

IPS610: FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Class number:

Water Tower Campus, Maguire Hall Room 401

Instructor: Susan Rans

Thursdays, 1 to 3:30 PM

Office Hours: Saturdays 10 AM to 12:45 PM; Thursdays after class by Appointment; Fridays 9:30AM to Noon

Questions of justice and injustice have engaged and motivated people of all faiths throughout history. In particular, the gospel call to do justice has inspired Christians. Classic and contemporary thinkers have attempted to describe and envision a just society. But still, most people associate justice with the legal system or with due process, while examples of injustices perpetrated around the world and right outside the door of this classroom saturate the media as well as our personal experience.

This course will take place in the center of the concrete dilemmas that confront us in our efforts to do justice. We will spend time examining our own experience and the experience of faith-based practitioners of justice; the Christian scriptures and tenets other world religions; the Catholic Social Teachings; and the work contemporary and classic authors. We will be guided by the work of the founder of this program, Mary Elsbernd, through her powerful examination of the subject, *When Love is Not Enough*. And we will apply the ideas and definitions we encounter to real world and real time struggles to bring about some semblance of justice in the world.

Most of all, we will create our own vision of social justice, one that can guide and equip us through the rest of this program and in our lives as agents of change.

Required Texts:

1) Elsbernd, Mary and Reimund Bieringer. *When Love is Not Enough. A Theo-ethic of Justice*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2002.

2) Other selections and articles handed out in class or posted on Blackboard. Access to a computer by which you have reliable internet access including the capability for downloading articles is important.

3) Plus a choice of 1 book from the following ten (auto)biographies. You will be asked to do a book review and an assessment of the understanding of social justice on which the social justice practitioner drew.

- Addams, Jane. *Twenty Years at Hull-House*. New American Library, 1961.
- Alinsky, Saul D. *Rules for Radicals*. Vintage Books, 1989.
- Aung San Suu Kyi. *The Voice of Hope. Aung San Suu Kyi. Conversations with Alan Clements*. New York: Seven Stories Press, 1997.
- Day, Dorothy. *The Long Loneliness*. Harper, 1996

- Frisbie, Margery. *An Alley in Chicago: the Life and Legacy of Monsignor John Egan*. Sheed & Ward, 2002
- Kopp, Wendy. *One Day, All Children*. Public Affairs, 2003.
- Maathai, Wangari. *Unbowed: One Woman's Story*. Arrow, 1988.
- Mandela, Nelson. *Nelson Mandela Speaks – Forging a Democratic, Nonracial South Africa*. Pathfinder Press, 1993.
- Patel, Eboo. *Acts of Faith: the Story of an American Muslim, the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation*. Beacon Press, 2008
- Stavans, Ilan (ed). *Cesar Chavez: An Organizer's Tale*. Penguin, 2008.
- Yunus, Muhammad. *Banker to the Poor*. Public Affairs, 2003.

Learning Outcomes:

1. To develop an understanding of (social) justice in the Catholic social teachings tradition and the Jewish and Christian scriptures.
2. To have some familiarity with the concepts of (social) justice in other world religions.
4. To become familiar with the understandings of justice in contemporary philosophical traditions as well as assess their strengths and weaknesses
5. To identify (observe) and analyze (judge) operative understandings of justice in their social contexts as well as to become skilled in building on diverse understandings for collaborative action (act).
6. To articulate and support a working definition of social justice informed by the descriptions and concepts studied in the course.

I. OBSERVE

September 2: Introductions

Today, we'll introduce ourselves to each other and I'll outline the way we will undertake this exploration. We'll also talk about assignments and break into presentation groups. In the second half, we'll revisit one of the noisier debates about social justice in the last year...maybe the last century!

September 9: Visions

Can we describe what we feel called to? In response to the scriptural visions and the insight of several practitioners of justice, we'll share our own visions. In the spirit of pictures = 1000 words, bring a picture of your vision of world imbued with social justice

September 16: Method: Observe, Judge, Act

The framework for all of our reflections and activities in this class has a history and some strong connections to practitioners of social justice right here in Chicago. We'll discuss both today. We'll also begin our second half reflections.

2. JUDGE: Faith Traditions and Social Justice

September 23: Social Justice in the Scriptures

We'll get some insight into the rich traditions and meanings of justice in the Judeo-Christian texts, with help from a guest.

