

PL089/TH089  
Person and Social Responsibility II  
Admin. Bldg. 380C

Dr. Mary Troxell  
Office: New

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Office Hours: M 1-1:45,

3-4 F 2-3

The aim of this course is to explore the concept of the person and the nature of social responsibility through 1) the examination of key texts in philosophy and theology and 2) active engagement in serving the needs of the community through your field placement.

Whereas last semester our discussions centered on the understanding of the person, this semester we will focus our concerns on the relationship between the person and society. In particular we will explore the following questions: What do we owe our neighbor? How do we create a just society? What institutions foster human flourishing? How does our own community succeed, and how does it fail to measure up? Is violence ever justified in fighting oppression? Throughout the course, our theoretical inquiries will be aided and informed by the practical experience you receive in your placements.

This two-semester, twelve-credit course is designed to fulfill the undergraduate requirements in Theology and Philosophy.

### **Course Requirements**

**1) Attendance and Class Participation:** Class Participation is a vital element of this course, and you should come to class on time, prepared to discuss the assigned reading material. Unexcused absences will count against your class participation grade, and more than five unexcused absences during the semester will result in the lowering of your final grade. An excused absence is an absence either agreed upon by the instructor **ahead of time** or excused by a doctor's note after.

**2) Exams:** One midterm exam will be given **Wednesday, March 19**. A final exam will be given on the date scheduled by the administration.

**3) Papers and Quizzes:** Two short reflection papers will be assigned throughout the semester, as well as two longer essays, due on the dates noted below. In addition, short quizzes will be given periodically in the first five minutes of class, which will ask basic questions of the text. If you arrive after the quiz has been distributed, you cannot take the quiz.

**4) Newspaper Reflections:** You are required to read the *Boston Globe* Monday through Friday, taking special note of articles that concern issues relevant to the community in which your placement is located or issues relevant to social justice. Approximately every other Friday, **you are required**

**to hand in four news articles from the two-week period,**  
along with a reflection on **one of the articles** from the four  
that you chose (see handout).

**Grade Distribution for this Portion of the Course** (60% of  
final grade for course).

Short Papers and Newspaper Reflections: 15%

Long Essays: 40%

Midterm: 15%

Class Participation and Quizzes: 15%

Final

Exam: 15%

### **Required Texts**

John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government and A Letter  
Concerning Toleration*

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*

Karen Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*

Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love*

#### January 14- January 18

Introduction

Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, Morality" (online)

King, "On Being a Good Neighbor"

#### January 21- January 25

Ayn Rand, "The Ethics of Emergencies" (handout)

Ian Parker, "The Gift" (online)

Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (online)

**News Articles Due on Friday**

#### January 28- February 1

Mill, *On Utilitarianism* (online)

**February 1: First Short Reflection Paper Due**

#### February 4- February 8

Mill, *On Utilitarianism* (online)

Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*

**News Articles Due on Friday**

#### February 11-February 15

Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government*

Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter One

#### February 18-February 22

Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter Two

John Rawls, *Theory of Justice* selections (online)

**News Articles Due on Friday**

#### February 25- February 29

Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter Three

Nozick, *Anarchy State, and Utopia* (online)  
Marx, *Communist Manifesto*  
**Long Essay Due: March 1**

### **March 3-7 Spring Vacation**

March 10-March 14  
Marx, *Communist Manifesto* (online)  
Marx, *The German Ideology* (online)  
**News Articles Due on Friday**

March 17-March 19  
Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (online)  
Erhrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*  
**Midterm Exam March 19**

### **March 20-24 Easter Weekend**

March 26- March 28  
Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (online)

March 31- April 4  
Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*  
Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter Four  
King, "The Man Who Was a Fool"  
"How Should a Christian View Communism?"  
Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*  
**News Articles Due on Friday**

April 7-April 11  
Reinhold Niebuhr, *Selections* (online)  
Lebacqz *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter Five  
**Friday April 13: Second Reflection Essay Due**

April 14-April 18  
Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice* Chapter Five  
King, "The Answer to a Perplexing Question"  
"Loving Your Enemies"  
"Paul's Letter to American Christians"  
Thich Nhat Hanh, *Love in Action* selections (on reserve)  
**News Articles Due on Friday**

### **April 23 Patriots Day No Classes**

April 23-April 25  
Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice*, Chapter Six  
Boff, *Introduction to Liberation Theology* selections (on reserve)  
Cone, *Black Liberation Theology* (Handout)  
**Wednesday April 27: Final Long Essay Due**

April 28-May 1

Cone, *Black Liberation Theology*, Wrap Up