

Politics 9503a/Philosophy 9125a: Equality (Sep-Dec 2018)

Tuesday 3:30-5:30, SSC 4105

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In this seminar course we discuss recent debates in political theory about the meaning and value of equality. The first part of the course considers competing answers to the questions, 'Equality of what?' and 'Why equality?', asking both what should be equalized and whether something other than equality is to be preferred. The discussion covers the arguments for and against John Rawls's influential idea of democratic equality, Ronald Dworkin's equality of resources, sufficiency and priority as against equality (Harry Frankfurt and Derek Parfit), and Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum's equality of capabilities.

The second part of the course begins with defences of relational or social equality (Elizabeth Anderson and Samuel Scheffler) before considering the range of Tim Scanlon's answers to the question, 'Why does inequality matter?'. We conclude with two of the most important topics within the debates about egalitarianism: (1) the prospects for sex and gender equality, and (2) the value and possibility of global equality.

Most of the weekly readings will be posted on the OWL site for the course. You are required to purchase one book: T. M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. It is available at the UWO bookstore.

Evaluation

A final essay, due on the last day of classes, 50%: unless you get the instructors' agreement, the essay is to be on one of the week's topics, drawing on the assigned readings plus additional readings as appropriate. The essay should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced (approximately 4,500-6,000 words). Late essays are subject to a penalty of 2% per day.

Participation: 50%.

Your grade here will be based on *your contributions to class discussion*. To be eligible for this portion of the final grade, students must attend all classes except when there are medical or compassionate reasons, and hand in at the start of each class a weekly response to the readings.* This is to be one page, single-spaced, and should succinctly state what you take to be the main point and argument of each reading, and then state what issue or issues the readings pose for discussion. It will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. [*Note: you may miss one week's written response without penalty; each further missed response will result in a two mark deduction from the participation grade.]

Students who meet this requirement will receive a mark that reflects their contributions to seminar discussion – average contributions will receive marks that translate into the B range, excellent contributions will receive marks that translate into the A or A+ range. It is expected that all students will contribute to every class, or at least will not fail to contribute to two classes in a row.

1. Introduction (Sep 11)

2. John Rawls's Democratic Egalitarianism (Sep 18)

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999, sections 1-4 (3-19), 11-13 (52-73), 16 & 17 (81-93), 77 (441-449) and 80 & 81 (464-474).

3. Critics of Rawls from Right and Left (Sep 25)

Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1974, 149-164 & 183-231.

G. A. Cohen, 'Where the Action Is: On the Site of Distributive Justice', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 26, 1997, 3-30.

4. Ronald Dworkin on Equality of Welfare and Equality of Resources (Oct 2)

Ronald Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part 1: Equality of Welfare', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 10 (3), 1981, 185-246.

Ronald Dworkin, 'What is Equality? Part 2: Equality of Resources', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 10 (4), 1981, 283-345.

Reading Week (October 8-12)

5. Critics of Dworkin from Right and Left (Oct 16)

John Kekes, 'Against Egalitarianism', *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 58, 2006, 137-156.

Richard Arneson, 'Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare', *Philosophical Studies* 56, 1989, 77-93.

G. A. Cohen, 'On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice', *Ethics* 99, 1989, 906-944.

6. Equality, Sufficiency, and Priority (Oct 23)

Harry Frankfurt, 'Equality as a Moral Ideal', *Ethics* 98 (1), 1987, 21-43.

Paula Casal, 'Why Sufficiency is Not Enough', *Ethics* 117 (2007), 296-327.

Derek Parfit, 'Equality or Priority?', in Matthew Clayton and Andrew Williams (eds.), *The Ideal of Equality*, London: Macmillan, 2000, 81-125.

7. Sen and Nussbaum on Equal Capabilities (Oct 30)

Amartya Sen, 'Capability and Well-Being', in Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen (eds.), *The Quality of Life*, 1993, 30-53.

Martha Nussbaum, 'Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice', *Feminist Economics* 9 (2-3), 2003, 33-59.

Elizabeth Anderson, 'Justifying the Capabilities Approach to Justice', in Harry Brighouse and Ingrid Robeyns (eds.), *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and Capabilities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 81-100.

8. Relational Equality and the Critique of Luck Egalitarianism (Nov 6)

Elizabeth Anderson, 'What is the Point of Equality?', *Ethics* 109, 1999, 287-337.

Samuel Scheffler, 'What is Egalitarianism?', *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31, 2003, 5-39.

9. Scanlon on Why Inequality Matters: Part 1 (Nov 13)

T. M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 1-73.

10. Scanlon on Why Inequality Matters: Part 2 (Nov 20)

T. M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 74-158.

11. Sex and Gender Equality (Nov 27)

Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, Chapter 5, 89-109 & 195-198.

Martha Nussbaum, 'The Feminist Critique of Liberalism', in *Sex and Social Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, 55-80 & 384-392.

Audre Lorde, 'Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference', in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984, 114-123.

12. Global Equality (Dec 4)

Charles Beitz, 'Does Global Inequality Matter?', *Metaphilosophy* 32 (1), 2001, 95-112.

David Miller, 'Against Global Egalitarianism', *Journal of Ethics* 9 (1 & 2), 2005, 55-79.

Christian Barry and Laura Valentini, 'Egalitarian Challenges to Global Inequality: A Critique', *Review of International Studies* 35, 2009, 485-512.