September 30: Social Justice in World Religions

Although it is not possible to gain a complete grasp of the call to justice in other world religions in one class, we will examine and reflect upon passages and commentary that will illuminate these articles of faith.

October 7: The Catholic Social Teachings

Often referred to as Catholicism's best-kept secret, the Catholic Social Teachings provide an evolving mandate for justice, human dignity and human rights. We'll let Mary Elsbernd's work provide a direction for our examination of these directives and encyclicals.

NO CLASS OCT. 14—Fall Break

III: JUDGE: Social Justice Thinking

October 21: Social Justice in the work of Reinhold Niebuhr and Robert Nozick

Today we begin our Community of Inquiry as we are led in an examination of the definition of Social Justice as Laws and Procedures which restrain self-interest. In the second half, we will apply this definition to our chosen issues.

October 28: Social Justice in the work of John Rawls and Thomas Pogge

Our Community Inquiry into Social Justice as Fairness in Distribution of Resources and Opportunity

November 4: Social Justice as Liberation from Oppression

Our Community Inquiry into the Liberation Theologians

November 11: Social Justice in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre

Our Community Inquiry into the understanding of social justice as the core of community building.

November 18: Social Justice as Participation

Our Community Inquiry will complete as we discuss the conclusions of *When Love is Not Enough*.

November 25: NO CLASS (Happy Thanksgiving)

3. ACT

December 2: Making Change

...because in the end, it all means nothing if these inquiries don't lead us to action. Today, we'll end our class with some insight and inspiration from folks who have committed themselves to action.

December 9: Final Papers due.

Course expectations:

1. **Class Attendance/Participation** (30%) is an important component of the course.

- If a student is unable to be present, professional courtesy requires that the student notify me of your absence prior to the class.
- Please see below for additional clarification around attendance/tardiness
- **Class participation** builds on required readings for each class as well as short prepared reflections on topics that are the basis for group work. Study questions are provided for many of the readings. Questions, discussion, thoughtful contributions and based on the required readings as well as in-class activities and at least one case study analysis are components of class participation. **Due Weekly.**

2. A small group **in-class presentation** (25%) of a contemporary theory of social justice. **Due October 21 through November 18.**

3. **Analysis of a biography of a social justice practitioner** (15%).

This assignment has two parts: 1) reading and writing a book review of a biography for a social justice practitioner (**due at Mid-Term**) and 2) an analysis of the understanding of social justice in the thinking and practice of this person (**due before Thanksgiving Break.**)

4. A **case study paper** (30%) which analyzes a justice issue of your choice according to the Observe, Judge, Act format introduced in this course.

Students are highly encouraged to choose an issue related to a social justice issue around which you have passion or from an area in which you may wish to do your internship. The point of the 6500 to 8000 word paper is to use your own critical thinking and the resources of this course to address a concrete justice issue.

Other Important Student Information

Please note: Students are responsible to know the following information

1) Written Style Guidelines:

All sources are to be cited using the Chicago Manual of Style. Please use the following as a guide: <http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php>

2) Statement of Academic Honesty from Loyola University Chicago

(Academic integrity, plagiarism, cheating)

http://www.luc.edu/ips/Academics_Standards.shtml#academic_integrity

3) Services for Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>

4) IPS Academic Handbook:

http://www.luc.edu/ips/Academics_Standards.shtml

5) Deadlines for assigned (written) work

Extensions are possible, but must be arranged before the day that the assignment is due.

Papers may be turned in electronically (before the class in which it is due) or in hard copy during the class in which it is due. I like some of each to vary my reading medium.

6) Absence/Tardiness

- Students are expected to attend all classes for the entire class period. Students must inform the instructor if they are going to miss a class. Three absences (excused or unexcused) result in the need to repeat the course – the student can be exempted from this requirement at the discretion of the professor due to extenuating circumstances.
- An expressed expectation that as part of a professional school, students should demonstrate professional behavior, which includes being on time for class and returning to class on time after a break. Beyond this expectation, the individual professor should deal with the issue of tardiness (e.g., through participation grades or having the student be accountable to classmates) as well as engage in conversation with colleagues if there seems to be a consistent problem with a student in more than one class.

- Absence and tardiness are considered in the context of the student's responsibility to her/his learning community composed of the other students in her/his class and in developing a habit of professionalism.
- Excessive absences, tardiness, or other non-professional behavior should be reported to the student's Graduate Program Director, so that the director may be aware of any patterns of behavior across courses that might require attention