Course Description

The notion that relations of justice extend beyond the state is fuelled in part by recognition that processes that are causally responsible for peoples’ well-being are distributed across state boundaries. The effect of human-caused climate change is a central example. There is growing appreciation that these harms present collective action problems whose resolution will require an equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of cooperation among all human beings. Yet at present a fully worked account of a global theory of justice remains elusive.

The aim of this colloquium is to bring into sharper focus the issues that a credible theory of global justice must address. The project is necessarily multi-disciplinary, requiring investigation of topics that are conventionally studied in different academic units. This is reflected in the distinguished list of invited speakers, whose areas of expertise are diverse, as well as the fact that the course is open to interested graduate and senior undergraduate students from across the University.

Format

The group meets each week for a three-hour session, followed by a meal during those weeks in which we host an invited colloquium speaker.

The week prior to the colloquium we will discuss a set of readings that introduce the issues raised during the following week’s colloquium. During weeks when there are no colloquia groups of students, selected from different academic disciplines, will be responsible for introducing that week’s readings (The Presentation). All students are expected to write critical responses to that week’s readings every week.

Students are also required to participate in all colloquia, as well as joining for a (free) meal. Students will present an original Capstone Project at the conclusion of term.

Evaluation

Presentations: 2-3 per term 30%
Weekly 700 Word Written Assignments: 7 per term (pass or fail), 20%
Participation: 10%
Capstone Project and Presentation: 1 per term 40%

Provisional Schedule

All sessions meet from 3:30-6:30 on Thursdays. There will be colloquia on alternating weeks to which all members of the University community are invited. During weeks without an invited speaker the class will read materials in preparation for the following week’s colloquium.

Readings: TBA

TOPIC #1: Do the Boundaries of Political States have Moral Significance For Distributive Justice?

Background for Colloquium 1: Jan. 10, wk 1

Colloquium 1: Jan. 17, wk 2
Kit Wellman, Philosophy, Washington U., St Louis


Samuel Scheffler, "Families, Nations and Strangers," THE LINDLEY LECTURE (Lawrence: The University of Kansas, 1994).

Christopher Heath Wellman, "Relational Facts in Liberal Political Theory: Is There Magic in the Pronoun 'My'?

**Background for Colloquium 2:** Jan. 24, wk 3

**Colloquium 2:** Jan. 31, wk 4
Tom Christiano, Philosophy and Law, Arizona


**TOPIC #2 What is the Right Trade-off Between Growth and Protection of the Environment?**

**Background for Colloquium 3:** Feb. 7, wk 5
"A few articles and/or book chapters will introduce students to the economic, political and social challenges of preventing major global warming and the widespread ecological destruction that would ensue."

University Reading Break: Feb. 11-15

**Colloquium 3:** Feb. 21, wk 6
Mark Jaccard, REM, SFU

**TOPIC #3 Contextualism, Universalism, and the Meaning of Human Rights**

**Background for Colloquium 4:** Feb. 28, wk 7

**Colloquium 4:** Mar. 7, wk 8
Melissa Williams, Political Science, University of Toronto
TOPIC #4 What kind of Special Consideration Should Aboriginal Peoples Receive In a Theory of Global Justice?

Background for Colloquia 5-6: Mar. 14, wk 9

Colloquium 5: Mar. 21, wk 10
Rob Williams, Law, Arizona
2) BCTC Annual report
3) HTG Admissibility Report from IACHR
4) HTG Presentation Summary on the Merits, Oct. 2011 and exhibits OAS photo sites and Paldi Exhibit for Merits.

Colloquium 6: Mar. 28, wk 11
Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Government of BC

TOPIC #5 Is Democratization the Most Effective Means to Help the World’s Poor?

Background for Colloquium 7: Apr. 4, wk 12

Colloquium 7: Apr. 11, wk 13
Anke Hoeffler, Economics, Oxford

Presentations of Capstone Projects: April 18 (Exam Period)