



COURSE SYLLABUS

Philosophy and Justice

Phil. 31035-001-16266
BOW 301
MW 12:30-1:45

Dr. Frank Ryan

Office: 320-E Bowman
Hours: MTWR 1:45-3:00
(and by appointment)
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Course Design: Philosophy culminates in the ethical quest for happiness and the good. The search for “justice” extends this to the well-being of the community and society. We will examine key issues, including the nature of justice, how it should be disseminated, and its relation to freedom and the distribution of resources. Just as philosophy is traditionally divided between empirical materialist and rational idealist world views, so too do the conflicting values of maximal individual liberty and the common good polarize traditional conceptions of justice. We’ll examine both historical and contemporary developments of this debate, highlighted by the divide between libertarians and socialists, as well as efforts to integrate aspects of both by utilitarian and discourse ethics advocates. We’ll conclude our survey with recent developments rooted in feminist and environmentalist perspectives.

Required Texts: (1) *Justice: Alternative Political Perspectives*, 4th Ed. James P. Sterba
(2) Readings posted to Canvas

Grading: Grades are calculated according to the standard scale:

≥93 = A; 90-92 = A-; 88-89 = B+; 83-87 = B; 80-82 = B-; 78-79 = C+;
73-77 = C; 70-72 = C-; 68-69 = D+; 60-67 = D; ≤59 = F

- 30% is determined by two multiple choice Unit Tests (15 pts. ea.) taken online in class.
- 20% is determined by a *cumulative* multiple choice Final Exam taken online in class.
- 15% is determined by verbal answers to three sets of unit essay questions (5 pts. ea.).
You are strongly encouraged to participate in the discussion. If you are unable to do so, however, you may earn credit for this assignment by providing written answers to all questions before the class exercise.
- 5% is determined by a two page paper abstract.
- 25% is determined by a 5-7 page term paper in either an argument-criticism or topic-thesis format. You may revise and resubmit your first draft once for a higher grade.
- 5% is an attendance grade scaled to the number of unexcused absences:
0-1 A; 2 B; 3-4 C; 5-6 D; 7+ F.

Attendance Policy: Although attendance is specifically graded in this course, your regular attendance is expected. Excessive absences will reflect negatively upon your class participation grade. Please avoid tardiness, which may disrupt the continuity of lectures and discussions.

Class Etiquette: Electronic media is disruptive if used for any purpose other than reading assignments or note taking—students who fail to comply with this policy during class will be asked to leave.

Academic Honesty: For the full policy, see <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism>

Acts of cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses that subvert the goals of the institution and the rights of fellow students. Students caught cheating will receive no credit for the assignment and are subject to additional sanctions including failing the course and additional University disciplinary action.

I. "Cheat" means to intentionally misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- 1. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) prompts or guidance for any written assignment.**
- 2. Using unauthorized information in examinations.**
- 3. Securing, giving or exchanging information during examinations.**
- 4. Having another person take one's place for any academic performance.**
5. Possessing partial or whole copies of examinations, tests or quizzes before these are distributed for student use.
6. Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented.
7. Presenting falsified information in order to postpone or avoid examinations, tests, quizzes, or other academic work.

Prerequisite, Registration, and Withdrawal Information. The prerequisite for this course is one course in Philosophy. By University policy, all students must be officially registered in each class they are attending. Those not officially registered for a course not attend classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm your enrollment by checking your class schedule (using Student Tools in Flashline) prior to the deadline. The deadline for withdrawing from the class is Sunday, October 27, 2024.

Grievance Policy: The Philosophy Department Grievance Procedure for handling grievances is in conformity with the Student Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures set down as University Policy 3342-4-16 in the *University Policy Register*. For information concerning the details of the grievance procedure, please see the Departmental Chairperson.

Student Accessibility Policy: University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).

Religious Compliance Statement: The University welcomes the beliefs and practices of diverse faiths, philosophies, and other systems of belief. In compliance with University policy and the Ohio Revised Code, students

are permitted to request excused class absences for up to three days per term to participate in sanctioned activities authorized by a religious or spiritual organization. The request for excusal must be made in writing during the first fourteen days of the semester and include 1) the date(s) of each proposed absence, 2) a clear explanation of the activities involved, and 3) the specific accommodation(s) you desire.

Date	Topic/Author	Reading/Assignments
		J: <i>Justice: Alternative Political Perspectives</i> C: Item on Canvas Site
8/19	Syllabus Review & Introduction: Competing Conceptions of Justice	
I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES		
8/21	Plato: What is Justice?	C: <i>Republic</i> , paragraph 327-336 Instructions for Paper Assignment
8/26	Plato: Happiness, Virtue, and Vice	C: <i>Republic</i> , Bk 9
8/28	Aristotle: The Nature of Justice	J: 188-197
9/2	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i>	
9/4	Locke: Property and Consent I	C: Locke, 13-27
9/9	Locke: Property and Consent II	C: Locke, 27-39
9/11	Kant: Contractarian Justice	J: 102-106
9/16		UNIT 1 STUDY QUESTION IN-CLASS RESPONSES
9/18		UNIT TEST I
II. LIBERTARIAN JUSTICE		
9/23	Nozick: Distributive Justice I	C: Nozick, 1-5
9/25	Nozick: Distributive Justice II	C: Nozick, 5-10
9/30	Hospers: The Libertarian Manifesto	J: 22-32
III. SOCIALIST JUSTICE		
10/2	From Kant to Marx	
10/7	Marx: The Communist Manifesto	J: 68-76
10/9	Neil and O'Neill: Socialist Justice	J: 77-85
10/14	Nielsen: Radical Egalitarianism	J: 86-96
IV. UTILITARIAN JUSTICE		
10/16	Mill: What Utilitarianism Is	C: <i>Utilitarianism</i> , Ch.2 Paper Abstract Due
10/21	Mill: Utilitarianism and Justice	C: <i>Utilitarianism</i> , Ch.5
10/23		UNIT II STUDY QUESTIONS-IN-CLASS RESPONSES
10/28		UNIT TEST II

V. JUSTICE AS FAIRNESS

10/30 Gilligan: Justice and Care
Feminist Justice

C: Gilligan, 300-311

TBA

11/4 Rawls: Justice as Fairness

C: *A Theory of Justice* 211-218

PAPER FIRST DRAFT DUE

C: *A Theory of Justice* 219-234

11/6 Rawls: Distributive Justice

11/11 *Veterans Day Observed (no class)*

11/13 Mills: Race and Global Justice 1

C: C: Mills, 1-10

11/18 Mills: Race and Global Justice 2

C: C: Mills 10-20

VI. JUSTICE AS DISCOURSE ETHICS

11/21 Dewey: Social Intelligence

C: Dewey, 1-5

11/25 Habermas: Law and Democracy

J: 156-162

11/27-12/1 *Thanksgiving Holiday*

12/2 Benhabib: Deliberative Democracy

J: 172-187

12/4

PAPER FINAL DRAFT DUE

UNIT III STUDY QUESTIONS

IN-CLASS RESPONSES

FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 9, 10:15-12:30