

Justice and Civil Society
LDST 210
Spring 2022
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Craig T. Kocher
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Phone: 289-8500 (office)
Office hours: by appointment
Class meeting time Monday and Wednesday, 3:00-4:15pm. Location: Jepson 102

Purpose

This course is shaped by the following three foundational questions:

- 1) What is justice?
- 2) What is justice in society?
- 3) What does justice mean to me?

Together we will explore ancient and modern theories of justice as they relate to society. Readings will focus on the nature of civil society, theories of personal and communal expressions of justice, and social and moral analysis of significant challenges facing contemporary society, with a particular emphasis on Richmond, Virginia.

This course includes a Community-Based-Learning (CBL) component in which students engage with the lived experience of social deprivation through a community organization in the Richmond region. The partnerships will culminate in a symposium to be held near the end of the fall semester. More details about the partnerships and resulting group projects will be shared in class.

Learning Objectives

In seeking to answer the three foundational questions, the course shall enable the students to meet these objectives:

- explore the relationship between justice and contemporary society;
- analyze social challenges in light of different theories of justice;
- learn from and with others of different backgrounds and beliefs;
- develop relationships across lines of difference within a community-based organization;
- discern and develop personal values and goals;
- reflect on career and personal opportunities to advance justice in society.

Required Texts

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption
Bryan Stevenson

Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?
Michael Sandel

Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis
Robert Putnam

When They Call You a Terrorist: A Black Lives Matter Memoir
Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele

Other Readings

All other readings are on blackboard.

Graded work (1000 points total)

- Class participation: 150 points
The three journal entries and the community based project will be considered in the participation grade.
- Four reading quizzes: 100 points (25 points each)
- Presentation: 150 points
- Mid-term paper: 250 points
- Final paper: 350 points

Graded work defined

- **Class participation:** This means attending class prepared and alert. High marks will be given to students who engage thoughtfully and regularly with the readings, the content of the lectures, and the reflections of their peers. Two journal entries will be included in the class participation grade. No electronics allowed (computers, tablets, phones) unless required for learning accommodations. Drinks are allowed in class; food is not. Students should use the bathroom ahead of class time so as not to disrupt the chemistry of the class. Students are expected to be in class unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor beforehand.
- **Reading quizzes:** The course readings are central to the learning goals of the class. There will be four pop quizzes throughout the semester to ensure students are reading and comprehending the material.
- **Class presentation:** Each student will make a 10 minute presentation to the class on the content of your final paper. The presentation prompt is included in the syllabus. Higher grades will be given to presentations that show clarity, creativity, and preparation.

- **Mid-term paper:** The paper should follow the format for papers in the syllabus and be emailed to the instructor before class on March 2. See the assignment prompt on page 7 of the syllabus.
- **Final paper:** The paper should follow the format for papers in the syllabus and be emailed to the instructor by 5:00pm on April 28. See the assignment prompt on page 8 of the syllabus.
- **Community Based Project:** Small groups of students will work in partnership with a community organization in the Richmond region which is focused either on education or mass incarceration. The projects will include a symposium hosted by the Jepson School later in the semester. Further details will be provided in class.

The mid-term paper and final paper should be organized as follows. The organization also serves as a pattern for the response paper and journal entries, though word limitation for those assignments will necessitate significant focus from the author.

1. *Format.* Please type the paper double-spaced, in Times New Roman font size 12, on one side of the paper only, with one inch margins all the way around. Page numbers should be at the bottom center.
2. *Title.* Think carefully about how your title communicates the argument of the paper in an attractive way, and whether you want to use a subtitle. The title, name of course, word count, and your name should be on a cover sheet.
3. *Introduction.* Write this after you have written your paper, so that it genuinely introduces:
 - the argument that follows
 - the specific ways in which you are narrowing your subject down to a manageable size
 - the specific terms you are using that need some definition
 - the introduction should not take up more than 5% of a paper of this kind. One or two paragraphs should do it. The introduction for the response papers and journal entries may be only a couple of sentences.
4. *Main body of the paper.* A sequence of subheadings that divide the paper into logical, roughly even-length sections reassures the professor that the argument has been planned and reasoned carefully before being written.
5. *Conclusion.* Should be very short and summarize main findings.

Grading Standards:

These standards have been articulated by Jepson faculty members and serve as a helpful guide for students preparing papers.

“A” work is well-written, well-argued, and thoroughly conversant with the source material, containing no major inaccuracies or contradictions, and illustrating subtlety and nuance of argument. “A” papers consist of interesting, substantial thoughts well-packaged in technically proficient writing.

“B” work attempts to forward an argument and shows good familiarity with and understanding of the source material, and is generally well-written. There are generally two genres of “B” work: papers that have some of the qualities of an “A” paper, but also contain serious flaws; and

papers that contain no serious flaws, but also lack originality or depth of perceptiveness, or simply fail to be persuasive.

