Justice and Civil Society  
LDST 205-02  
Spring 2018  
Course Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Craig T. Kocher  
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Phone: 289-8500 (office)  
Office hours: by appointment  
Class meeting time Tuesday and Thursday, 12:00pm – 1:15pm. Location: Jepson 107

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 for 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.

This course includes a CBL (community-based-learning) component in which students engage with the lived experience of social deprivation within an approved site in the city of Richmond or the immediate surrounding area. The CBL component is designed to help students integrate what they are learning in class with the practical, hands-on experience of working in the midst of social inequality while seeking to advance the mission of a particular non-profit institution. The CBL component gives students an opportunity to develop relationships with people of difference beyond the University; integrate their classroom experience with life beyond; reflect on the intentions, risks, and possibilities of social engagement; develop practical skills; and further their own values, interests, and career aspirations.

Thus, the course offers a purposely broad and diverse set of learning experiences, putting students into conversation with the readings, one another, the instructor, and their CBL activity in seeking to discern the answers to the three foundational questions of the course.

The course is divided between 45 hours of class time, 24 hours of community-based learning, and 4 hours of social observation. The 24 hours of service component should:
• Immerse students in a significant area of social need in a manner that permits them to learn from those in need and those working to support them.
• Involve students in direct, face-to-face contact with the person, people, or group being served.
• Take students off campus and, preferably, among people new and unfamiliar.
• Take place under the auspices of an organization with a supervisor committed and able to provide the student with professional guidance, counsel, support, and evaluation.

Dr. Kerstin Soderlund, associate dean in the Jepson School, is the contact for administering the CBL and social observation components of the course. Her email address is: ksoderlu@richmond.edu.

Learning Objectives

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

• learn about the relationship between justice, contemporary society, and hands-on engagement;
• analyze social challenges in light of different theories of justice;
• understand the experience of others in the context of social structures;
• develop relationships across lines of difference within a community-based non-profit;
• explore and develop personal values and goals;
• reflect on career and personal opportunities to advance justice in society.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and active participation in each class session.
2. Completion of 24 hours of service in an approved site within the city of Richmond or the immediate surroundings.
3. Four additional hours of social observation.
4. Attendance at two evening justice learning opportunities, detailed in the schedule below.

Required Texts (available for purchase in the UR book store)

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption
Bryan Stevenson

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City
Matthew Desmond

Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide
Nicholas Kristoff and Sherly WuDunn

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

Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World
Paul Farmer and Tracy Kidder

Graded work (1000 points total)

- Class participation: 100 points
- Two journal entries: 100 points (50 points each)
- Class Presentation: 50 points
- Reading quizzes: 100 points (20 points each)
- Mid-term paper: 300 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. 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 allowed one unexcused absence and then will be penalized a half letter grade for each additional unexcused absence.**

- **Community-based learning component and journal**: The community-based learning experience is a significant component of the class. All 24 hours are required. Two journal entries are also required. The first one will also be presented to the class. The journal entries should integrate the lived experience of service, some element of the readings and lectures, and personal introspection. Each journal entry should be 2-3 pages. The specific topics and due dates are incorporated below.

- **Reading quizzes**: The course readings are central to the learning goals of the class. There will be five pop quizzes throughout the semester to ensure students are reading and comprehending the material. Students who are absent from class on the day of a quiz will not be able to make it up.

- **Class presentation**: Working in teams of two, students will present the content of one reading to the rest of the class. More details of this assignment will be given in class.

- **Mid-term paper**: A 7-8 page paper following the format below will be due in class on March 15.

- **Final paper**: A 9-10 page paper following the format below will be due by May 3 at 5pm.
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, 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:** Hardcopies of all papers should be turned in at the beginning of the class period listed on the syllabus. Students will receive a one letter grade penalty for every day the paper is late.

**Attendance Policy:** Each student is allowed one unexcused absence. Further absences or tardiness will result in a lowered grade. Students should use the restroom before or after class.

**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.

**Religious Observance Policy:** Students needing to miss class because of religious observance should contact me within the first two weeks of the semester to discuss the absence. The University’s full religious observance policy may be found here: [http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/religiousobsy.html](http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/religiousobsy.html)

**Outline of Study**

**T January 16** Course Introduction

**Th January 18** Theories of Justice
Justice, chapter 1-2

**T January Theories of Justice**
Justice, chapters 3-4

**W January 24** Attend the University’s MLK commemoration with Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney at 5:30pm in Camp Concert Hall.

**Th January 25** *Five Miles Away A World Apart* (Reading will be emailed to you).

**M January 29** Attend Jepson Leadership forum lecture by Robert Putnam. *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis.* Cannon Memorial Chapel. The talk begins promptly at 7 pm. Important: you need to arrive no later than 6:45pm to claim your ticket. Unclaimed tickets after 6:45pm will be released to people on the wait list. When you arrive at the event tell the “ticket takers” that you are a student in Dr. Kocher’s class.

