

Professor Jan Dowell
E-mail: jldowell@syr.edu

Course:
When: TH 9:30-10:25 When: 10:30-11:30 TH
Where: 205 HL, T Where: 308 HL T, Zoom

H

Where: Asynchronous, online ; H

Teaching Assistant: Stacy Kohls
Email: slkohls@syr.edu

Office hours:
When: 1:00-2:00 T, F
Where: 103 Bowne and zoom

Course Description:

Racial justice in the United States, what it might be and what it might require. Topics may include distributive justice, fair equality of opportunity, fair housing and segregation, the criminal justice system, and reparations.

Course Overview:

The focus of this course is racial justice in the context of the United States. In the first third of the course, we will focus on social contract theories of justice with special attention to John Rawls's *Theory of Justice*, widely regarded as the greatest contribution to the theory of justice in the 20th Century. In that section of the course, we will also consider critical discussions of Rawls' work, addressing the question of what, if anything, we can learn about racial justice from Rawls. The remainder of the course considers the special topic of racial justice, what it might be and what it might require. To that end, we will focus our attention on anti-Black injustice in the United States. In particular, we will consider issues of distributive justice, fair equality of opportunity, fair housing and segregation, the criminal justice system, and reparations.

Among the questions we will address are:

1. What is justice?
2. What makes a state just or unjust?
3. What is a just distribution of the fruits of social cooperation?
4. What is racism?
5. What is racial injustice?

6. Where do we find anti-Black injustice historically and currently in the US?
7. What is corrective justice? What are its demands?

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will learn to read and understand broadly philosophical texts and theories from a variety of perspectives.
2. Students will learn how to identify philosophical claims, arguments, and argument structures.
3. Students will learn how to evaluate arguments for and against philosophical theories.
4. Students will learn how to explain philosophical positions in their own words.
5. Students will learn how to develop and express their own assessments of philosophical positions in writing.
6. Students will learn how to respectfully engage with others who hold views different from their own.

Required Texts: All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Plan for In-class Time:

This is a hybrid course. On Tuesdays, we will meet together face-to-face in our classroom for lecture and group discussion. On Thursdays, there will be new materials for you to review and a short writing assignment, both available online through our Blackboard page. Both types of class will typically have a reading assignment that you will need to complete before class.

Course Assignments and Class Preparation:

Students are expected to come to each class having done the reading assigned. Additional due dates are noted on the schedule below. Assignments will be posted in advance on Blackboard. For the weights of each assignment towards the final grade, see **Course Requirements and Grading**, below.

Course Schedule:

Note: The reading and assignment schedule below may be subject to small changes. Changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to ensure that you know what the reading will be for the next class and when the assignments are due.

Justice and Equality

1. (1/17) Introduction
2. Ann Cudd & Seena Eftekhari, "Contractarianism", Section 1; (1/19)

3. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, excerpts (1/24)
4. Rawls; (1/26)
5. G.A. Cohen, "Where the Action is: On the Site of Distributive Justice". (*Short Rawls summary due (300-350 words)*) (1/31)
6. Cohen, (2/2)
7. Angela Davis, "The Meaning of Emancipation According to Black Women", (*Women, Race, and Class*, chp.5) (2/7)
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2022/11/30/metoo-movement-start-black-survivors/>
8. Davis, Charles Mills, "White Supremacy as a Sociopolitical System" (2/9)
 - *Recommended:* Black Wall Street and the Tulsa massacre
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/05/24/us/tulsa-race-massacre.html>
 - *Recommended:* Liam Kofi Bright's (London School of Economics) tribute to Charles Mills
<https://sootyempiric.blogspot.com/2021/09/personal-tribute-to-charles-mills.html>
9. Tommie Shelby, "Race and Ethnicity, Race and Social Justice: Rawlsian Considerations" (2/14)

What is Racism?

10. Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Racisms" (2/16)
11. Joseph Stiglitz, "Markets and Inequality" (2/21)
12. Structural and institutional racism (2/23)

Overview:

Opportunity and Redlining (John Powell):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zfs5k9CkJKM>

Reverse Redlining and Systemic Racism (John Powell):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDwjLahKKfA>

For more on opportunity mapping: <https://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu>

Race and Socio-Economic Justice (Housing, Education, and Employment)

13. Seana Shiffrin "Race, Labor, and Fair Equality of Opportunity". (2/28)
14. Elizabeth Anderson, *the Imperative of Integration*, chp. 1 (last two sections only), chp.2 (3/2)
15. Tommie Shelby "Integration, Inequality, and the Imperatives of Justice" Sections V-VIII (3/7)
16. Catch up (3/9) (Rawls vs Shiffrin or Anderson vs Shelby reading response due (450-500 words))

