

Tuesday – Thursday 2.00 -3.15 p.m. (Gardner 210)

Instructor: Dr. Stan Husi

husi@email.unc.edu

Office hours: Wednesday 2-4 p.m.

Course Description:

What kind of society and what kind of social arrangements does justice demand? This course surveys the major philosophical approaches to these questions. We are going to discuss whether society is to be arranged so as to maximize utility or overall preference satisfaction; or whether the equality (of opportunity, income, or well-being) among its citizens is the key factor; or whether justice demands that the rights of individual must be respected and never be violated; or whether individual desert and merit matter for social justice. Moreover, should we find multiple ideals to matter for justice, we are going to ask how to balance them, especially how to balance the social virtues of liberty, solidarity, and equality. We are going to look into the ideal of democracy and what it entails.

Grading:

The grading scheme for this course is straightforward. Students may earn up to 100 points, translating into grades according to the standard point-to-grade schedule given below. Grades are determined by three components:

(1) Two essays of at least five pages: The first essay counts for 20 points, the second essay counts for 30 points, adding up to a total of 50 points or 50% of the grade.

A note on the essays: For both essays, a list of discussion questions will be distributed, out of which students will pick one to discuss in greater detail (in at least five pages). I will also distribute a list of expectations/suggestions for writing an essay in philosophy. Students have two and a half weeks for each essay (including three weekends), 9/29-10/18 for the first essay, 11/03-11/22 for the second essay. Essays will be graded blindly in accordance with the distributed expectations. The instructor is committed to ensure a timely return (no more than two weeks). Late submission of the essays will be penalized. Submissions are considered on time when submitted by (exactly) 3 p.m. of the relevant due dates. If submitted after 3 p.m. on the relevant due date, students loose 1 point; for every additional late day, students loose 2 extra points (meaning if the essay is submitted due date +1, the student loses 3 points, due date + 2, the student loses 5 points, and so on). In case of emergencies, I would ask students to contact me as early as possible, and documentation for emergencies will be demanded in accordance with university policy.

(2) Two exams: The two exams together count for 30 points or 30% of the grade. Regarding the overall exam-score, there are two scenarios: (1) If the final exam receives a higher grade than the midterm exam, and provided that the midterm receives at least a D, the midterm exam will be dropped (counting for nothing) and the final exam will count for 30 points or 30% of the grade. (2) If the midterm exam receives a higher grade than the final exam, or if the midterm receives a grade lower than a D, the final exam will count for 20 points or 20% of the grade, and the midterm exam will count for 10 points or 10% of the

grade. The midterm exam thus has a probationary character, intended to prepare students for the final exam, with the nice benefit of potentially helping but not hurting a student's overall exam-score.

A note on the exams: A list of sample exam-questions will be distributed at least one week prior to the exams, enabling students to effectively prepare for the exam (for the final exam, the list will be distributed in week 15). Questions on the sample list may or may not appear on the actual exam, though there is a decent probability that at least some will. At the class immediately preceding the exam, we will reserve some time for exam-preparation, and students are encouraged to ask clarificatory questions about the distributed list of questions, though naturally should not expect "substantive" answers. Students will have a full three hours for the final exam, even though the exam will be designed so as to require significantly less time (around two hours). The midterm exam will be held in class on October 27th, and take one hour.

(3) Quizzes: There will be 10 quizzes during the course, and together they will count for 20 points or 20% of the grade. The three quizzes with the lowest scores will be dropped. Each quiz will receive between 0 and 3 points: 3 points for getting it exactly right, 2 points for getting it mostly right, 1 point for getting more than half of it right and 0 for getting more than half of it wrong. Students will receive the 20 point maximum by getting a total of either 20 or 21 quiz points, correcting for the mathematical impurity, and thus granting students an extra "grace point." (*meaning 6 perfect quizzes plus one "almost" perfect quiz equals an overall perfect quiz score*)

A note on the quizzes: The quizzes serve one sole purpose: to ensure students come prepared to class, and have read the assigned texts. Reading the assigned texts is a core component of this course, and thus the quizzes together count for a rather substantial portion of the grade. Students who regularly come prepared to class should receive close to the 20 point maximum. The quizzes do not test for deeper comprehension of the reading material, nor a full mastery of the arguments presented; instead, they identify a few key points any student who has read the material is most likely to remember. For instance, should a text contain a central example, the quiz might ask about some crucial details of the example, where it took place, when it took place, how many people were in it, etc. Usually there will be two to four questions in each quiz, and students will roughly have 5 minutes for each quiz. All quizzes will be taken towards the beginning of the class. They test for the assigned readings of the entire week, not just for the individual class at which they are taken.

Points-to-grade schedule:

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
0-59	F

Honor Code:

All students are expected to abide by the University's Honor Code: <http://honor.unc.edu>

Required Readings:

Justice: Michael Sandel, *Justice – What's the Right Thing to Do?*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2009.

Reader: Michael Sandel, *Justice – A Reader*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press 2007.

