**Justice: Player’s Guide**

*Description*

You are a **representative** in a democratic national assembly, set in an alternative universe exactly like ours, in a country identical to the one we currently inhabit, except for specific differences that will be outlined in the course of the game. You will be assigned the **role** of a particular political philosopher, and your goal will be to **implement policies** that accord with that philosopher’s perspective and objectives.

While acting in character, you will give **speeches**, vote on **resolutions**, negotiate with colleagues and write a **game narrative essay** justifying the choices that you made. At all times, your choices will be guided by the principles outlined on your philosopher’s **role sheet**, which also contains references to background readings that set out these principles in greater detail. The Assembly contains three broad **factions** (uniform liberalism, difference liberalism, libertarian) and numerous “indeterminate” positions between (and beyond) the factions. If you are assigned to a faction, you will begin the game with allies who share your goals. If you are assigned an indeterminate role, you will need to spend more time **cultivating alliances** with other factions and indeterminates.

You and your colleagues will run the game sessions. This includes **setting the agenda**, **making** **speeches** in support of various proposals, **negotiating** with colleagues and **voting** to determine the outcome. While the starting agenda calls for votes on policies relating to welfare, immigration and minority rights, this is only a starting point, and you should feel free to **propose changes** to the agenda. Because these changes must be approved by majority vote, it is important to frame your proposal in terms that other players will be able to get behind. This will mean understanding their roles and the philosophical principles motivating their behavior.

The object of the game is to **implement as much of your philosopher’s position into legislation as possible**. At the conclusion of play, you will be asked to write a game narrative essay justifying the choices that you made in terms of your assigned philosopher’s principles. It may be the case that the views you are asked to implement differ substantially from your own. **This is normal**. Although a wide variety of views will emerge over the course of the game, they are all defensible and should be engaged with **charitably**, particularly because other students may similarly be portraying views that they in fact do not share. No particular faction or group is likely to achieve total victory, and the course of the game may require you to **compromise** on peripheral objectives to achieve your philosopher’s core goals.

*Game Mechanics*

One of your first actions will be to elect a **Speaker of the Assembly**. This speaker will manage the agenda and speaker’s list, and will be empowered to end debate and call for a vote. The Assembly may expand or contract these powers as it sees fit. A separate set of **Speaker’s Rules** will be provided to the Speaker after election. Before play begins, you will also create a game plan setting out your proposed actions during the game based on your assigned role. If time permits, you will receive instructor feedback on this proposed course of action.

During the game sessions, you will make proposals, propose modifications to your colleagues’ proposals, and vote on proposals for adoption. As in all legislatures, much of the action is **informal**, and will require a wide variety of contacts across a broad range of philosophical positions. Students attuned to the dynamics of play should have a fairly good idea whether or not a resolution has sufficient support before bringing it to the floor for a vote, because you will know the roles assigned to other players and be able to talk to them before voting on a particular proposal.

At the conclusion of play, you will have an opportunity to provide the instructor with **feedback** on the process of play, as well as your own **reactions** to the (sometimes surprising) developments over the course of the game sessions. Philosophical positions are often extremely abstract, and the game will allow you to see and evaluate some of the **practical implications** of actually implementing these theoretical views. In the process, you may find that your own views develop in unexpected ways. **This is also normal**. We’re conducting an exciting experiment to try to understand what the political theory we’ve been studying would look like if it were put into practice, and your reactions and opinions are crucial. **Have fun!**