FAIRNESS
University of Toronto, Trudeau Centre for Peace, Conflict, and Justice
PCJ360H Topics in Peace, Conflict and Justice | Fall 2018
Tuesdays: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Room SS 1070
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Office hours: Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The difference between peace and conflict can hinge on agreement or disagreement about what is just and fair. This course explores fairness from multiple perspectives to shed light on why a shared conception of fairness is often hard to achieve. Through recent readings from developmental, social, moral and cultural psychology, as well as behavioral economics, students will gain a practical understanding of the current state of the research on the topic. Students will be asked to critically examine the implications of this existing evidence for an understanding of the universality and diversity inherent in fairness judgments. Throughout, students will apply their learning to historical and contemporary conflicts, from inside the home to across national boundaries.

COURSE POLICIES

Course materials that are not otherwise available online will be shared via Quercus. In this seminar course, discussion of the assigned readings is the vehicle for learning. For this reason, punctual attendance is required, and thorough reading of all assigned articles is mandatory. Please note that readings are subject to change – you will be provided with at least a week’s notice if there are changes.

EVALUATION

Class participation You are expected to participate in all class meetings and in online course activities. When you are taking part in discussions – online and in the classroom, and doing your part in the in-class group presentations, you’re participating.

Responding to discussion questions: 20%
Each week, you will find discussion questions related to the week’s readings online. Please submit your responses to the discussion questions online each week (even if you are auditing the class). A few (3-4) paragraphs describing your response will suffice. Post on Quercus and also respond to your fellow students as desired. Your question responses must be posted by 9am on the Monday.

In-class Group Presentations: 40%
Following the lecture and discussion at the start of class, we will break into (6) discussion groups targeting the remaining 3 articles (bolded). Each of these articles will be the focus of 1/3 of the class (2 of the 6 discussion groups). These groups will be responsible for presenting their article to the rest of the class. These groups will stay the same, week to week (groups assigned on Quercus).
There will be 20-30 minutes to meet, discuss, allocate portions among group members, and prepare a presentation for the rest of the class. It's important for your group members and your other fellow classmates that you do your reading before class to facilitate an engaging and useful class for everyone. Part of the planning for the presentation can be done before class or online if it's helpful. A smaller number of group members can be delegated as presenters if desired, and this role can be rotated week to week. The following are some things to keep in mind regarding what to cover in your presentation to the class:

For **scientific articles:**
- describe the background (the prior research on the topic according to the article)
- the method (the research question and exactly how it was tested)
- the results (what was found)
- the implications of the results (e.g., for our understanding of the psychology of fairness).

For **other kinds of scholarly work**, such as theoretical pieces, describe what you learned and specifically how the article relates to the findings other readings. These pieces require you to summarize and state the implications for our understanding of the psychology of fairness more broadly.

[Note: For papers with **multiple experimental studies**, you might cover multiple studies in less detail or focus on conveying the paper's primary, strongest contributions. This could mean focusing in on one or two studies or meta-analytic results.]

Then, make **connections with outside material**. This might include, for example, news reporting on political events that demonstrates a powerful notion about fairness found in your article; or, pulling up artistic or video material that illustrates an important point from your article.

Connection material addresses questions like: “How does something in your article connect to something you learned in another course in PCJ?” “Have you had any personal experiences or witnessed things that connect to your article?” “Have you ever encountered themes from your article in a book, film, television show, cultural product or historic theme?” Feel free to be creative.

Your group will have 20 min to present including Q+A. Ideally, aim to ensure the class is clear on any difficult to grasp scientific aspects (which can be further addressed online), that you connected the core themes from the article with outside material, and that you engaged with at least a few discussion questions.

**Final paper & 5 min in-class presentation – 40%**

**Who is the fairest of them all? Designing the fair agent.** When attempting to reverse engineer an artificial agent that could successfully interact with human beings in a way that would maximize peace and justice, and minimize conflict, what considerations about fairness would you now make? For the final paper and in-class presentation, you’ll describe the psychological components of the optimal fair artificial agent based on the semester’s readings. You’ll model your agent after the human person you consider the fairest person of them all (from any time in history), with full justification. What fairness foibles will you place within reasonable allowances, based on your knowledge of human development, neural
functioning, and context-specific constraints on fairness? When do you expect peak performance in your agent, and why? Your paper (3500 wds, APA format) is due in class December 4 in paper form. A presentation (5 min with one-page handout) about your fair agent, human fairness model, and the major themes of your paper will occur Nov. 27 or Dec. 4 (assigned online).

Assignments will be graded on demonstration of scientific understanding of the fairness literature covered in the course, and integration of this understanding and critical thinking to arrive at a reasonable and creative solution.

Late or missed assignments
Late assignments will be penalized after the due date. Penalties will increase incrementally from the day the assignment was due until the day it is submitted electronically via email. You are still required to submit a hard copy at the next class when hard copies are required. The electronic copy must be identical to any hard copy submitted. Assignments that are + 5 days late will not be accepted unless they are accompanied by valid documentation of circumstances beyond your control. Accommodation will be granted per University of Toronto policy under the following circumstances:

1. Illness, as documented with a Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor’s note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to me, and submitted with your work at class.
2. Religious observances, per the University of Toronto guidelines at: http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm
3. Other documented unplanned circumstances entirely beyond your control (e.g., a court subpoena or a funeral).