“C” work makes an attempt to complete an assignment but contains substantial flaws, either of writing quality, inadequate comprehension of the material, unsupported arguments, and/or logically contradictory or implausible arguments.

“D” and “F” work refers to papers that are seriously inadequate and fail to meet the basic requirements of the assignment.

Late Paper Policy: Papers, journals, and presentation material should be emailed to the instructor prior to the beginning of the class period when they are due. Papers and journal entries should be emailed as a PDF. Students will receive a one letter grade penalty for every day an assignment is late.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to be in class unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Unexcused absences will negatively impact the student’s final grade.

The Honor System: The Jepson School supports and adheres to the provisions of the Honor System as sanctioned by the School of Arts and Sciences. All work should be your own. A violation of the Honor System may result in a failing grade for the course.

Outline of Study

M January 10 Course Introduction

W January 12 Theories of Justice
Justice, chapter 1-2

M January 17 – No class in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday

W January 19 Theories of Justice
Justice, chapters 3-4

M January 24 – Theories of Justice
Justice, chapters 5-6

W January 26 – Educational Disparities and Theories of Justice
Five Miles Away A World Apart
Guest presenter: Dr. Ed Pruden

M January 31 RVA and Justice
Richmond’s Unhealed History (Part I)

W February 2 RVA and Justice
Richmond’s Unhealed History (Part II)

M February 7 UR and Justice – The Story of Robert Ryland

Guest presenter: Ms. Shelby Driskill

Watch video presentation on Ryland on this page:

<https://equity.richmond.edu/inclusive-history/ryland/index.html>

Read the Ryland summary report: [Robert Ryland Summary Report](#)

W February 9 UR and Justice – The Story of Douglas Southall Freeman

Guest presenter: Ms. Suzanne Slye

Watch video presentation on Freeman on this page:

<https://equity.richmond.edu/inclusive-history/freeman/index.html>

Read the Freeman summary report: [Douglas Southall Freeman Summary Report](#)

M February 14 UR and Justice

Journal 1 due

Journal Entry 1: What principles should the University of Richmond use for examining current and future names on campus buildings or other visible landmarks? How should those decisions be made and who should make them? The journal entry should be approximately 700-800 words. Be prepared to share a section of the journal entry in class. The journal should be emailed to the instructor prior to the start of class.

W February 16 Justice and Inequality

Our Kids, Chapters 1-3

Discuss mid-term paper

M February 21 Justice and Inequality

Our Kids, Chapters 4-6

W February 23 Theories of Justice

Justice, 8-10

M February 28 Justice and the Legal System

Just Mercy, Chapters 1-4

W March 2 **Mid-Term Paper Due**

Group work on Community-Based Partnerships

SPRING BREAK

M March 14 Justice and the Legal System

Just Mercy, Chapters 5-9

Discuss in-class presentations

W March 16 Justice and the Legal System

Just Mercy, Finish the Book

Watch Netflix Documentary 13th

M March 21 Healthcare Inequalities in the United States
Guest Presenter: Professor Rick Mayes
America's Racial Contract is Showing (The Atlantic)
How Racist is America (The New York Times)

W March 23 Class Reflection Session

Journal 2 Due

The journal entry should be emailed to the instructor prior to class.
Come prepared to share a section of the entry with the class.

Journal Entry 2: Write a journal entry that describes the agency with which you are working through the eyes of one of those whom it serves. The journal may reflect the thoughts and feelings of someone you observe or someone you imagine. You might consider the following questions to help shape the journal entry. Does this person consider themselves to be a full member of the community? Does this person believe he or she experiences injustice? And how? In what ways does the agency support the person seeking help? What are the barriers for inclusion? The journal should be approximately 700-800 words in length.

M March 28 Justice and Black Lives Matter
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part I

W March 30 Justice and Black Lives Matter
When They Call You a Terrorist, Part II
Discuss final papers

M April 4 Presentations

W April 6 Presentations

M April 11 Presentations

W April 13 Presentations

M April 18 Presentations

W April 20 Course Conclusion

Journal 3 Due

Community Based Learning Reflection

Journal Entry 3: Describe how you think about justice, or an aspect of justice, differently as a result of the class and community-based partnerships. Draw on a character, or key idea, from one of the readings we did this semester to inform reflections. The journal should be 700-800 words in length and emailed to the instructor prior to class. Be prepared to present a section of your journal entry to the class.

Mid-Term Paper Prompt

Choose a justice-related issue in contemporary American society such as healthcare disparities, immigration, child poverty, various forms of racial inequality, the environmental crisis, etc. You will then need to shape the issue for a particular context. For example, child poverty in Richmond, VA, or the impact of climate change on communities of color in a specific region.

