

Global Justice

Senior Values Seminar, POSC
4400

Professor Nicholas Tampio
Fordham University
Spring 2025

Class hours: Faber 668, TF 8:30
am – 9:45 am

Office hours: Faber 665, TF
11:30am-12:30 pm
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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. The course stages a conversation about global justice between the following authors: Immanuel Kant, whose essay on perpetual peace continues to shape modern conceptions of cosmopolitanism; W.E.B. DuBois who wants the Dark World (or global south) to unite to fight racism and imperialism; Martha Nussbaum, who defends cultural universals for the sake of everyone including historically oppressed people and draws the ire of anthropologists such as Saba Mahmood; Leo Strauss, the neoconservative who distinguishes good and bad tyrannies; Tongdong Bai, who articulates a theory of *tian xia* that places Confucianism at the center of global debates about global justice; Savarkar, who inspires the BJP to embrace a nationalistic Hindutva in India; and B.R. Ambedkar, who calls for international organizations to intervene in India to solve the caste problem.

Throughout, we test each author's ideas by how well they help us grasp contemporary issues of global justice, including human rights, pandemic responses, 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.

Student learning objectives

- By the end of the semester, students should be able to successfully:
- Know about Enlightenment, post-Enlightenment, feminist, realist, neoconservative, Indian, and Chinese conceptions of global justice
- Be able to apply theories of global justice to real world problems
- Be confident discussing issues of global justice
- Write a philosophical, empirically-grounded research paper

Texts

Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace* (Yale) 9780300110708

W. E. B. Du Bois, *International Thought* (Cambridge) 9781108798778

Martha Nussbaum, *Sex and Social Justice* (Oxford) 9780195112108

Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations* (Simon & Schuster) 9781451628975

Leo Strauss, *On Tyranny* (Chicago) 9780226776873

Tongdong Bai, *Against Political Equality: The Confucian Case* (Princeton) 9780691195995

B.R. Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste* (Verso) ISBN: 9781784783525

Course Requirements

(1) A week beforehand the midterm, 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.

(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. The paper should cite a few newspaper articles and primary and secondary sources for the author.

Please sign up here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O~Yypbe2MZlpIFxhzLB7kzGit94KtVFUvo5pBrogXE/edit?tab=t.0>

(5) By noon on May 6, upload to Blackboard a 4500-word research page paper comparing two theoretical perspectives on a subject of global justice. See template at the end of the syllabus.

This is a No-AI course. Students need to learn how to think and research on their own while in college. AI is a tool, but it also lets an algorithm assemble other people's words for you. I see more dangers than benefits for college students using AI.

(6) Class participation.

Grade Distribution

Midterm

20

Final exam	20
Presentation paper	10
Presentation	10
Research paper contrasting 2 authors	30
Class participation	10

Class Schedule

An Enlightenment Conception of Global Justice

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.

1. January 14 – "Perpetual Peace," First Section (pp. 66-71)
2. January 17 – "Perpetual Peace," Second Section (pp. 72-85)
3. January 21 – "Perpetual Peace," First Supplement (pp. 85-92)
4. January 24 – "Perpetual Peace," remainder (pp. 92-109)
5. January 28 – David Ragazzoni (NYU→Toronto) will visit to discuss Hans Kelsen

Post-Colonial Cosmopolitanisms

Many political thinkers and actors on the left work within an Enlightenment framework of equality, liberty, justice, and cosmopolitanism. But how is it possible to take these ideals into an era when we have become cognizant of how these ideals were articulated in eras of imperialism and colonialism? In this unit, we consider W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of "the dark races of mankind," his critique of Western imperialism, and his call for pan-African unity.

6. January 31 – "The Present Outlook for the Dark Races of Mankind," "The African Roots of War"
7. February 4 – "Black Africa Tomorrow"
8. February 7 – Student presentations on DuBois

An Aristotelian Conception of Global Justice

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.

9. February 11 – *Sex and Social Justice*, Introduction

10. February 14 – *Sex and Social Justice*, Women and Cultural Universals
11. February 21 – Judging other Cultures; Saba Mahmood [*Politics of Piety*](#), Chapter 5, “Agency, Gender, Embodiment”
12. February 25 – Student presentations on Nussbaum or Mahmood
13. February 28 – Midterm exam

Realist Conceptions of Global Justice

Samuel Huntington has argued that civilizations necessarily define themselves by their enemies and that “global justice” is just a tense stalemate between civilizations.

14. March 4 – *Clash of Civilizations*, Chapter 1
15. March 7 – *Clash of Civilizations*, All the passages on Islam
16. March 11 – Savarkar, [*Essentials of Hindutva*](#)
 - Please confirm with me your research paper topic and send me a bibliography of at least 10 sources on the topic.
17. March 14 – Student Presentations on Huntington or Savarkar
 - We will likely meet in my Zoom room: <https://fordham.zoom.us/my/tampio>

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.

18. March 25 – *On Tyranny*, Xenophon, “Hiero or Tyrannicus,” Introduction
19. March 28 – *On Tyranny*, Rest of *On Tyranny*
20. April 1 – Student presentations on Strauss

A Chinese Conception of Global Justice

Chinese is a rising world power and may soon possess a military capability to challenge America, particularly in Asia. In this unit, we consider how Tongdong Bai envisions China’s role in global politics.

21. April 4 – Tongdong Bai, *Against Equality*, Chapter 7
22. April 8 – Tongdong Bai, *Against Equality*, Chapter 8
23. April 11 – Student presentations on Tongdong Bai

An Indian Conception of Global Justice

B.R. Ambedkar was a Dalit who opposed the caste system, put the reservation system in the Indian constitution, criticized Gandhi for holding onto the varna system, had no time for Hindutva, and wanted international organizations to intervene in Indian affairs. Luis Cabrera is a political theorist who draws upon Ambedkar to envision something like a world government.

24. April 15 – Ambedkar, “Annihilation of Caste”

25. April 22 – Luis Cabrera, “Gandhiji, I Have no Homeland”

26. April 25 – No class. I’ll be at the New England Political Science Association conference.

27. April 29 – Student presentations on Ambedkar

Final exam – online

Friday, May 9, 2025	9:30 AM	11:30 AM
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May 6, noon – Upload research paper to Blackboard.

Template for final research paper

A catchy title and informative subtitle. E.g.: *The Problems with Pirates: How Realists and Cosmopolitans would deal with Somali Pirates in the Gulf of Aden*

I. Introduction (roughly 500 words)

- a. Hook. Find a recent news story that raises a legitimately hard question. Ideally, you'll raise a question that you have not yet answered to your satisfaction and want to think about harder.
- b. Map. Explain how the paper will address the question.

II. How the first perspective would address the question. Use catchy and informative subheadings. Each section can begin with a hook and a map (even in one paragraph). (roughly 1500 words)

III. How the second perspective would address the question. (roughly 1500 words)

IV. How would you answer the question. This is your chance to bring in more sources, perspectives, considerations. Make an argument rather than just share an opinion. (roughly 1000 words)

General advice:

- Cite 10 academic sources
- Cite 5 newspaper articles
- Take ideas from academic articles about how to structure the paper. How many paragraphs is the introduction? How does the author cite sources? What does the author do in the conclusion? Etc. Look at journals such as *Comparative Political Theory*, *Constellations*, or *Philosophy and Global Affairs* for ideas about how to write the paper.
- Use recent sources. If you consider a Kantian perspective, read recent articles on Kantian political theory and not just *Towards Perpetual Peace*.
- It's crucial to ask the right question. I'm happy to meet in person or communicate by email over formulating the right question.