

**LDST 210 01 (CRN #22953) JUSTICE AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
SPRING 2026 - COURSE SYLLABUS**

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Office hours: By appointment

Class meeting time and location: *Section 04* Monday, Wednesday 12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.  
Jepson 107

### **INTRODUCTION**

This course explores justice and civility as the topics relate to contemporary public education and its impact on a democratic society. Students will tackle readings on the nature of civil society and theories of justice. Combining an intellectual focus on social needs and justice combined with a community-based learning component, the course encourages students to develop their understanding of “leadership as service to society.” The course reflects the goals for the Jepson School: to educate students *for* and *about* leadership and to “motivate students to seek positions of leadership as a vehicle for service.”

Specifically, this course will challenge you to think about the role of justice and society in a metropolitan area. During the first half of the semester, we will read and think about theories of justice as it pertains to the metropolis. This will be a broad overview of theories of justice and civility. This thinking and reflection will provide us with a foundation for our understanding of the complexity of metropolitan areas in the U.S. We will then examine a brief history and get an overview of the metropolitan area of Richmond, particularly the City of Richmond. The metro area of Richmond is a microcosm of what is happening across the U.S. in terms of the idea of a city and urban policies and issues. (In fact, many scholars write about metropolitan Richmond because it serves as a strong case study.) The second half the course will examine the changing demographics, specifically poverty, race, culture, and language, in our metropolitan areas. We will examine the impact of this change in three important areas: education, housing and juvenile justice.

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course is a staple of the Jepson School’s curriculum because it thinks about the fundamental questions of social justice and civil society and focuses on the following four learning objectives:

- examine various theoretical perspectives on justice and what a just society entails, particularly for metropolitan areas, drawing on philosophical, historical and contemporary texts;
- understand and analyze the socio-economic structure of the present-day metropolitan areas in the United States, including economic inequality, poverty, racial disparities, immigration, language, culture and how these contribute to systems of power and privilege;
- consider of theories of justice in a metropolitan area and the inequities in socio-economic structures in education, juvenile justice, and housing in metro-Richmond, Virginia;
- and overall, develop different perspectives on how to advance justice within the context of contemporary American society.

### **SERVICE**

This course aims to foster reflective practice for students—by which persons do something and

reflect upon it to learn from it—in turn learning about themselves and their actions. This requires that students to apply critical thinking skills while at a service site and in class and that then consider their efforts in light of careful social and moral analysis. Service sites have been organized into three areas of study in the metropolitan Richmond area: education, housing, and juvenile justice. This engagement is meant to spur reflection, thinking and understanding. Overall, students are expected to visit and engage in the service site for approximately 10 hours for the semester.

Your service in the community should:

- engage you in a significant area of study of metropolitan Richmond in a manner that permits you to learn from those who have experienced separation and challenges from society;
- involve you in direct, face-to-face contact in a community/organization in the metropolitan Richmond area;
- take you off campus to engage with people and organizations that might be unfamiliar or different than your backgrounds and experiences;
- provide you with reflection and discernment on the academic components related to justice and civil society in a metropolitan area;
- and, finally, expand your thoughts and ideas on the role of equity (and inequity) in living and studying in a metropolitan area, such as Richmond, and in turn the U.S.

The service sites for this course are situated across the metropolitan Richmond area:

#### **Education**

- Southampton Elementary School, 3333 Cheverly Road, Richmond
- Youth Life Foundation, 1704 Laburnum Ave, Richmond

#### **Housing**

- Housing Families First, 3900 Nine Mile Road, Richmond

#### **Juvenile Justice**

- Henrico Juvenile Detention Home, 4201 E. Parham Road, Henrico, VA

The class will be broken up into three groups with approximately six students in each of the areas of education, housing and juvenile justice.

### **GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

This course fulfills the University's General Education Learning Outcomes for Power, Equity, Identity and Culture (IFPE) for the Integrated Focus Area by:

- Students will analyze the origins and dynamics of structural inequities and power imbalances in specific societal contexts.
- Students will analyze how attitudes, experiences, and/or beliefs are shaped both by context and/or cultural identity.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of inequities and power imbalances on a society, and the historical or current efforts, successful and unsuccessful, used to reduce such effects.

### **COURSE POLICIES AND STANDARDS**

The following class policies are established for the purpose of allowing students enrolled in leadership courses to establish practices that demonstrate mature and responsible behavior toward their work and each other.