Anthology: Robert Goodin & Philip Pettit, *Contemporary Political Philosophy – An Anthology*, 2nd Edition, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing 2006.

A note on the acquisition of the required texts: together the three books are not inexpensive. There are various options to keep the price more manageable, however. Book sharing is a possibility, especially since most, even if not all, classes use readings from multiple books (making swapping easier). At a certain popular internet bookseller, Sandel's *Justice – What's the Right Thing to Do?* currently sells for \$9.14 new, \$4.00 used (An audiobook version is also available with *audible*). Sandel's reader *Justice* currently sells for \$27.02 new, \$14.49 used. Goodin & Pettit's *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, the most expensive of the three books, currently sells for \$45.61 new, \$17.53 used (prices might change). If a student manages to secure all three books at used prices, the total might very well be less than \$40. Moreover, for the first two weeks we are going to use only the comparatively less expensive two Sandel books; students therefore have a little bit more time to find affordable copies of the anthology. If at the beginning of the semester a student is still unsure as to whether to stay in the course, it might be advisable to hold off on the purchase of the anthology.

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities should also contact the Department of Disability Services, <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/>

Course Schedule:

Week 1

08/23 Introduction (plus some basic game theory)

08/25 Justice: *Doing the Right Thing (Chapter 1)*; Reader: *Chapter 1*

Week 2 – Utility

08/30 Reader: Bentham, *Principles of Morals and Legislation*; Mill, *Utilitarianism* (excerpts)

09/01 Justice: *Utilitarianism (Chapter 2)*

FIRST QUIZ

Week 3 – Equality

09/06 Anthology: Williams, *The Idea of Equality*; Walzer, *Complex Equality*

09/08 Anthology: Sen, *Equality of What?*; Parfit, *Equality and Priority*

SECOND QUIZ

Week 4 – Liberty

09/13 Anthology: Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*

09/15 Anthology: Taylor, *What's Wrong with Negative Liberty?*; Skinner, *A Third Concept of Liberty*
THIRD QUIZ

Week 5 – Equality versus Liberty?

09/20 Reader: Friedman, *Free to Choose*; Anthology: Cohen, *Are Freedom and Equality Compatible?*

09/22 Anthology: Barry, *Chance, Choice, and Justice* FOURTH QUIZ

Week 6 – Rights

09/27 Justice: Immanuel Kant (*Chapter 5, 103-129, 138-139*); Anthology: Hart, *Are There Any Natural Rights?*, Sections I & II, pp.282-286

09/29 Anthology: Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously*; Anthology: Shue, *Basic Rights*, pp.302-308 & 312-313 (meaning you may skip the sections *The Generality... & Subsistence Duties*)

FIRST ESSAY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED FIFTH QUIZ

Week 7 – Liberalism

10/04 Justice: John Rawls (*Chapter 6*); Reader: Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*

10/06 Reader: Rawls, *Political Liberalism*; Sandel, "Political Liberalism" SIXTH QUIZ

Week 8 – Libertarianism

10/11 Anthology: Nozick, *Distributive Justice*; Reader: Locke (excerpts)

10/13 Justice: *Libertarianism (Chapter 3)* SEVENTH QUIZ

(Short) **Week 9 – Markets**

10/18 Justice: *Markets and Morals (Chapter 4)*; Reader: Chapter 5 (excerpts) FIRST ESSAY DUE

10/20 FALL RECESS – NO CLASS

Week 10 – Merit and Desert

10/25 Justice: Ch.8 *Aristotle*; Reader: *Chapter 11*; Reader: Aristotle (excerpts)

10/27 MIDTERM EXAM

Week 11 – **Democracy**

11/01 Anthology: Dahl, *Procedural Democracy*; Habermas, *The Public Sphere*

11/03 Reader: Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent*; Anthology: Sunstein, *Preferences and Politics*

SECOND ESSAY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED EIGHTS QUIZ

Week 12 – **Community**

11/08 Justice: *Dilemmas of Loyalty (Chapter 9)*, Reader: MacIntyre, *After Virtue*

11/10 Anthology: Sandel, *The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self*; Anthology: Taylor, *Invoking Civil Society* NINTH QUIZ

Week 13 – **Difference**

11/15 Anthology: Phillips, *Dealing with Difference*; Anthology: Young, *Polity and Group Difference*, pp.248-252, introduction and section I.

11/17 Anthology: Young, *Polity and Group Difference*, pp.252-262, sections II & III; Anthology: Kymlicka, *Justice and Minority Rights* TENTH QUIZ

(Short) Week 14 – **The Common Good**

11/22 Justice: *Justice and the Common Good (Chapter 10)*

SECOND ESSAY DUE

11/24 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

Week 15 – **Injustice**

11/29 Anthology: Waldron, *Superseding Historic Injustice*

12/01 Justice: *Arguing Affirmative Action (Chapter 7)*; Anthology: Wasserstrom, *Racism, Sexism, and Preferential Treatment: An Approach to the Topics*

(Short) Week 16

12/06 LAST CLASS

12/13 FINAL EXAM (4-7 p.m.)