

Sample Syllabus – Intro to Political Theory: Justice, Legitimacy, and Politics

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2020

Summary: This module of study involves two 1 hour lectures every week for 10 weeks at an undergraduate level on topics in contemporary political theory.

Week 1: What is the Problem of Justice?

Lecture 1: Ancients (Reading: Plato, *The Republic*, Books 1–2.)

Lecture 2: Early Modern Thinkers (Reading: Hobbes, *Leviathan* Chapters 12–15, 17–21. Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book III, Part II, “Of Justice and Injustice,” and *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Section III, “Of Justice.”)

Week 2: Theories of Justice

Lecture 1: Right-libertarianism (Reading: Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* pp. 149–182.)

Lecture 2: Left-libertarianism (Reading: Michael Otsuka, *Libertarianism without Inequality*, Chapter 1.)

Week 3: Theories of Justice Cont’d

Lecture 1: Liberalism (Reading: Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 1. Arthur Ripstein, “Kant on Law and Justice”, in *The Blackwell Guide to Kant’s Ethics*.)

Lecture 2: Rule Utilitarianism (Reading: Robert Goodin, *Utilitarianism as a Public Philosophy*, Sections II–V of Chapter 1.)

Week 4: Theories of Justice Cont’d

Lecture 1: Liberal-Egalitarianism (Reading: John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, Chapter 2 and 3.)

Lecture 2: Luck-Egalitarianism (Reading: Dworkin, *Sovereign Virtue* Introduction and Chapter 2. Gerald Cohen "On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice." *Ethics* 99 (1989): 906–44.)

Week 5: Theories of Justice Cont'd

Lecture 1: Relational Egalitarianism (Reading: Elizabeth Anderson "What is the point of equality?", *Ethics*, Vol. 109, No. 2 (January 1999), pp. 287-337. Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, Chapter 11)

Lecture 2: Egalitarian Institutions: Socialism (Reading: David Miller, "Socialism and the Market" *Political Theory*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Nov., 1977), pp. 473-490. Gerald Cohen, "Why Not Socialism?")

Week 6: Problem of Reasonable Disagreement and Legitimacy

Lecture 1: Problem of Reasonable Disagreement and Normative Stability (Reading: Charles Larmore, "What is Political Philosophy?" *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 10 (2013) 276–306. John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, Section 1.)

Lecture 2: Political Legitimacy and Authority (Reading: Thomas Christiano, *The Constitution of Equality: Democratic Authority and its Limits*, Chapter 6. Fabienne Peter, *Political Legitimacy*, SEP <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/legitimacy/> Sections 1–2.)

Week 7: Political Liberalism

Lecture 1: Consensus Conception (Reading: John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, Introduction to Paperback Edition.)

Lecture 2: Convergence Conception (Reading: Gerald Gaus and Kevin Vallier *The roles of religious conviction in a publicly justified polity: The implications of convergence, asymmetry and political institutions*, *Philosophy Social Criticism* 2009; 35; 51 2009.)

Week 8: Political Realism

Lecture 1: Non-Domination Conception (Reading: Bernard Williams, *In the Beginning was the Deed*, "Realism and Moral in Political Theory".)

Lecture 2: Restrained Domination Conception (Reading: Matt Sleat, *Liberal Realism*, Chapter 6 and 7.)

Week 9: Metanormative Issues

Lecture 1: Autonomy of Politics (Reading: William Galston, "Realism in political theory" in *European Journal of Political Theory* 9(4) 385–411.)

Lecture 2: Non-Autonomy (Reading: Jonathan Leader Maynard and Alex Worsnip “Is There a Distinctively Political Normativity?” *Ethics* 128 (July 2018): 756–787.)

Week 10: Methodological Issues

Lecture 1: Non-Ideal Theory (Reading: Andrea Sangiovanni, “Justice and the Priority of Politics to Morality”, in *The Journal of Political Philosophy*: Volume 16, Number 2, 2008, pp. 137–164)

Lecture 2: Ideal Theory (Reading: David Estlund (2017) “Methodological moralism in political philosophy”, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 20:3, 385–402.)