

Spring 2010

**Social Justice
PH/PS 310**

Professor: Hatcher
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Office hours: 11:00-2:00 TR
3:20-4:00 TR
Or by appointment

Course Description: The readings for this course focus on questions of distributive justice; e.g., what is a **fair** way to distribute a society's benefits and burdens? In the course of the semester, we will examine various theories and their criticisms, e.g., libertarian, socialist, contractarian, liberal, and communitarian theories of justice. The semester will end with Reinhold Niebuhr's classic book on social justice, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*.

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course students will have demonstrated their ability to

1. understand and discuss the major theories of distributive justice intelligently
2. present course material competently
3. evaluate various philosophical positions critically
4. write position papers competently

Format: The format of the course will be a student-centered presentations and discussion. Students will present most of the material to be covered by producing an outline that summarizes the assigned reading, poses questions for discussion, and critiques the ideas and arguments in the work.

Grades: Grades will be a function of class presentations and participation (200 pts.), two exams (200 pts.), a comprehensive final exam (300 pts.), and a well-researched position paper on a contemporary issue in social justice (100 pts. for outline and bibliography, 200 pts. for paper). Possible topics include a fair tax system, minimum wage, distribution of medical care, affirmative action, the fairness of the free market, the fairness of criminal justice system, or welfare reform. (Other topics are welcome.) If the average on the comprehensive final is higher than the average on the two exams, the final average will replace the average on the exams.

Outlines and Papers: Outlines should be sentence outlines and follow the standard format of introduction and thesis, support with evidence and arguments, objections and replies, conclusion and works cited. Papers will be typed, double-spaced, and at least five pages long. Longer papers are welcome. In all cases, a position must be taken and supported with good evidence and arguments. Quotes from your research and the readings should be integrated into the paper. Relevant objections or counter arguments should be discussed. Sources should be up to date and must be properly documented using APA or MLA format.

Attendance: Attendance is required. Students will write an extra paper for each absence over three or fail the course.

Academic Misconduct: Students found guilty of plagiarism, counterfeit work, or cheating, as defined in the "Baker University Student Handbook," Section V, will at least fail the course. Severe instances of plagiarism may result in expulsion from the university. It is current Baker policy to record any instance of academic misconduct on the student's transcript.

Texts: Sterba, James (ed). *Justice: Alternative Political Perspectives*, 4th edition. Belmont, CA.: Wadsworth Publishing, 2003.

Peffer, R.A., "Toward an Adequate Marxist Moral and Social Theory" (Handout)
Jeffrey Rieman, "Liberalism and Its Critics." (Handout)
Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. New York, Charles Scribner and Sons, 1960
edition.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Thurs., Jan. 28 -- Introduction to the course. Rescher, "The Canons of Distributive Justice."
(Handout)

Libertarian Justice

Tues., Feb. 2 John Hospers, "The Libertarian Manifesto," pp. 22-32.
Thurs, Feb. 4 James Sterba, "From Liberty to Welfare," pp. 33-42.
Tues. Feb. 9 Tibor Machan, "The Nonexistence of Basic Welfare Rights," pp.43-54.
Thurs., Feb., 11 Jan Narveson, "Contracting for Liberty," pp. 55-67.

Socialist Justice

Tues., Feb.16 Marx and Engels, "The Socialist Ideal," pp. 68-76.
Thurs., Feb 18 Nell and O'Neill, "Justice Under Socialism," pp. 77-85.
Tues., Feb. 23 Kai Nielson, "Radical Egalitarianism," pp. 86-96.
.Thurs., Feb 25 R. A. Peffer, "Toward an Adequate Marxist Moral and Social Theory" (handout);
Tues., Mar. 2 Robert Nozick, "How Liberty Upsets Patterns," pp. 97-100. Review Questions
Distributed
Thurs., Mar 4 Review
Tues., Mar. 9 Exam #1

Liberal Democratic Justice The Contractarian Perspective

Thurs., Mar. 11 John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: A Restatement," pp. 107-117.
Mar. 16 -18 **SPRING BREAK**
Tues. Mar 23 James Sterba, "Rawls and a Morally Defensible Conception of Justice, pp. 118-
128.

Communitarian Justice

Thurs., Mar 25 Sandel, "Morality and the Liberal Ideal," pp. 224-237;
Tues., Mar. 30 MacIntyre, "The Privatization of the Good," (Handout) .

Thurs., April 1	In-Service Day (No –Class)
Tues., April 6	Jean Hampton, "The Liberals Strike Back," pp. 218-227.
Thurs., April 8	Jeffrey Reiman, "Liberalism and Its Critics." (Handout)
Tues., April 13	Review the Communitarian and Liberalism Debate. Exam questions circulated
Thurs., April 15	Exam #2
Tues., April 20	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , Introduction and CH 1..
Thurs., April 22	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , Ch. 2 Outlines Due.
Tues., April 27	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , Ch. 3 Outlines returned. Conferences scheduled.
Thurs., April 29	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , Ch 4 and 5
Tues. May 4	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , TBA
Thurs., May 6	Reinhold Niebuhr, <i>Moral Man and Immoral Society</i> , TBA, Papers Due
Tues., May 11 --	Review. Exam Questions Distributed. Papers Returned.
Friday, May 14 --	Comprehensive Final (300 pts.) 8:30 – 11:30

Paper Evaluation Sheet

Name: _____

1. Adequacy of introduction of the issue:
2. Clarity of thesis (objection-position-reasons) and important concepts:
3. Quality of support and argumentation (evidence, argumentation quotes from relevant texts, etc.):
4. Quality of objections (to position and/or arguments) and replies:

5. **Grammar, spelling, and punctuation:** fragments, run-ons, comma splice, noun/pronoun agreement, subject-verb agreement, apostrophe use, sexist language

6. **Quality of expression:** paragraph development, transitions, word choice, syntax etc.

7. **Originality of ideas:** Not a commonplace thesis, objections were substantive and hard to answer well, or a clever critique of a position.

8. **Quality of research of the issue:** number of sources, quality of sources, integration of research into paper