

Politics 4206G/9762: Theories of Global Justice

-

January-April 2025

Charles Jones SSC 7213, cwjones@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Monday 2:00-3:00 pm, and by appointment

From Plato to John Rawls, *justice* has been a major theme in the history of political theory. But until the 1970s it was thought to be concerned only with the relations of co-citizens within a single state. The modern debates about *global justice* began with the questioning of this assumption: why shouldn't justice focus on the relations of citizens of different states or relations between human beings regardless of citizenship? This political theory course surveys several topics in the modern global justice debates, including global poverty, the idea of international distributive justice, global inequality, compatriot priority, distributive justice and state coercion, sovereignty and human rights, the law of peoples, crime against humanity, global gender justice, immigration, and trade.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- (1) Describe competing answers to the question, 'What is global justice?', and understand the recent historical development of approaches to this question,
- (2) Identify and assess the arguments for and against specific theoretical perspectives on global justice, including cosmopolitanism, nationalism, and statism,
- (3) Understand the central arguments in debates on key topics in the field, including global poverty and inequality, crime against humanity, global gender justice, immigration, and trade.

How Your Final Mark is Determined

30%: *Participation*

35%: *First 2,000-word Essay*, double-spaced (Due by 4:00 pm on Friday February 14, 2025)

35%: *Second 2,000-word Essay*, double-spaced (Due by 4:00 pm on Monday April 7, 2025)

Participation: 30%

To be eligible for this portion of the final grade, students must attend all classes except when there are medical or compassionate reasons for absence. **Students will be provided with a list of questions to discuss and will be expected to attend with pre-written answers, ready to talk about their answers.**

Students will receive a mark that reflects their **contributions to seminar discussion** – average contributions will receive marks that translate into the B range, excellent contributions will receive marks that translate into the A or A+ range. I expect that all students will contribute to every class, or at least will not fail to contribute to two classes in a row.

Note: For the essays, please follow the advice in my ‘How to Write an Essay’ document. For each essay topic, you must discuss the required readings in detail.

Essay #1 (Due Friday February 14, 2025 @ 4:00 pm, via Brightspace)

2,000-word essay, double-spaced.

Choose *one* of the following topics:

1. With specific reference to Charles Beitz, David Miller, and Chris Armstrong, *outline* and *evaluate* the debate on whether equality is a requirement of global justice.

or

2. With specific reference to David Miller, Robert Goodin, and Stephen Nathanson, defend a thesis in answer to the following question: Should we ethically prioritize our compatriots?

Essay #2 (Due Monday April 7, 2025 @ 4:00 pm, via Brightspace)

2,000-word essay, double-spaced.

Choose *one* of the following topics:

1. With specific reference to Jack Donnelly, Thomas Pogge, and Charles Beitz, answer the following question: What is the ethical significance of sovereignty in relation to human rights and cosmopolitanism?

or

2. With specific reference to Allen Buchanan, Gillian Brock, and Joseph Heath, critically discuss John Rawls's *Law of Peoples*.

Schedule of Meetings

January 9, 2025 (first class): Introduction to the course

Hannah Ritchie, *Not the End of the World*, New York: Little, Brown Spark, 2024, Introduction and Chapter 1: Sustainability: A Tale of Two Halves, 1-36.

January 16, 2025: Global Poverty

Peter Singer, *The Life You Can Save: How to Do Your Part to End World Poverty*, New York: Random House, 2009, 3-41.

Brian Barry, 'Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective', in Barry, *Democracy, Power, and Justice: Essays in Political Theory*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, 434-462.

January 23, 2025: International Distributive Justice and Cosmopolitanism

Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, 1979, Part Three: International Distributive Justice, 125-176.

David Miller, 'Cosmopolitanism: A Critique', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 5 (3), 2002, 80-85.

January 30, 2025: Global Inequality

Charles Beitz, 'Does Global Inequality Matter?', *Metaphilosophy* 32 (1), 2001, 95-112.

David Miller, 'Against Global Egalitarianism', *Journal of Ethics* 9, 2005, 55-79.

Additional reading for essay: Chris Armstrong, 'Global Egalitarianism', *Philosophy Compass* 4 (1), 2009, 155-171.

February 6, 2025: What Do We Owe our Compatriots?

David Miller, 'The Ethical Significance of Nationality', *Ethics* 98 (4), 1988, 647-662.

Robert E. Goodin, 'What is So Special About Our Fellow Countrymen?', *Ethics* 98 (4), 1988, 663-686.

Additional reading for essay: Stephen Nathanson, 'Moderate Patriotism', in Mitja Sardoc (ed.), *Handbook of Patriotism*, New York: Springer, 2020, 141-161.

February 13, 2025: Distributive Justice, Cooperation, and Coercion

Michael Blake, 'Distributive Justice, State Coercion, and Autonomy', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 30 (3), 2001, 257-296.

Simon Caney, 'Global Distributive Justice and the State', *Political Studies* 56, 2008, 487-518.

Essay #1 due Friday February 14, 2025 @ 4:00 pm, via Brightspace

February 20, 2025: Reading Week: No Class Today

February 27, 2025: Sovereignty and Human Rights

Jack Donnelly, 'State Sovereignty and International Human Rights', *Ethics & International Affairs* 28 (2), 2014, 225-238.

Thomas Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', *Ethics* 103 (1), 1992, 48-75.

Additional reading for essay: Charles Beitz, 'Sovereignty and Morality in International Affairs', in David Held (ed.), *Political Theory Today*, Cambridge: Polity, 1991, 236-254.

March 6, 2025: Rawls's *Law of Peoples*

Allen Buchanan, 'Rawls's Law of Peoples: Rules for a Vanished Westphalian World', *Ethics* 110, 2000, 697-721.

Gillian Brock, 'The Debate about Rawls's *Law of Peoples*: Critics and Defences', in Brock, *Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Account*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 19-44.

Additional reading for essay: Heath, Joseph, 'Rawls on Global Distributive Justice: A Defence,' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, supp. vol., 35, 2005, 193-226.

March 13, 2025: Crime Against Humanity

Richard Vernon, 'What is Crime Against Humanity?', *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10, 2002, 231-249.

Massimo Renzo, 'Crimes against humanity and the limits of international criminal law', *Law and Philosophy* 31, 2012, 443-476.

March 20, 2025: Global Gender Justice

Martha Nussbaum, 'Human capabilities, female human beings', in Martha Nussbaum and Jonathan Glover (eds.), *Women, Culture and Development: A Study of Human Capabilities*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 61-104.

Alison Jaggar, 'The Philosophical Challenges of Global Gender Justice', *Philosophical Topics* 37 (2), 2009, 1-15.

March 27, 2025: Immigration

Shelley Wilcox, 'The Open Borders Debate on Immigration', *Philosophy Compass* 4 (5), 2009, 813–21.

Joseph Heath, *Cooperation and Social Justice*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022, Chapter 5: 'A Unified Theory of Border Control and Reasonable Accommodation', 200-251.

April 3, 2025 (last class): Trade

James Christensen, *Global Justice*, London: Macmillan, 2020, Chapter 7: Trade, 127-145.

Joseph Stiglitz and Gary Hufbauer, 'The Fair Play Debate', *The National Interest*, May/June 2008, 15-24.

Essay #2 due Monday April 7, 2025 @ 4:00 pm, via Brightspace