3/14 & 3/16: **SPRING BREAK!**

Race and Criminal Justice: Policing, Courts, Prisons, Post-Prison

17. *Policing*: Michelle Alexander, *the New Jim Crow*, chp 2, “the Lockdown”. (3/21)
18. *Reform: Policing*. Katherine Spencer, Amanda Charbonneau, and Jack Glaser, “Implicit Bias and Policing”. (3/23)
Recommended: *Hidden Brain* podcast in implicit bias
<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/531587708?fbclid=IwAROMEFINzABwSSQjw8uesanir5WUIk9OTO9fum6wnDMM6SPCj7AifPnn5lE>
19. *The Courts*: Alexander, *the New Jim Crow*, chapter 3, “the Color of Justice”. (3/28) (Short writing assignment on policing and bias due, **300-350 words**.)
20. *Prisons & Post prison*: What We Have, What Could Be? Prison Abolitionism Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (3/30)
21. *Reform: Prisons*. Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Chp. 2. (4/4)
22. *Reform: Prisons*. Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Chp. 6. (4/6)

Reparations

23. Derrick Darby, “Reparations and Racial Inequality”, (4/11) (Reform: Davis reading response due, **450-500 words**)
24. Assessment of Darby’s discussion (4/13)
25. Christopher Morris, “Existential Limits to the Rectification of Past Wrongs”. (4/18)
26. Evaluating Morris’s argument* (4/20)
27. Bernard Boxill, “A Lockean Argument for Black Reparations”, (4/25)
28. Boxill’s reply to Morris (4/27)

5/8 by 1 p.m.: Final project due (default project **1,000-1,250-word** paper).

- All papers must be uploaded to Turnitin on Blackboard by that day and time.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Class Participation: 10%

Thursday Assignments: 20%

- Each Thursday class includes a writing assignment.
- These assignments must be uploaded to Turnitin on Blackboard by **10 am** on the Friday immediately following day of the assignment.
- There are a total of 14 Thursday writing assignments. Student are permitted to miss up to four, no questions asked.
- Each remaining assignment is 1/10 of your 20%.
- *Each remaining assignment that is turned in late will be penalized.*
- *Assignments handed in later than the Monday following a Friday due date will not be accepted.*

2 short (300-350 words) papers (reading summaries): 10%/each
2 medium (450-500 words) length papers: 15%/each
Final project (20%) (Default project is a final paper, 1,000-1,250 words)

Late papers and Thursday writing assignments will be penalized; papers and writing assignments later than two weeks past the deadline will not be accepted without evidence of serious illness.

Good philosophy paper writing advice:

<http://www1.cmc.edu/pages/faculty/AKind/Intro01s/Writing.htm>

The *University's Writing Center* also offers support for all aspects of paper writing for both native and non-native speakers. Meetings are kept confidential. More information on the center and how to make an appointment here:

<https://thecollege.syr.edu/writing-center/>

Use of Turnitin: All written assignments must be uploaded onto Turnitin to receive course credit. Turnitin is located on Blackboard under **Assignments**.

Class Rules:

The *use of cell phones* is not permitted during class.

The *use of laptops for class purposes* is permitted. If another student complains about how you are using your laptop during class or if you are found to be using it for some non-course purpose, you will be asked to turn it off.

Orange Success:

- *Early semester progress reports:* The university tracks student non-attendance through Orange Success to comply with Title IV regulations. Faculty are asked to report a student who "Never Attended" by the third week of the semester.
- *Mid-semester reports:* Faculty provide feedback to academic advisors on each student to help identify students who may be struggling.

University Policies:

Academic Integrity: See <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

IMPORTANT NOTE: Chatbot written assignments violate the university's academic integrity policies and will be treated accordingly. Depending upon their severity, penalties for violations will range from a failed assignment to a failing grade for the course and a report of the violation to the university.

Religious Observances: See

http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm

Note: If you plan to avail yourself of the university's policy regarding religious observances, you *must* notify Professor Dowell by the end of the second week of class, (1/27/23).

Disability Services:

If you believe you need accommodation for a disability, please see the Office of Disability Services (ODS) <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu> for an appointment to discuss your needs. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations. *Since accommodations require early planning and are generally not offered retroactively, please contact the ODS* (phone: 315-443-4498, location: 804 University Avenue) *as soon as possible*.

Mental Health Services:

Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. This means that learning how to cope with stress and anxiety is an important part of your college experience. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources offered at the Barnes Center (<https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/>) Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days a year at 315-443-8000.