### **Class and Event Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation in class and group activities/meetings are very serious components of the class. Class attendance **is required**. More than three unexcused absences will result in a half grade reduction for each session missed. Student absences due to illness or University-required quarantine are excused absences and will not be penalized. Students who are sick should not attend class and will not be required to provide formal documentation from a health care provider. In the event of excused absences, the instructor will support students to maintain progress toward the course learning goals. Please communicate with me about any extended absence – I want to make sure I am supporting you and assisting in any way possible. In addition, unless there are good reasons, lateness will not be tolerated.

### **Technology**

Laptops are acceptable in class. ***Smartphones are a distraction and will need to be put away during class and not checked until after class.***

### **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](https://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

### **Honor Code**

Every piece of written work presented by individual students must have the honor pledge and the student's signature on it. The pledge is, ***"I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."***

### **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 (<https://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religious-observance.html>.)

### **AI tools**

The use of AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is permitted in this course with certain tasks and with attribution: You may use AI platforms to help prepare for assignments and projects (i.e. to help with brainstorming ideas). You may also use AI tools to help revise and edit your work (i.e. to help identify any flaws in reasoning, spot confusing or underdeveloped paragraphs, or to fix citations). Using any AI tools in any other manner outside of these specified tasks without explicit permission is a form of academic dishonesty and a violation of the UR Honor Code. If you are unsure about whether something may be plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please contact me to discuss the issue before the assignment is due.

If you choose to use AI tools for the tasks specified above, you must do so with caution and proper citation. Remember AI tools have flaws and their use is not a replacement for your own thinking and research. When submitting each assignment, you must clearly attribute what part(s) of the assignment was generated by the AI tool. All statements containing AI-generated text must appear in a different colored font and use an in-text parenthetical citation in APA style.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

There are also other resources that can support you in your efforts to meet course requirements.

**Academic Skills Center** ([asc.richmond.edu](http://asc.richmond.edu)): Academic coaches assist students in assessing and developing their academic and life-skills (e.g., critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, test preparation, time management, stress management, etc.). Peer tutors offer assistance in specific subject areas (e.g., calculus, chemistry, accounting, etc.) and will be available for appointments in-person and virtually. Peer tutors are listed on the ASC website. **Email Roger Mancastroppa** ([rmancast@richmond.edu](mailto:rmancast@richmond.edu)) **and Hope Walton** ([hw Walton@richmond.edu](mailto:hw Walton@richmond.edu)) **for coaching appointments in academic and life skills.**

**Boatwright Library Research Librarians:** ([library.richmond.edu/help/ask/](http://library.richmond.edu/help/ask/) or 289-8876): Research librarians help students with all steps of their research, from identifying or narrowing a topic, to locating, accessing, evaluating, and citing information resources. Librarians support students in their classes across the curriculum and provide individual appointments, class library instruction, tutorials, and [research guides](http://libguides.richmond.edu) ([libguides.richmond.edu](http://libguides.richmond.edu)). Students can [contact an individual librarian](http://library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html) ([library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html](http://library.richmond.edu/help/liaison-librarians.html)) or ASK a librarian for help via email ([library@richmond.edu](mailto:library@richmond.edu)), text (804-277-9ASK), or [chat](http://library.richmond.edu/chat.html) ([library.richmond.edu/chat.html](http://library.richmond.edu/chat.html)).

**Career Services:** ([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** ([caps.richmond.edu](http://caps.richmond.edu) 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 brief consultations, short-term counseling and psychotherapy, skills-building classes, crisis intervention, psychiatric consultation, and related services.

**Disability Services** ([disability.richmond.edu](http://disability.richmond.edu)) The Office of Disability Services works to ensure that qualified students with a disability (whether incoming or current) are provided with reasonable accommodations that enable students to participate fully in activities, programs, services and benefits provided to all students. The University of Richmond's office of Disability Services strives to ensure that students with disabilities and/or temporary conditions (i.e., concussions & injuries) are provided opportunity for full participation and equal access. Students who are approved for academic accommodations must complete the following steps to implement their accommodations in each class:

- 1) Submit their Disability Accommodation Notice (DAN) to each of their professors via the Disability Services Student Portal available at this link: [sl.richmond.edu/be](http://sl.richmond.edu/be).
  - 2) Request a meeting with each professor to create an accommodation implementation plan.
- Disability Services is available to assist, as needed.

It is important to complete these steps as soon as possible because accommodations are never retroactive, and professors are permitted a reasonable amount of time for implementation.

**Speech Center** ([speech.richmond.edu](http://speech.richmond.edu) or 287-6409): 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. Remote practice sessions can be arranged; we look forward to meeting your public speaking needs.

