

Course Title : Social Justice
Course Code : SOC 321
Instructor : Dr Annie Chan, SO 218, annchan@ln.edu.hk, 2616-7204, term time office hours Wednesdays 11:30 – 1:30 Thursdays 12:30 – 2:30
Tutor : Creamy Wong, GE108, yh2wong@ln.edu.hk, 2616-7606
Class Contact Hours : 2 hours lecture, 1 hour tutorial /3 service learning hours per week

Brief Course Description : Social justice (or distributive justice) is about the ways in which valued resources are distributed in society. This is a topic of interest and importance for a wide range of academic disciplines, including sociology, social theory, political philosophy and public policy. The first half of the course will introduce students to the subject on a theoretical and conceptual level, and the second half will be concerned with the application of these theories and concepts to contemporary social issues and phenomenon such as income inequality, discrimination, and affirmative action policies.

Aims : This course aims to familiarise students with major theories of social justice in political philosophy and social theory, as well as the theoretical and practical problems involved in debates regarding social justice.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of the course, students should

1. Be able to recall and understand basic concepts, theories and perspectives on social justice in political philosophy and social theory.
2. Be able to summarize and evaluate academic texts and articles on issues of social justice
3. Be able to apply concept and theoretical perspectives on social justice to real life social issues
4. Be able to communicate verbally and in writing their own views on social justice related issues
5. Embody an intellectually informed attitude towards issues in social justice.

To achieve the above outcomes, you need to

1. Attend all lectures and read the required readings accompanying each topic.
2. Attend all tutorials, familiarize yourself with the topic of presentation or discussion each week, read the designated readings, and actively participate in all discussion
3. Commit yourself to improving your reading, writing, oral presentation and analytical skills

Course Assessment:

A. Tutorial option:

1. Tutorial presentation (15%)

- This consists of 2 parts: content (10%), presentation and discussion (5%)
- Students in the same presentation group will get the same grade for the content part only unless you request otherwise.
- Individual grades will be given to each student for presentation and discussion.

2. Comment on a presentation (15%)

- Individual grades will be given to each student in the comment group.

3. Tutorial paper (either individual or group paper) (30%)

- This is a 2000 word essay based on your tutorial presentation, and your essay must refer to the comments and discussion made during the tutorial class.
- You can opt for either handing in an individual or a group paper (marks will be the same for all group members in the latter case unless you request otherwise)

- Marking is based on: content (10%), style and originality (10%) and organization (10%).
- Your paper is due within two weeks of the presentation of the topic of your choice. The sooner you hand it in the sooner I can have it marked and returned to you.
- Late submissions will receive a 10% reduction in marks for each day after the due date (i.e. 5 days late = 50% reduction)

4. Final exam (40%)

- The final exam will take place during exam week.

B. Service learning option:

1. Service learning practicum (30%)

- This includes participation in pre-practicum workshop(s) and meetings (5%), assessment from agency co-ordinator(s) (15%), and assessment from program co-ordinator(s) (10%).

2. Reflective essay (either individual or group paper) (20%)

- This is a 2000 word essay which relates your practicum experience to a particular aspect of the course. **You should consult me before finalising your topic.**
- You can opt for either handing in an individual or a group paper (marks will be the same for all group members in the latter case unless you request otherwise).
- Marking is based on: content – this refers to the relevance of your paper to the course content (10%), style and originality (5%) and organization (10%).
- Deadline for the essay is the day of your final exam.
- Late submissions will receive 10% reduction in marks for each day after the due date (i.e. 5 days late = 50% reduction).

3. Report back seminar presentation (10%)

This will take place at the end of term, students in the same group will receive the same presentation marks unless you request otherwise.

4. Final exam (40%)

- The final exam will take place during exam week.

IMPORTANT:

- Each week's lecture outline will be placed on WebCT, no hard copies will be distributed in class. **Lecture outlines are only meant to remind you of what is covered each week – they are not substitutes for attending lectures and you will certainly need to take notes in class.** Check WebCT regularly for notices.
- Each unjustified absence from tutorials (e.g. can't come to class because of a part-time job is not a reasonable excuse) – including the first introduction class - will result in a deduction of **one sub-grade** from your final grade (e.g. B will become B-)
- If you are late for more than 20 minutes, you will be regarded as absent.
- If you are sick, you **must** provide me with a sick note (original, no photocopy) within a week.
- If you know you will be absent for a particular tutorial session, notify me **well in advance** so that alternative arrangements could be made.

