

Spring 2004
TR 9:30-10:45
PE 204
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Sociology 68. Social and Economic Justice Syllabus

This course on social and economic justice will focus on human rights from a social science perspective on humans - their universal needs, capabilities, and rights, and the many ways that they are different. That is, we will be especially attentive to human universality and the importance of human particularities. Here are a few conceptions of human rights: **HR1:** Moral rights that every human has against every other human; **HR2:** Legal rights that every citizen has in their nation; **HR3:** Moral rights of humans to get rich; **HR4:** Moral rights of humans in the global order; and, **HR5:** Ethical responsibilities among moral equals. These conceptions will have interesting consequences for our discussions about social and economic justice. We will be discussing such topics as food security, sustainability, world peace, gender equality, minority rights, peoples' rights to their culture and traditions, "deep democracy," and indigenous rights.

This is the core, required course for the Social and Economic Justice Minor. Besides human rights, we will discuss the concept of justice and its varied meanings in law, religious traditions, philosophy, and the social sciences. Learning and practice go hand in hand in this course on human rights and justice, and for that reason I require students to participate in an APPLES service-learning project or an activist project (such as working with a labor union). While experiential learning is very important, I want to encourage all of us in our discussions to be sharply critical of practices that maintain the status quo, inequality and oppression. I also hope to promote utopian thinking in this class, which is why I require an art or poetry project. Student debates are always carried out with respect for the other and others' views. The student honors code is always in effect, and in the case of group or collaborative work, students will formally acknowledge the contributions of others. In APPLES and activist reports, use pseudonyms to protect the identities of others.

Two books are available for purchase:

Brian Orend, *Human Rights: Concept and Context* (Broadview Press, 2002)

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 1968; or another edition).

Your grade consists of the following: (1) class assignments and participation in discussions, 20%; (2) a paper on your service-learning or activist project, 20% (may include regular submission of journals); creative utopian or critical project, 10%; (3) a paper on human rights, 25%; (4) a paper on freedom, 25%.

I grade on a letter scale, as described in the Undergraduate Bulletin, and deduct one-half letter grade for late papers – with no make-up possibilities for (1) above. The optional oral final will provide students with an opportunity of gaining one-half letter grade. I distribute the question for each (3) and (4), and these are take-home projects, with generous time to work on them.

Social and Economic Justice

Schedule

- Jan 7-11 The US Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
In Orend, Appendix A
- Jan 12-18 Bring notes to class on the US Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration
For Thursday, explore Derechos: Human Rights: <http://www.derechos.net/links/>
Decisions due for APPLES-activist project
- Jan 19-25 Bring notes to class from Derechos. Decide on a topic from Derechos.
Class groups formed on the basis of these topics.
Read Orend, chapter 1 for Thursday
- Jan 26-Feb. 1 Read Orend, chapters 2 and 3 for each Tuesday and Thursday
- Feb. 2-8 Bring a detailed question or comment on Orend to class
Discus Orend, chapters 2 and 3
- Feb. 9-15 Read Orend, chapters 4, 5 and 6.
Discussion,
- Feb. 16-22 Read Orend, chapters 7 and 8; Assign paper on Human Rights on 2.22.
Arts paper discussion
For ideas see:
PS 1 web-page (flies);
www.sociologistswithoutborders.org (poet laureate page);
<http://www.taparts.org/>
<http://www.musiciansforpeace.org/>
- Feb. 23-29 Human Rights paper due on 2.29
Background for Freedom paper:
<http://www.galauganda.netfirms.com/> Gay and lesbian alliance of Uganda
<http://fxi.org.za/> Freedom of Expression Institute, South Africa
<http://www.twnafrica.org/> Third World Network, Africa (free trade)
<http://www.ethiobar.net/English/cnstiotn/consttn.htm> Ethiopian Constitution
- Mar. 1-7 Bring notes to class from the web-page assignment.
Start reading Fanon
- Mar. 8-14 Break
- Mar. 15-21 Background for the Algerian revolution
Discussion of “Concerning Violence”
- Mar. 22-28 Bring notes to class on “Spontaneity”
Discussion of “Spontaneity” and “Pitfalls of National Consciousness”
- Mar. 29-Apr.4 Bring notes to class on “National Culture”
Discussion of “National Culture” and “Colonial War and Mental Disorders”
Assign Freedom paper, 4.4
- Apr. 5-11 Bring draft of arts paper
Discuss service-learning and activist papers
- Apr. 12-18 Student APPLES and activist presentations
Freedom paper due, 4.12
- Apr. 19-25 Student APPLES and activist presentations
APPLES and activist papers due, and art paper due on April 25.
- Apr. 27 Oral exam, 8 am