

Contemporary Currents in Ethical & Political Theory: Multicultural and Global Citizenship

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Hours: M 10-12, TTh 2:15-3

PL311 Contemporary Currents in Ethical & Political Theory: Multicultural and Global Citizenship

Liberal democracies' central value is freedom. Having freedom includes having an equal opportunity to obtain social goods and positions of authority as well as being allowed to pursue one's own conception of a good and morally estimable life. In order to secure citizens' equal liberty, liberal political theorists have often stressed the importance of state neutrality on matters of morality and religion. Liberal theorists have also stressed the importance of securing individual civil and political rights, tolerating a plurality of lifestyles, and ensuring that basic goods (like education and income) are fairly distributed. Liberal political theory has been a theory about what it would mean for legal, governmental, and economic institutions within states to be just.

The emergence of an array of social group movements focused on challenging systems of oppression (gender, racial, sexual, class), the increase in public attention to the presence and significance of multiple ethnic and national groups within individual countries, and the increasing level of global interdependency-especially economic interdependency-have presented interesting challenges to liberal theory. Can the state adequately address systems of oppression from a stance of moral neutrality? Given the fact of multi-ethnic and multi-national societies, can liberty be secured through a system of exclusively individual rights? Or do minority cultures also need group rights? In societies where racism, sexism, heterosexism, and xenophobia are pervasive, is the goal of social tolerance an adequate goal? Or do subordinate and minority groups need more affirmative support than mere tolerance? In the light of the specific needs of subordinate social groups and minority ethnic and national cultures, does liberal theory have a sufficiently complex account of what goods it is important to distribute? And finally, given the emerging global economy, how are we to think about justice at an international level, including distributive justice?

TEXTS:

Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*
Iris Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*
Carlos Ball, *The Morality of Gay Rights*
Thomas Pogge, *World Poverty and Human Rights*

Selected articles available at DeeDee's in Railroad Square

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADE PERCENTAGES:

25% of your grade will be based on:

being a critic: three peer reviews of others' short essays, using the peer review form handed out in class
and

responding to critics: three revisions of your short essays. Here you will be graded on the extent to which you have taken seriously both your peer reviewer's and my suggestions for revisions and successfully incorporated them into the revised essay

50% of your grade will be based on:

3 peer reviewed short essays: first draft, 4-5 pages; topic must be related to readings. You **MUST** phrase your thesis as a question and do so in the first paragraph. These essays will be turned in twice. The first draft will receive a provisional grade so that you can gauge how much revision you need to do. Both your peer reviewer and I will suggest ways that you can improve your essay. Your essay grade will be based solely on the revised draft.

1 final essay project: 7-8 pages. This is your space to pursue a topic of your choosing related to the theme of multicultural and global citizenship. At least two reference sources required, one of which **MUST** be external to the class readings. Project description due 11-25.

15% of your grade will be based on:

class presentation. Everyone will sign up to be responsible for leading one class session. Your presentation should cover a summary of the reading with a special focus on some portion that you think is important and that we need to be clear on. Your presentation should also include some critical, reflective approach to the text that will stimulate discussion. Bring an outline of the order of your presentation to hand out to the class (you may include important quotes or questions). Be sure that your thoughts are well organized for public presentation.

10% of your grade will be based on:

discussion facilitation. Everyone will sign up for four days on which they will be especially responsible for raising issues for our discussion. Come prepared with your points written out (these should include a summary of the portion of the text that you want to focus on and a clearly thought out point that you want to raise or make about that passage. You must have at least two points to raise. Your written comments should be 1 to 1 and a half pages.

and

attendance at Professor Charles Mills' colloquium lecture, November 20, 4:00pm.

Syllabus:

9-4 intro day

Background

9-9 Rawls, excerpts from A Theory of Justice and Political Liberalism (article)

Rethinking Liberal Neutrality on Moral Matters

9-11 "Neutral Liberalism"

Ball, Ch. 1

9-16 "Moral Liberalism"

Ball Ch. 3, sections 1 & 2; Nussbaum handout

9-18 "The Future of Feminist Liberalism"

Martha Nussbaum (article)

9-23 "Moral Liberalism" cont'd; 1st ESSAY

Ball, Ch. 3, section 3; handout on Supreme Court decision

9-25 "Communitarianism"

Ball, Ch. 4

Rethinking Liberalism's focus on Individual Rights

9-30 "The Politics of Multiculturalism" and "Individual Rights and Collective Rights";
PEER REVIEW

Kymlicka, Chs. 2 and 3

10-2 "Freedom and Culture"

Kymlicka, Ch. 5 and Benhabib excerpt (article) on the "scarf affair"

10-7 "Justice and Minority Rights"; REVISION

Kymlicka Ch. 6

Rethinking the Meaning of Toleration

10-9 "Toleration and Its Limits"

Kymlicka, Ch. 8

10-14 "Cultural Toleration" and "Multiculturalism and Gendered Citizenship" Chandron
Kukathas (article) and Benhabib excerpt (article) on the multicultural defense

10-16 "What's Wrong with Tolerance"; 2ND ESSAY

Janet Jakobsen and Ann Pellegrini (article)

Fall Break

Rethinking the Meaning of Distributive Justice

10-23 "Displacing the Distributive Paradigm"; REVIEW

Young, Ch. 1

10-28 "Five Faces of Oppression"; REVISION

Young, Ch. 2

10-30 "The Ideal of Impartiality and the Civic Public"
Young, Ch. 4

11-4 "Social Movements and the Politics of Difference"
Young, Ch. 6

11-6 "Affirmative Action and the Myth of Merit"; 3RD ESSAY
Young, Ch. 7; handout on Supreme Court decision

Rethinking the Bounds of Justice: What do we Owe non-Citizens?

11-11 "Is Patriotism a Virtue?" and Pogge, pp. 1-5; REVIEW
Alistair MacIntyre (article)

11-13 "Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders"
Joseph H. Carens (article)

11-18 "Liberalism, Nationalism, and Egalitarianism"; REVISION
Samuel Scheffler (article)

11-20 "How Should Human Rights be Conceived?"
Pogge, Ch. 2

11-25 "Moral Universalism and Global Economic Justice"; Final Essay proposal due (one paragraph abstract and list of at least two references sources)
Pogge, Ch. 4

Thanksgiving Break

12-2 "The Bounds of Nationalism"
Pogge, Ch. 5.

12-4 "Achieving Democracy" and institutional cosmopolitanism
Pogge, Ch. 6 and Ch. 7, sections 7.0 and 7.1 only

4TH ESSAY due December 14th, 5:00pm, in my mailbox outside Lovejoy 252