**Writing Center** ([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.

## COURSE REQUIRED READINGS

The classroom work in this course will center on the reading assignments. Since the course involves as much discussion as possible, and with minimum lecturing, it is **IMPERATIVE** that you complete the assigned readings prior to each class. *To be successful in this course you should devote 10 – 14 hours in class, reading and studying the material, and preparing assignments.*

### Texts:

Davidson, D. (2023). *Justice and cities: Metro morals*. New York, NY: Routledge. (online in Library)

McGhee, H. (2022). *The sum of us: What racism costs everyone and how we can prosper together*. New York, NY: One World. (online in Library)

### Articles:

You can access other readings, labeled Bb, under the Course Document section on the **Blackboard website**.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments are designed to create a framework in which students are treated fairly and equally. Please remember that critical analysis of the assigned readings is necessary. The readings, articles, and ideas from the course will need to be incorporated into each assignment. Please utilize the *American Psychological Association (APA)* style in referencing material or other referencing sources such as the MLA or Chicago Style. **Every quote and non-original thought that is written by a student should have a reference citation.**

The assignments for this class are:

### Chapter Response and Questions (10%)

Each student will be responsible for one chapter response and questions. Chapter responses are brief overview of reading and questions for discussion in advance of class. I will be evaluating these for engagement and completion. These are due on Blackboard by 10 am prior to each class. Here is a list the list of students and due date for the assignment:

Jan. 26	Jan. 28	Feb. 2	Feb. 4	Feb. 9	Feb. 11
Douglas	Bernhardt	Bortz	Clifford	Ewald	Fowler
Conti	Gaytan Lopez	Hughes	Heruy	Kloninger	Lewis
Jackson	Witkop	Strauss	Suero	Ysrael	Reyes Martinez

### Mid-term Examination (20%)

There will be an in-class mid-term examination of all the material for the first half of the class. The midterm date is Wednesday, March 4.

### Group Service Site Presentation and Application (10%)

This will be a presentation on your service site and what you are learning about the organization and its relationship to the ideas in the book, *The Sum of Us*.

Unpacking the Census Group Project (20%)

In a culminating activity, groups will be working with students associated with the Spatial Analysis Lab on a project titled, Unpacking the Census. This project will entail creating a document that contains questions on and about justice and civil society for anyone using or viewing the maps from the Unpacking the Census website. More information will be handed out on the project.

Response Essay/Reflection on Service and “City as Family” (15%)

This will be a final reflection essay on your service site and the role of a just and civil society in a metropolitan area, or what might term, a “City as Family.”

Leadership (25%)

Class preparation and attendance are expected and will help determine both your experience and success in the course. We will call this leadership because it will require you to act as leaders and followers in our course community.

**COURSE GRADING**

10%	Chapter Response and Questions
20%	Mid-term Examination
10%	Group Service Site Presentation and Application to <i>The Sum of Us</i>
20%	Unpacking the Census Group Project
15%	Reflection Paper on Service and “City as Family”
25%	Leadership (Attendance, quality class participation)

*For additional information on the type of writing that is expected in this class please see the Course Grading Rubric.*

**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.<sup>1</sup> Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups.<sup>2</sup> 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).<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup>Sue, 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>

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

<sup>3</sup>Nadal, 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>

<sup>4</sup>Rolón-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>

<sup>5</sup> <https://inclusion.richmond.edu/>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1

**Mon., Jan. 12**                    **Introduction - syllabus**

**Reading:**                    There are no readings for the first day. Please review the syllabus.

**Wed., Jan. 14**                **Introduction Continued – “City as Family”**

**Reading:**                    Bb, Griffin, “Defining the Just City Beyond Black and White”  
Bb, Moeser, “The Best of Times and the Worst of Times: An Overview of Richmond”

### Week 2

**Mon., Jan. 19**                **No Class – Happy MLK Day!!!!**

**Wed., Jan. 21**                **Justice and Cities**

**Reading:**                    Davidson, Introduction

**\*Dr. Kerstin Soderlund will visit class to discuss service sites**

### Week 3

**Mon., Jan. 26**                **Utilitarianism Theories of Justice and the Metropolis**

**Reading:**                    Davidson, Chap. 2

**DUE:**                        Chapter response / questions

**Wed., Jan. 28**                **Libertarianism Theories of Justice and the Metropolis**

**Reading:**                    Davidson, Chap. 3

**DUE:**                        Chapter response / questions

### Week 4

**Mon., Feb. 2**                 **Liberalism Theories of Justice and the Metropolis**

**Reading:**                    Davidson, Chap. 4

**DUE:**                        Chapter response / questions

**Wed., Feb. 4**                **Communitarianism Theories of Justice and the Metropolis**

**Reading:**                    Davidson, Chap. 6

**DUE:**                        Chapter response / questions

Week 5

Mon., Feb. 9

Reading:

DUE:

**Conservatism Theories of Justice and the Metropolis**

Davidson, Chap. 7

Chapter response / questions

Wed., Feb. 11

Reading:

DUE

**Segregation in the Metropolis**

Davidson, Chap. 10

Chapter response / questions

Week 6

Mon., Feb. 16

Reading:

**History of a Segregated/Separate City: Case of Richmond**

Bb, Moeser and Silver, "Race, Social Stratification, and Politics: The Case of Atlanta, Memphis, and Richmond"

Wed., Feb. 18

Reading:

**Field Trip to the Black History Museum and Cultural Center**

Bb, Website of the Black History Museum and Cultural Center

Week 7

Mon., Feb. 23

Reading:

**The Role of the Suburbs in Separating/Segregating: Voting Disenfranchisement and Annexation in Metro-Richmond**

Bb, Chiles, "Annexation: The Only Answer"

Bb, Shields, "The Fight for Political Representation: The Use of the Voting Rights Act and Federal Court System by Black Plaintiffs in Henrico, VA"

Wed., Feb. 25

Reading:

Guest speaker:

**Current Segregation in the City of Richmond**Bb, Williamson, Hayter, and Howard, "The Persistence of Segregation" excerpt from *The Making of Twenty-First-Century Richmond*

Dr. Thad Williamson, Professor, Jepson School of Leadership Studies

Week 8

Mon., Mar. 2

**Catch up and review**

Bb, Chiles, "Revisioning Richmond's Past: Race, Reconciliation, and Public History in the Modern South, 1990-Present"

Wed., Mar. 4

**Midterm examination**Week 9

Mon., Mar. 9

**No Class Spring Break**

Mon., Mar. 11

**No Class Spring Break**Week 10

Mon., Mar. 16

Reading:

Guest Speaker:

**Unpacking the Census Initiative and Website Overview**

Bb, Unpacking the Census website

Mr. Jonathan Zur, President and CEO, Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities

**Wed., Mar. 18**                    **Zero Sum Hierarchy with Public Goods and the Need for a Solidarity Dividend**

**Reading:**                    McGhee, *The Sum of Us*

**Week 11**

**Mon., Mar. 23**                    **Poverty, Race, Culture, Language and Education in Metro-Richmond**

**Reading:**                    Bb, Shields, Siegel-Hawley, Bridges, et. al, “Can We Learn & Live Together 2.0: Housing and School Segregation in the Richmond Region” report  
Bb, Learn & Live website

**Wed., Mar. 25**                    **Education Service Site and the Public Good**

**Reading:**                    McGhee, *The Sum of Us*  
**DUE**                            Education service site group presentation

**Week 12**

**Mon., Mar. 30**                    **Poverty, Race, Culture Language and Juvenile Justice in Metro-Richmond**

**Reading:**                    Bb, Commonwealth Institute, “Ending the Cycle of Incarceration for Black Youth”  
Bb, Commonwealth Institute, “Smarter Choices for Virginia’s Youth and Future”  
Bb, Commonwealth Institute, “Virginia’s Criminal Legal System: 10 Truths We Need to Talk About”

**Guest Speaker:**            Levi Goren, Director of Research, Commonwealth Institute

**Wed., Apr. 1**                    **Juvenile Justice Service Site and the Public Good**

**Reading:**                    McGhee, *The Sum of Us*  
**DUE:**                            Juvenile Justice site group presentation

**Week 13**

**Mon., Apr. 6**                    **Poverty, Race, Culture, Language and Housing in Metro-Richmond**

**Reading:**                    Bb, Digital Scholarship Lab, “Redlining Richmond”  
Bb, HOME report on redlining  
Bb, Virginia Housing Alliance presentation

**Guest Speaker:**            Ms. Mariah Williams, Ph.D. student, Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs (and UR alum)

**Wed., Apr. 8**                    **Housing Service Site and the Public Good**

**Reading:**                    McGhee, *The Sum of Us*  
**DUE:**                            Housing service site group presentation

**Week 14**

**Mon., Apr. 13**                    **Unpacking the Census Project Introduction and Workday**

**Reading:**                    Bb, Blackboard Assignment page

**Wed., Apr. 15**                    **Workday on Unpacking the Census Project**

Week 15

Mon., Apr. 20

**DUE: Unpacking the Census Final Project Presentations**

Wed., Apr. 22

**DUE: Unpacking the Census Final Project Presentations**

Week 16

**DUE:**

**Reflection Paper on Service**