 8
	11/26/09	Thanksgiving Day
10	12/3/09	Economic justice Van Til, Intro.- ch. 4
11	12/10/09	Economic justice, strategies to work for justice Van Til, chs. 6-7, BPS chs. 1-5

12	12/17/09	Strategies to work for justice BPS 6-end
13	12/21/09 (Monday)	Wrap Up Paper due