**T January 30** No Class

**Th February 1** Theories of Justice
Justice, chapters 5-6
T February 6 Healthcare and Poverty
Mountains Beyond Mountains, pgs. 1-121

Th February 8 Healthcare and Poverty
Mountains Beyond Mountains, pgs. 123-178

T February 13 Introduction to library resources with Librarian Lucretia McCulley
Mountains Beyond Mountains, finish the book

Th February 15 Theories of Justice
Justice, chapters 8-10

T February 20 Reflection session on CBL sites
Just Mercy, introduction and chapters 1-4

Th February 22 Justice and the Legal System
Just Mercy, chapters 5-9

T February 27 Justice and the Legal System
Just Mercy, chapters 10-13

Th March 1 Justice and the Legal System
Just Mercy, chapters 14-16 and epilogue

T March 6 Justice and the Legal System
Watch Netflix Documentary “13th”

Th March 8 Class reflection session on CBL sites.

Mid-Term Paper Due: See assignment on page 8 in the syllabus.

T March 13 Spring Break (No Class)

Th March 15 Spring Break (No Class)

T March 20 Justice and Loyalty
Justice, chapters 10-12

Th March 22 Student presentations of Journal 1

Journal Entry #1: Write a journal entry that describes the agency in which you work through the eyes of one of those whom it serves. Write this entry in the first person. It may reflect the thoughts and feelings of someone you observe or someone you invent based on various persons you have met. Does this person consider himself or herself to be a full member of the community? Does this person believe he or she experiences injustice?
T March 27 **Student presentations of Journal 1**

Th March 29 Justice, poverty, and profit
Evicted introduction and Part 1

T April 3 Justice, poverty, and profit
Evicted Part 2

Th April 5 Justice, poverty, and profit
Evicted Part 3 and epilogue

T April 10 Justice around the world
Half the Sky, pgs. 1-69.

Th April 12 Justice around the world
Half the Sky, pgs. 70-148

T April 17 Read “Night” by Elie Weisel

Visit the Virginia Holocaust Museum and have dinner with Holocaust Survivors. The bus will leave campus at 5pm and return at approximately 9pm.

Th April 19 No Class

T April 24 Justice Around the World
Finish Half the Sky

Th April 26 Class Reflection on CBL Sites

**Journal Entry #2 Due:** Describe how you changed as a result of your community-based learning experience. Draw on one of the characters from a book we read this semester to inform your own experience in service to others.

**Final Paper is due by 5pm on Thursday, May 3.** A hardcopy of the paper should be turned in to my office in the Wilton Center located between the commons and the chapel. See assignment on page 8 in the syllabus.
Mid-Term and Final Paper Assignments

Mid-Term Paper
Choose one of the following justice-related issues in contemporary American society:

1) Healthcare  
2) Education  
3) Mass Incarceration

The paper should include the following:

1) A strong thesis statement

2) At least four reputable academic research 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.

The paper should follow the format guidelines in the syllabus. It should be 7-8 pages in length.

The paper is due in class on March 8.

Final Paper

Develop a systematic analysis of the specific social problem your service work has been addressing. You should draw on your own experience, conversations with those you have been working alongside throughout the semester, the course readings, and at least five outside reputable published sources to support your analysis.

The paper should be 8-10 pages in length and follow the format outlined in the syllabus. The paper should have a clear thesis statement and a well-developed argument.

The paper is due by 5pm on Thursday, May 3 to my office in the Wilton Center located between the Chapel and the Commons.

Jepson School of Leadership Studies

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

Other Helpful University of Richmond Resources:

**Academic Skills Center** ([http://asc.richmond.edu](http://asc.richmond.edu), 289-8626 or 289-8956): Assists students in assessing their academic strengths and weaknesses; honing their academic skills through teaching effective test preparation, critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, and related techniques; working on specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.); and encouraging campus and community involvement.

**Career Services** ([http://careerservices.richmond.edu/](http://careerservices.richmond.edu/) or 289-8547): Can assist you in exploring your interests and abilities, choosing a major or course of study, connecting with internships and jobs, and investigating graduate and professional school options. We encourage you to schedule an appointment with a career advisor early in your time at UR.

**Counseling and Psychological Services** ([http://wellness.richmond.edu/offices/caps/](http://wellness.richmond.edu/offices/caps/) or 289-8119): Assists currently enrolled, full-time, degree-seeking students in improving their mental health and well-being, and in handling challenges that may impede their growth and development. Services include short-term counseling and psychotherapy, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

**Speech Center** ([http://speech.richmond.edu](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** ([http://writing.richmond.edu](http://writing.richmond.edu) or 289-8263): 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.

**Boatwright Library Research Librarians** ([http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/](http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/) or 289-8876): Research librarians assist students with identifying and locating resources for class assignments, research papers and other course presentations.