The paper should include the following:

- 1) A strong thesis statement
- 2) At least four reputable sources
- 3) A summary of the four approaches to justice we have looked at in the class:

Utilitarianism
Libertarian/Rights Based
Justice as Social Contract
Virtue and the Good Life

- 4) Use one of the theories, along with your research, to articulate a potential solution to the issue you are exploring.

The paper should follow the format guidelines in the syllabus. It should be 2200-2500 words in length.

The paper should be emailed to the instructor prior to class on Wednesday, March 2.

Presentation Prompt

Each student will offer an in-class presentation of key findings related to your final paper. The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes in length and should include a thesis statement, an analysis of the organization and the justice concern it is addressing, and offer suggestions of how the organization may be more effective at fulfilling its mission. Your presentation should incorporate research to support your argument, and draw on personal experience, as well as experience with your community-based learning project, as appropriate. The presentation may incorporate images, text, and other forms of media. The date of the presentation for each student will be assigned in class.

Final Paper Prompt

Develop a systematic analysis of an organization that is addressing a specific social justice issue which you are interested in helping to solve. The social problem should be significantly different from the one you addressed in your mid-term paper. In writing the paper, you should reference your own experience – drawing attention to your interest in the issue, the course readings, at least five reputable sources beyond the scope of the class, and insights gleaned from your community-based learning experience. The paper should include strengths and weaknesses of the organization's approach to the problem and offer suggestions for how the organization may be more effective at fulfilling its mission. The paper should be 2700-3000 words in length and follow the format outlined in the syllabus.

The paper should be emailed to the instructor by 5:00pm on Wednesday, April 28.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If you experience difficulties in the class, do not hesitate to consult with your instructor. There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

Academic Skills Center (<http://asc.richmond.edu> or 289-8626) helps students assess their academic strengths and weaknesses; hone their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information processing, concentration, and related techniques; work on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encourage campus and community involvement.

Career Development Center (<http://cdc.richmond.edu/> or 289-8547) can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major, connecting with internships and learning experiences, investigating graduate and professional school options, and landing your first job. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor during your first year.

Counseling and Psychological Services (<http://caps.richmond.edu> or 289-8119) assists students in meeting academic, personal, or emotional challenges. Services include assessment, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention and related services.

Speech Center (<http://speech.richmond.edu> or 289-6409): Assists with preparation and practice in the pursuit of excellence in public expression. Recording, playback, coaching and critique sessions offered by teams of student consultants trained to assist in developing ideas, arranging key points for more effective organization, improving style and delivery, and handling multimedia aids for individual and group presentations.

Writing Center assists writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Students can schedule appointments with trained writing consultants who offer friendly critiques of written work: <http://writing.richmond.edu>

Boatwright Library Research Librarians assist students with identifying and locating the best resources for class assignments, research papers and other course projects. Librarians also assist students with questions about citing sources correctly. Students can schedule a personal research appointment, meet with librarians at the library's main service desk, email, text or IM. Link to <http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask.html> or call 289-8669.

Jepson School Common Syllabus Insert

Awarding of Credit

To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time and time spent on course-related activities.

registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html

Disability Accommodations

Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams.

disability.richmond.edu/

Honor System

The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: "I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."

studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/the-honor-code.html

Religious Observance

Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance.

registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html

Addressing Microaggressions on Campus

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.¹ Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups.² Furthermore, both students and faculty that are exposed to microaggressions more often are more likely to have depressive symptoms and negative affect (a negative view of the world).³ A comfortable and productive environment where meaningful learning happens can be collectively created through actions, words, or environmental cues that promote the inclusion and success of marginalized members, recognizing their embodied identity, validating their realities,

resisting sexism, ableism, and racism.⁴

The University of Richmond is committed to building an inclusive community. To this end, the Student Center for Equity and Inclusion (SCEI) was created in 2021 and offers ongoing support and assistance for a diverse student body.⁵ With this in mind, as a community member at the University of Richmond, I pledge to address microaggressions in the classroom by holding myself, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

¹Sue, S., Zane, N., Nagayama Hall, G. C., & Berger, L. K. (2009). The Case for Cultural Competency in Psychotherapeutic Interventions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 525–548. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651>

²Bergom, I., Wright, M.C., Brown, M.K. and Brooks, M. (2011), Promoting college student development through collaborative learning: A case study of *hevruta*. *About Campus*, 15: 19-25. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20044>

³Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The Impact of Racial Microaggressions on Mental Health: Counseling Implications for Clients of Color. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(1), 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00130.x>

⁴Rolón-Dow, R. (2019). Stories of Microaggressions and Microaffirmation: A Framework for Understanding Campus Racial Climate. *NCID Currents*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.106>

⁵ <https://inclusion.richmond.edu/>

*Updated 8/11/2021