Syllabus: Justice and Civil Society

Instructor: Javier Hidalgo
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Office Hours: Thursday, 2-4pm
Class Meeting Time: 3:00pm to 4:15pm, Monday and Wednesday
Class Location: Jepson 107

Course Description:

Here is the official description of the course:

The Jepson School’s Justice and Civil Society course explores the meaning and practice of justice in contemporary society and gives students an opportunity to apply what they have learned. Students read about and debate theories of justice and study poverty and other socio-economic problems, and then serve populations in need by volunteering in nonprofit organizations throughout Greater Richmond.

My section of this course will focus on the ethical aspects of contemporary social problems. The aim is to enable students to become more articulate and sophisticated with respect to their own judgments about public moral controversies. We will consider how each of us would resolve – or at least think clearly about – ethical controversies, especially as they relate to social problems in the United States. In the first half of the course, we will focus on evaluating different major theories of justice, particularly utilitarianism, liberal egalitarianism, and libertarianism. In the second half of the course, we will focus on four general issues: gender and justice, racial justice, criminal justice and the war on drugs, and immigration.

General Course Requirements/Expectations

1. **You must complete a service requirement for this class. To satisfy this requirement, you must do the following:**
   a. You must complete 24 hours of community service at an approved site and attend the Justice Course Orientation Session.
   b. You must attend an off-campus field trip to visit to the Richmond City Jail.
   c. You must complete 4 hours of riding along with the Richmond Police Department.
2. You must attend every class session and come prepared to discuss the readings.
3. You may use laptops in class, but please do not use your laptops for anything other than material that is relevant to the class.
4. Please try to keep the bathroom breaks during class to a minimum.
5. I can only offer make up exams in cases of extreme duress like documented medical/personal emergencies and/or religious observance.
Assignments and Grades:

1. Class Participation and Attendance: 15% of final grade.
   a. You are expected to come to class prepared to participate. This means you will have done the reading and you will have thought critically about the material. Your participation grade will depend on whether (1) you participate in the discussion and on (2) the quality of your participation.
   b. You must attend every class session. I will lower your final grade by 2 percent for every unexcused absence.

2. Service Learning Component: 20% of final grade.
   a. Service-Learning Contract. You must turn in the contract to Associate Dean Kerstin Soderlund (ksoderlu@richmond.edu).
   b. Field Supervisor Evaluation. I will use this evaluation to assess the quality of service hours, responsibility, and initiative shown at the site of service.
   c. Weekly Journal Entries. You need to make a weekly entry in an online journal on blackboard. Each entry should be at least 150 words (one paragraph) and you are encouraged to write longer entries. You should summarize your experience with community service or connect the readings or class discussions to your community service. If you did not complete any hours of community service during the week, you should comment on the readings or class discussion. Weekly entries will be due every Saturday at 5pm. Your first journal entry is due on January 26th.
   d. Attendance. You will also be graded on whether you completed your service hours and attended all of the required events.

3. Two essays: 40% of final grade (the essays are worth 20% each).
   a. Please email me your essays at hidalgoj@gmail.com by 5pm on the day that the essay is due.
   b. These essays will be approximately 1500 words long.
   c. If you turn in your paper late, I will immediately drop it by 1/3 of a grade. I will then continue to drop your grade by 1/3 for every two days that pass.
   d. Once you receive your grade on an essay, I will allow you to revise and resubmit your essay in light of my comments. I will then re-grade your essay. If your essay has significantly improved, then I will raise your grade on the essay by 1/3 of a grade (for example, you can go from a B to a B+). But I reserve the option of lowering your grade by 1/3 as well if the quality of your resubmitted essay is significantly worse.

4. Final Exam: 25% of final grade.
   a. There will be a final exam. The final exam will consist in short-answer questions about the readings and an essay question.
   b. The final exam will be on May 4th, 9am-12pm.

My grading follows the standard scale:

- 97-100: A+
- 93-96: A
- 90-92: A-
A Note About the Reading and Required Texts:
Almost all of the readings will be available on blackboard. The only exceptions are:


These books will be available at the university bookstore.

Week 1: Introduction

January 14th: Introduction
- Hugh LaFollette, “Reading Philosophy.”

January 16th: Moral Reasoning and Poverty
- Peter Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” *Philosophy and Public Affairs*.

Week 2: Utilitarianism

January 21st: Classical Utilitarianism

January 23rd: Objections to Utilitarianism
- Bernard Williams, “Consequentialism and Integrity” pp. 20-50.

Week 3: Liberal Egalitarianism

January 28th: The Original Position

January 30th: Rawls on Equality and Political Economy
Week 4: Equality, Poverty, and Public Policy

February 4th: Education

February 6th: The Lives of the Poor

Week 5: Libertarianism

February 11th: Redistribution and Poverty

February 13th: Libertarianism and Social Justice
  - Jason Brennan, *Libertarianism*, chapters 1, 6, and 7.

Week 6: Markets and Justice

February 18th: Work and Justice

February 20th: School Choice
  - Milton & Rose Friedman, “What’s Wrong With Our Schools?” in *Free To Choose*.

February 22nd:
  - First Paper Due at 5pm.

Week 7: Gender

February 25th:
  - Susan Okin, “Sexual Orientation, Gender, and Families: Dichotomizing Differences” *Hyptia*.

February 27th: Markets in Bodily Services

Week 8: Sexual Violence and Discrimination
March 4th: Sexual Violence and Inequality
- Lois Pineau, “Date Rape” *Law and Philosophy*.

March 6th: Discrimination

Week 9: Spring Break!

March 9th: No class.

March 13th: No class.

Week 10: Discrimination and Affirmative Action

March 18th:
- Judith Thomson, “Preferential Hiring” *Philosophy & Public Affairs*.

March 20th:

Week 11: Race and Segregation

March 25th:
- Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, chapters 2, 3, 4.

March 27th:

Week 12: Race, Policing, and Criminal Justice

April 1st:

April 3rd:
Stephen Nathanson, “Does it Matter if the Death Penalty is Arbitrarily Administered?” *Philosophy & Public Affairs.*

**April 5th:**
- Second Paper Due at 5pm.

**Week 13: The War on Drugs**

**April 8th:**
- Douglas Husak, *The Legalization of Drugs,* pp. 41-95.

**April 11th:**

**Week 14: Immigration**

**April 15th:**

**April 17th:**

**Week 15: Immigration and Review**

**April 22nd:**
- Michael Huemer, “Is There a Right to Immigrate?” *Social Theory and Practice.*

**April 24th:**
- Review

**Final Exam Date:** May 4th, 9am-12pm.