- With regard to your coursework in particular, you are reminded: You must note the sources of quotations, data and general information in the essay. These sources/references should appear in alphabetical order in your list of references/bibliography.
- According to University Programme policy, plagiarism is "presentation of another person's work without proper acknowledgment of the source". Plagiarism (unattributed copying) will be heavily penalised and may attract a zero mark and disciplinary action.
- Also note that an essay which consists mostly of "cutting and pasting" from one or more sources – even if you acknowledged the sources – is unacceptable. You must use your own words and incorporate your own ideas and analysis in your paper.

Course schedule

Lectures	Dates
Introduction	21 Jan
Lecture 1	4 Feb
Lecture 2	11 Feb
Lecture 3	25 Feb
Lecture 4	4 Mar
Lecture 5	11 Mar
Lecture 6	18 Mar
Lecture 7	25 Mar
Lecture 8	1 April
Lecture 9	8 April
Lecture 10	15 April
Lecture 11	22 April
Lecture 12	29 April

Tutorials	Mon	Thur
Introduction	9 Feb	12 Feb
General discussion	16 Feb	19 Feb
Topic 1	23 Feb	26 Feb
Topic 2	2 Mar	5 Mar
Topic 3	9 Mar	12 Mar
Topic 4	16 Mar	19 Mar
Topic 5	23 Mar	26 Mar
Topic 6	30 Mar	2 April
Topic 7	6 April	9 April
Topic 8	20 April	23 April

Course content

- I. Justice: an introduction
 - The language of justice – how do we talk about justice in daily life?
 - What is social justice?
 - Concepts of justice – fairness, equality, desert, merit, right
- II. Theories of social or distributive justice
 - Utilitarianism
 - Justice as lottery
 - Justice as rights
 - Justice as desert
 - John Rawls' theory of justice
 - Marxism and social justice
- III. Discrimination and social justice
 - What is discrimination?
 - Is discrimination inevitable?
 - Policy and social justice: the case of affirmative action
- IV. Equality of opportunity and social justice
 - Measuring equal opportunity
 - Economic development and social justice: the case of social mobility
- V. Reflections on social justice
 - Personal philosophies and personal politics

Reading List (2-day reserve)

Essential

- Campbell, Tom. 2001. Justice. (2nd edition). London: Macmillan Press.
- Capeheart, Loretta and Dragan Milovanovic. 2007 Social Justice: Theories, Issues and Movements. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Dudley, William (ed.) 2005. Social Justice: Opposing Viewpoints. San Diego: Greenhaven Press.
- Fisk, Milton (ed.) 1993 . Key Concepts in Critical Theory: Justice. New Jersey: Humanity Press.
- Fleischacker, 2004. A Short History of Distributive Justice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Solomon, Robert and Mark Murphy (eds.) 1990. What is Justice? Classic and Contemporary Readings. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stewart, Robert M. (ed.) 1996. Readings in Social and Political Philosophy. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Supplementary

- Ackerman, Bruce A. 1980. Social Justice in the Liberal State. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Boucher, David and Paul Kelly (eds.) 1998. Social Justice: From Hume to Walzer. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, Gerald A. 2000. If You're an Egalitarian, how come You're so Rich? Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Goldman, Alan. 1979. Justice and Reverse Discrimination. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Goodwin, Barbara. 1992. Justice by Lottery. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Hayek, F. A. 1976. Law, Legislation and Liberty, volume II, The Mirage of Social Justice. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kukathas, Chandran and Philip Pettit. 1990. Rawls: A Theory of Justice and its Critics. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Marshall, Gordon, Adam Swift and Stephen Roberts. 1997. Against the Odds? Social Class and Social Justice in Industrial Societies. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Nozick, Robert. 1974. Anarchy, State, and Utopia. New York: Basic Books.
- Pojman, Louis and Owen McLeod (eds.) 1999. What do we Deserve? : a reader on Justice and Desert. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rawls, John. 1999. A Theory of Justice. Revised edition. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Sterba, James P. et al. 1995. Morality and Social Justice. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Tomasson, Richard F., Faye Crosby and Sharon Herzberger. 1996. Affirmative Action: The Pros and Cons of Policy and Practice. Lanham: American University Press.

Tyler, Rom R., Robert J. Boeckmann, Heather J. Smith and Yuen J. Huo. 1997. Social Justice in a Diverse Society. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Walzer, Michael. 1983. Spheres of Justice: a Defence of Pluralism and Equality. Oxford: Blackwell.