# Ohio State University Economics 3001

**Economy, Polity, and Community 11:10-12:30 TTh Fall 2019**

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# Overview

This course examines three models of human nature, each of which captures something important about social and political life, and each of which has significant blind spots. The first model sees human beings as rational actors who seek to maximize the satisfaction of their preferences. The second model sees human beings as citizens with public responsibilities that orient them toward the pursuit of the common good. The third model sees human beings

as members of communities that provide an identity and a set of values that enable them to navigate the social world. We begin by asking what human well-being consists in. Next we ask whether and when markets are the best way of pursuing human well-being. We then examine how the pursuit of well-being, through markets or otherwise, should be affected by considerations of desert or luck. Finally, we ask whether we should have special concern for the well-being of our fellow citizens, and if so what duties we might have to the citizens of other countries.

# Texts

All of the required readings have been placed on e-reserve through Carmen.

# Course requirements

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Assignment | Due date | Weight |
| Short essay (~800 words) | Submitted electronically on Canvas by midnight [month/day] | 10% |
| Midterm | [month/day], in class | 20% |
| Term Paper (~2000 words) | Submitted electronically on Canvas by midnight [month/day] | 25% |
| Final Exam | [month/day/time] | 25% |
| Participation (including attendance andclass contributions) | Ongoing | 20% |

**Policies and procedures**

Academic misconduct: It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: [http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc.](http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc)

Disabilities: Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 West 12th Avenue; telephone 292-3307; TDD 292-0901; [http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu](http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/)

# Grade scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 60-66 |
| F | 0-59 |

**Weekly schedule of readings and assignments**

# Weeks 1-4: Human well-being: What should we measure? What can we measure?

1. Freedom and flourishing

Week 1: Market freedom as the core value

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (excerpt) Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government*

Thomas Piketty, *The Economics of Inequality* (excerpt) Measuring freedom

Freedom in the World (Freedom House) https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015 Human Freedom Index (Cato) https:[//w](http://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index)ww[.cato.org/human-freedom-index](http://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index) Index of Economic Freedom (Heritage) <http://www.heritage.org/index/> World Index of Moral Freedom <http://www.fundalib.org/en/468-2/>

Social Mobility: <http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/national/20050515_CLASS_GRAPHIC/index_03.html> World Press Freedom Index (Reporters without Borders) https://rsf.org/en/ranking\_table

Week 2: The capabilities approach

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (excerpt) Martha Nussbaum *Creating Capabilities* (excerpt)

Erin Kelly, “Equal Opportunity, Unequal Capability” Measuring human flourishing

GDP https://knoema.com/nwnfkne/world-gdp-ranking-2017-gdp-by-country-data-and-charts World Happiness Report <http://worldhappiness.report/ed/2017/>

OECD Life Satisfaction index <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/topics/life-satisfaction/> Happy Planet Index <http://happyplanetindex.org/>

Environmental Performance Index <http://epi.yale.edu/>

1. Community, identity, and other social values Week 3: Inequality and social trust

Richard Wilkinson & Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level* (excerpt) Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (excerpt)

Measuring economic inequality

Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/IHDI> Gini Index [http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SI.POV.GINI&country](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&amp;series=SI.POV.GINI&amp;country)

Week 4: Social inequality and identity

Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (excerpt)

Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (excerpt) Measuring political and social equality

Democracy Index https:[//w](http://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index)ww[.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index](http://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index)

National Equality Index https://soba.iamempowered.com/2017-equality-index

# Weeks 5-8: Limits of markets?

Week 5: Benefits of markets

Adam Smith, “Of the Division of Labor” and “Of the Natural and Market Price of Commodities” from *The Wealth of Nations*

Friedrich Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society” Milton Friedman, *Free to Choose* (excerpt)

Week 6: Moral limits of markets

Michael Sandel, *What Money Can’t Buy* (excerpt)

Debra Satz, “Noxious Markets” (from *Why Some Things Should Not Be for Sale*)

Lauren-Brooke Eisen, *Inside Private Prisons: An American Dilemma in the Age of Mass Incarceration*

(excerpt) Week 7: Paternalism

Richard Thaler & Cass Sunstein, *Nudge* (excerpt) Sarah Conly, *Against Autonomy* (excerpt)

# Week 8: MIDTERM REVIEW and EXAM

**Weeks 9-11: Luck, effort, & the justification of inequality**

Week 9: Sufficientarianism, luck egalitarianism, and relational egalitarianism

Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (excerpt) Harry Frankfurt, “Equality as a Moral Ideal” Ronald Dworkin, “What is Equality?”

Elizabeth Anderson, “What is the Point of Equality?” Week 10: The work ethic and capitalism

Max Weber, *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (excerpt)

Robert Nozick, Wilt Chamberlain example (from *Anarchy State and Utopia*) Gerald Cohen, *Self-Ownership, Freedom, Equality*, chap. 1

Robert Reich, “Work and Worth” (from *Saving Capitalism*) Philippe Van Parijs, *Basic Income* (excerpt)

Week 11: Property

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapter 5

David Hume, “Of Justice and Property” from *Treatise of Human Nature*

John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* (excerpt) Karl Marx, *Capital* (excerpt)

David Schmidtz, “The Institution of Property”

# Weeks 12-13: Borders and cosmopolitanism

Week 12: Obligations to non-compatriots

Peter Singer, “Rich and Poor”

Bryan Caplan, “Why Should We Restrict Immigration?”

Catherine Lu, “Cosmopolitan Justice, Democracy and World Government” Martha Nussbaum, “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism”

Week 13: Duties to compatriots

David Miller, *National Responsibility and Global Justice* (excerpt)

Robert Goodin, “What Is So Special About Our Fellow Countrymen?” Thomas Nagel, “The Problem of Global Justice”

# Week 14: Review

**FINAL EXAM [canonical time for classes that meet in this time slot]**