Course Overview

The term global justice is both ancient and a neologism. Globe derives from the Latin *globus*, meaning round mass, or sphere, and has been applied to planet earth since the sixteenth century. Justice, in ancient Greece, originally meant authoritative custom, or the traditional manner of doing things, but early on shifted to that which should be enforced by authorities in the form of law (Latin, *jus*). Global justice, then, means the moral and political laws that apply to all human beings who share the planet. The Greek Stoics and Cynics considered themselves lovers of humanity, or cosmopolitans, and today we increasingly recognize that our fates intertwine across the globe.

As a senior values seminar, this course digs deeply into the philosophical and political issues surrounding global justice. We pursue this project by engaging several profound thinkers of global justice, beginning with Immanuel Kant, whose essay on perpetual peace continues to shape modern conceptions of cosmopolitanism. Then, we consider Daniel Bell’s account of Confucianism and Loubna El Amine’s call for political theory to transcend the East-West binary, John Rawls’s vision of an overlapping consensus of decent peoples, Martha Nussbaum’s defense of cultural universals, Samuel Huntington’s diagnosis of a clash of civilizations, Leo Strauss’s interpretation of tyranny, and Khaled Abou El Fadl’s account of Islam and the challenge of democracy. The course thus aims to construct a Socratic dialogue about global justice between profound representatives of diverse schools of thought: Enlightenment liberalism, Confucianism, political liberalism, cosmopolitanism, realism, neoconservativism, and Islam.

Throughout, we test each author’s ideas by how well they help us grasp contemporary issues of global justice, including human rights, American foreign policy, international trade agreements, war, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the Olympics. Students are encouraged to form a mental map of the world and the flows across by it by reading the *New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other international journals and newspapers. The hope is that by weighing contending theories, in the light of world events, we may clarify our own thinking and practice of global justice.

**Texts**

Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace* (Yale) 978-0300110708
Daniel Bell, *China’s New Confucianism* (Princeton) 9780691145853
Course Requirements

(1) The midterm on February 17 covers the visions of global justice advanced by Kant, Bell, El Amine, and Rawls. A week beforehand, I will distribute 6 essay questions, and on the day of the exam we will roll a die to determine 2 questions (on different authors). Well-written essays should incorporate material from the lectures, readings, presentations, and your own thoughts. You may study in groups, but the exam is close-booked. The exam is 1 hour.

(2) The final has the same format as the midterm, and is on Nussbaum, Huntington, Strauss, and Abou El Fadl.

(3-4) Students will write and present a 2000-word page research paper exploring what the author would say about a current international political event or controversy.

(5) On class on March 3, submit a research question and a bibliography for your research paper. By noon on May 5, send me a research page paper comparing and contrasting two of the authors on the syllabus about a matter of global justice. Students should write the essay as a potential submission to the Fordham Undergraduate Research Journal. For this reason, the essay should not be longer than 4500 words (approximately 15 pages).

(6) Class participation. Students are expected to come to class on time prepared to discuss the readings. I employ the Socratic method in the classroom, which means that I will often call on you even if your hands are down; be ready!

Grade Distribution

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<th>Component</th>
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<td>Research paper contrasting 2 authors</td>
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Class Schedule

1. January 20: Introduction; A Modern Conception of Global Justice
Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace*, Preliminary, First Section, Second Section

What is global justice and how may we attain it? Can people of different moralities and religions agree on basic ethical values or are we doomed to moral and political conflict? Can states form a just and stable international order or is peace just a time to prepare for the next war? Should the US join, lead, or follow the international community? The first seminar raises these and related questions and lays out a plan to address them, namely, by engaging in a Socratic dialogue about global justice with seven profound thinkers.

We start with Immanuel Kant’s 1795 essay, *Toward Perpetual Peace*. Kant’s essay continues to shape contemporary discussions about global justice. On the one hand, its call for republican states, international federations, and principles of universal hospitality opens a vista for liberal cosmopolitanism. On the other, Kant’s defense of principalities and sovereignty is a stumbling block for liberal interventionists. In this seminar, we’ll discuss how Kant presents and problematizes a modern conception of global justice.

