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404-01 Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Environmental Justice

Adam Konopka
Xavier University

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Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Environmental Justice

PHIL 404 - 01
Spring 2020
Three Credit Hours
Core Writing Flag
Tuesdays and Thursdays
11:30am-12:45pm
Logan Hall 2

Professor Adam Konopka
Office: Hinkle 231
Office phone: (513) 745-3491
Email: konopkaa@xavier.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:00-11:00am, 5:30-6:30pm and by appointment

Course Syllabus

Course Description:

This course is an investigation into theories of environmental justice and contemporary local, national, and international environmental justice issues. We will examine contemporary environmental justice public policy issues from distributive, recognitional, and participatory theories of justice. Through the examination of texts by John Rawls, Nancy Fraser, Axel Honneth, Amartya Sen, and Martha Nussbaum, students will investigate environmental justice policy issues related to air pollution, water pollution, and climate change.

Course Catalogue Description:

Study of selected issues and texts in contemporary philosophy (20th-21st centuries). Focus varies. This course may be taken more than once for credit if it has a different focus each time.

PPP Program Goals:

The PPP program aims to graduate students who are able to engage in public action in dynamic and productive ways, shaping the public sphere in accordance with the goods on which the public depends. PPP graduates will be able to navigate a diverse world, with an understanding of the principles on which a just society depends and of the causes of unjust inequality. PPP graduates will work with an appreciation of the differences among nations and cultures, and with the linguistic and cultural understanding necessary to bridge them.

Required Texts:

Rawls, John (1999). *A Theory of Justice: Revised Edition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press). ISBN-13: 978-0674000780.

Schlosberg, David (2007). *Defining Environmental Justice: Theories, Movements, and Nature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). ISBN: 978-0-19-928629-4.

Additional readings are posted on the Canvas site for this course.

Course Goals and PPP Student Learning Outcomes:

Course Specific Goals	PPP SLOs	Assessment
1) Analyze the historical and theoretical characteristics of 20 th and 21 st century environmental justice movements and theories.	Critical Understanding of the Public – Students will be able to explain competing conceptions of the public, and the different institutions, practices, and procedures that comprise it.	- Canvas Discussion Posts - Papers
2) Practically and theoretically engage local and national environmental stakeholders and decision makers.	Civic Engagement – Students will be able to collaborate in engaging in the public from a perspective that transcends any particular national outlook.	- Canvas Discussion Posts - Papers
3) Apply multiple scientific and scholarly approaches to environmental policy issues.	Multidisciplinary Perspective – Students will be able to bring multiple disciplinary perspectives to bear in understanding the public.	- Papers

Teaching Methodology:

This course primarily utilizes facilitated classroom discussion, lecture, and class guests in its pedagogical approach. Regular readings and writing assignments will be involved in class preparation.

Course Requirements:

Attendance:

- You are expected to have *punctual* attendance to every class meeting.
- You are allowed three unexcused absences. For every unexcused absence your attendance/participation grade will be lowered by 5%. (A total of five unexcused absences will result in a 0% for your attendance/participation grade.)
- Excused absences will be given if the student supplies a note from a doctor, a coach, etc. You must hand in the note within one week from your first day back to class, preferably before, especially if the absence is anticipated. If there is no note within this time frame, then the absence will be counted as unexcused.
- If you are late to class and have missed the role call/attendance sheet, you must notify me of your presence after class. If you do not, you will be counted as absent. (It is your responsibility to demonstrate your attendance.)
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the notes/information that you missed from another student. You are also welcome during office hours to discuss the material.
- Special campus events: Over the course of the semester, there will be several campus events, e.g, lectures, panel presentations, etc., that will have required attendance. Exceptions to this policy will be made on an individual basis and will require supplementary assignments.

Participation:

- You are expected to participate in class discussion.

- There will be special discussions throughout the semester that you will be asked to lead.
- University Disability Policy: Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to speak to course faculty at the beginning of the semester. In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Xavier University affords academic adjustments and auxiliary aids for students with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit or restrict one or more of such major life activities as walking, seeing, hearing, or learning. Students with disabilities should contact the Student Disability Services Center: <http://www.xavier.edu/lac/student-disability-services.cfm>.

Papers:

- There are four papers assigned for this semester. Specific guidelines for the papers will be available at least one week in advance of the paper due date that will specify the criteria of evaluation.
- Writing Center – The James A. Glenn Writing Center is located in Room 400 of the Conaton Learning Commons and relevant information can be found on the center website: www.xavier.edu/writing_center. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this valuable resource.

Discussion Posts:

- Over the course of the semester, there will be several required discussion posts on canvas that will be an extension of classroom group discussions. Specific questions and guidelines will be available in advance.