Extensions must be requested prior to the due date. With adequate documentation from your physician or college registrar indicating an inability to complete the assignment on time, I will work with you to set a new due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted after the negotiated deadline will be subject to late penalties as outlined above.

Grading
Please see University of Toronto guidelines, available at:
http://calendar.artsci.utoronto.ca/Rules_&_Regulations.html - grading

Appeals, Petitions, Reassessment of Marks Please see the sections “Appeals and Petitions” and “Reassessment of Marks” in the University of Toronto grading guidelines. We will strictly adhere to the guidelines, available at: http://calendar.artsci.utoronto.ca/Rules_&_Regulations.html#grading

I take the marking of assignments very seriously. If you believe there was a mistake or oversight in grading, course policy requires you adhere to the following before submitting your request for remarking:
1. Wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark.
2. Carefully re-read your assignment, all assignment guidelines, and my comments.

To request a remark, you must submit a written request explaining precisely why you believe your assignment should receive a different grade. Requests must be submitted within two weeks of the day the
graded work was made available for your pick-up. (Not the day you chose to retrieve your assignment). I will remark the entire assignment, not simply the portion you believe was scored improperly. Note that in the course of remarking your assignment, I may discover errors or defects that were not originally detected in the initial marking. As a result, it is possible that your revised mark may go down, rather than going up or staying the same. The revised mark stands.

Plagiarism Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Please review carefully the “Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters” in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

**EMAIL AND ACCESSIBILITY**

**Email**
- All course communication should be conducted through your University of Toronto email account.
- All emails must include the course code (i.e., PCJ360H1) in the subject line.
- All emails should be signed with your full name and student number.
- Emails will generally be answered within 72 business hours of receipt.

**Accessibility** The University of Toronto is committed to student accessibility. If you require accommodation or have any accessibility concerns, please visit [http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility](http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility) as soon as possible.
COURSE PLAN
Week 1 | September 11
Introduction
* Discuss course overview and structure

Week 2 | September 18
What is fairness?

Discussion questions: what differentiates the forms of fairness presented in the articles? Which form of fairness seems most problematic to you? Why? Which would do think most people could depend on most reliably? Why?

Week 3 | September 25
Where does a sense of fairness come from?

Discussion questions: what characterizes the development of a sense of fairness? How does the developmental trajectory relate to what you learned about the different forms of fairness last week? What do you expect about a baby’s, a preschooler’s, a teen’s, and an adult’s fairness norms, based on these findings?
**Week 4 | October 2**

Where does a sense of fairness come from?


Discussion questions: what features related to an sense of fairness seem present across species and which are missing, and how do we know? How is anger theorized to relate to fairness and justice? How do you perceive fairness and justice to relate to survival and advancement of humankind?

**Week 5 | October 9**

How does culture shape views on fairness?


* Huppert et al. (2018 working). The development of children’s preferences for equality and equity across 13 individualistic and collectivist cultures.


Discussion questions: what are some of the features of tight and loose cultures? Do you think these features are inevitable? What can people around the world do to increase the chances for well-being, taking into account these cultural patterns? How do you makes sense of these findings with the previous weeks’ findings on developmental, evolutionary, neural, contextual contributors to a sense of fairness?

**Week 6 | October 16**

What shifts behavior and perceptions related to justice?

Discussion questions: what kinds of contextual interventions might realistically affect fairness judgments? Might interventions only affect certain populations, and if so, which ones? Design an intervention on problematic allocation behavior. What are the conditions you expect will be necessary for the success of the intervention, and the variables that you’ll use to measure change?

Week 7 | October 23
How is fairness represented in the brain?

* Gurgoglu, B, van den Bos, W., Bombouts, S. A. R. B., Crone, E. A. (2010). Unfair? It depends: Neural correlates of fairness in social context. *Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience, 414*—*423. Discussion questions: what does the neural data show us about the nature of different kinds of fairness? How should we think about the mechanisms behind different kinds of allocations and about people’s responsibilities to enact fair behavior when they have varying capacities to employ these mechanisms across the lifespan?
How do we allocate across social categories?

- Quart, A. (Feb. 5, 2018). If Americans don't like the word 'inequality', would 'fairness' be better? The Guardian.

Discussion questions: what are the core arguments of the pro and anti-affirmative action camps? What does the experimental work on meritocracy reveal? What are your experiences competing in meritocratic environments and how can they be continually improved?

November 6: No class, Reading week

How do empathy and impartiality fit into prosociality?


Discussion questions: taken together, the literature suggests that prosocial allocation requires a balance of empathy and impartiality. Using examples to illustrate, describe why empathy and impartiality can be both morally problematic and also cornerstones of morality. Identify cases in public policy, popular culture, everyday events or family life in which the competing pulls of empathy and impartiality are explicitly or implicitly weighed and managed. When and why do you think either aspect tends to be prioritized?
Week 10 | November 20

How do philosophical intuitions shape the ethics and fairness of policy?


Discussion questions: when and how do you think people come to develop a belief in free will versus determinism? What contributes to these basic beliefs? Because of their likely connection to religious beliefs, is it ethical to intervene on these philosophical beliefs, even if they directly affect policy support?

Week 11 | November 27

Who is the fairest of them all? Designing the fair agent.

* Presentations (1 of 2)

Week 12 | December 4

Who is the fairest of them all? Designing the fair agent.

* Presentations (2 of 2)

* FINAL PAPER DUE