2. January 27: Kant and Global Justice

Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace*, the rest

Contemporary political scientists and philosopher continue to debate the relevancy of Kant’s essay on perpetual peace. Questions we may discuss today include: Does publicity act on a check on tyranny and oppression? Does free trade necessarily bring about peace? Is there support for Kant’s claim that democracies don’t wage war with one another?

3. February 3: Confucianism and Global Justice

- Daniel Bell, *China’s New Confucianism*, Parts One, Three

Can people around the world agree on fundamental questions of human rights and legitimate political regimes? Or are there profound differences between Western, Chinese, and Islamic civilizations? In the first half of the class, we consider Daniel Bell’s argument that Confucianism is different from and superior to Western notions of philosophy and agonistic politics. In the second half of the class, we discuss, with Loubna El Amine, her thesis that we are watching a global convergence on the ideals of constitutionalism, rights, and democracy.

4. February 10: A Liberal Conception of Global Justice

In 1971, John Rawls published perhaps the most important work of liberal political philosophy in the 20th century: *A Theory of Justice*. For over two decades, international relations scholars assumed that Rawls’s domestic principles—of civil rights and liberties and basic economic justice—could apply to the globe. *The Law of Peoples*, much like Kant’s essay, encouraged and disappointed liberals. Rawls insists that democratic republic live up to their ideals; yet he also thinks that democracies can form alliances with well-ordered hierarchical peoples. In this class, we discuss the Kantian roots of Rawls’s conception of global justice as well as its contemporary relevance.

5. **February 17:** No class. I will be at a conference in India. I will send a midterm with two questions and you will have 24 hours to send it back. Each answer may be up to 1000 words.

6. **February 24:** Rawls and Global Justice


   In the first half of the class, I will lecture on Rawls’s conception of burdened peoples. In the second half, students will present on what Rawls might say about a current debate about global justice.

7. **March 3:** An Aristotelian Conception of Global Justice

   Martha C. Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice*, Introduction, Chapter 1

   Martha Nussbaum presents a capabilities-approach conception of global justice that draws heavily on Aristotle’s account of basic human needs. For Nussbaum, there are universal obligations to protect human functioning and its dignity, and Western liberals should fight for these values. In this seminar, we’ll consider how Nussbaum presents her case.

   • Students should submit a research question and a bibliography for the research paper.

8. **March 10:** Nussbaum and Global Justice

   Martha C. Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice*, Chapters 2, 3

   In the first half of the class, I will lecture on Nussbaum’s conception of women’s human rights. In the second half, students will present on what Nussbaum would say about a current debate about global justice.

9. **March 24:** A Realist Conception of Global Justice
Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Preface, Chapter 1, Chapter 5

Samuel Huntington has argued that civilizations necessarily define themselves by their enemies and that “global justice” is just a tense stalemate between civilizations. In this seminar, we consider the philosophic and historic foundations of Huntington’s thesis.

10. March 31: Huntington and Global Justice

Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Chapter 12

In the first half of the class, I will lecture on Huntington’s views on the future of civilizations. In the second half, students will present on what Huntington might say about a current debate about global justice.

11. April 7: A Neo-conservative Conception of Global Justice


Leo Strauss’s interpretation of Xenophon's dialogue, *Hiero or Tyrannicus*, presents a defense of benevolent tyranny. Through the influence of Paul Wolfowitz, Strauss’s student at the University of Chicago in the 1960’s, Strauss’s position became enshrined in neoconservative political thought and American foreign policy for the George W. Bush administration. In this seminar, we consider the roots and implications of Strauss’s essay.

12. April 21: Strauss and Global Justice

Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny*, Part II. The Strauss-Kojève Debate

In the first half of the class, I will lecture on the Strauss-Kojève debate. In the second half, students will present on what Strauss might say about a current debate about global justice.

13. April 28: An Islamic Conception of Global Justice

Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*

In the first half of class, I will lecture on Khaled Abou El Fadl’s *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*. In the second half of the class, students will discuss what Abou El Fald might say about a current debate about global justice.

May 5 (noon) – Send research paper electronically

Final Exam – Tuesday, May 09, 1:30 pm