Submission and Plagiarism Guidelines:

- Failure to turn in the assignment by class time of the due date will result in a lowering of the grade for that paper. For every day that the assignment is late, the grade will automatically be lowered one letter grade. If the paper is more than one week late, you will automatically fail that assignment. Arrangements for exceptions to this policy must be made in person or by email before the day the assignment is due.
- Plagiarism: In accordance to university policy, papers that display evidence of plagiarism will be failed and can result in failure of the course. All such cases will be dealt with according to this policy and in coordination with the Dean’s Office. Whenever you quote or paraphrase from a book, the internet, a lecture, or other source, you must cite that source and use quotes if appropriate. Please review the student handbook at <http://www.xavier.edu/student-integrity/documents/studenthandbook.pdf>. As stated in the handbook, “Penalties for violations of this [plagiarism] policy may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an “F” in the course, and expulsion from Xavier.

Methodology/Grading Percentages:

Attendance and Participation:	10%
Discussion Posts:	10%
Papers:	80%

Letter grades are determined according to a ten-point scale:

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	88-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	59 and below

- The information on this syllabus is subject to change. If a change is made, students will be clearly notified.

Course Calendar:

Date:	Assignment:	Due:
	Introduction: What is Environmental Justice?	
1/14	Course Introduction	
1/16	Schlosberg – <i>Defining Environmental Justice</i> pp. 3-41	
1/21	Carson – <i>Silent Spring</i> pp. 1-13, 39-51 Bullard – <i>Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality</i> pp. 1-20	Discussion Post – Environmental Justice Case Studies
1/23	Schlosberg – <i>Defining Environmental Justice</i> pp. 45-99	
1/28	Schlosberg – <i>Defining Environmental Justice</i> pp. 103-127	Discussion Post – Cincinnati Case Studies
1/30	City of Cincinnati – “Ordinance No. 210” (Environmental Justice Ordinance) pp. 1-18 De Gure – “The Cincinnati Environmental Justice Ordinance” pp. 223-248 Cincinnati’s Office of Environment and Sustainability Website Class Guest: Mark Mallory (Former Cincinnati Mayor)	
2/4	Schlosberg – <i>Defining Environmental Justice</i> pp. 129-212	
2/6	Paper Discussion	Paper #1
	Air Pollution Policy and Distributive Justice	
2/11	PBS – “Do We Still Need a Clean Air Act” (video – 25 minutes)	
2/13	Clean Air Act – Selections TBA	
2/18	Clean Air Act – Selections TBA	Discussion Post – Air Pollution Case Studies
2/20	Congressional Research Service – “Clean Air Act Issues in the 116 th Congress” pp. 1-19	

2/25	Rawls – <i>A Theory of Justice</i> pp. 3-19	
2/27	Rawls – <i>A Theory of Justice</i> pp. 102-122	
3/3	Rawls – <i>A Theory of Justice</i> pp. 52-81	
3/5	Paper Discussion	Paper #2
3/10	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
3/12	NO CLASS – Spring Break	
	Water Pollution Policy and Participatory Justice	
3/17	Clean Water Act – Selections TBA	
3/19	Washington D.C. Trip – Final Preparations	
3/21-24*	Washington D.C. Trip	
3/24	NO CLASS – Washington D.C. Trip	
3/26	Clean Water Act – Selections TBA Class Guest: Dave Schmidt (Mill Creek Alliance)	
3/31	Clean Water Act – Selections TBA	Discussion Post – Water Pollution Case Studies
4/2	Nussbaum – “Women and Equality: The Capabilities Approach” pp. 227-243	
4/4*	Mill Creek Service Project What: Tree Planting and Live Staking along the Mill Creek When: 10:00am Where: Evendale How: Carpool – meet at the circle between Smith Hall and the CLC	
4/7	Sen – “Human Rights and Capabilities” pp. 151-166	
4/9	NO CLASS – Easter Break	

4/14	Paper Discussion	Paper #3
	Climate Justice and Recognition	
4/16	Human Rights Council – “Report ... on the Relationship Between Climate Change and Human Rights” pp. 1-30 Earth Summit – “Bali Principles of Climate Justice” pp. 1-2	
4/21	Parfit – <i>Reasons and Persons</i> pp. 351-417	Discussion Post – Climate Change Case Studies
4/23	Fraser – “Rethinking Recognition” pp. 107-120	
4/28	Honneth and Margalit – “Recognition” pp. 111-139 Honneth – “Recognition and Moral Obligation” pp. 16-34	
4/30	Paper Workshop	Paper #4 Draft
5/5	Final Exam – 10:30am-12:20pm	Paper #4