

# Applied Ethics Seminar: Ethics of Economics

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[Specific dates and location removed. This course is designed as a once-weekly, 90-minute applied ethics seminar for students in an interdisciplinary M.Sc program with some philosophy background.]

## Description and Learning Outcomes of the Seminar

How do we judge the economic well-being of a nation, a corporation, or our world? When we make decisions between various economic policies, which criteria should we employ? In this seminar we critically examine an influential approach to navigating these questions, known as the Capability Approach, as well as a number of pertinent responses to it. This will encompass topics including inequality (economic, gendered, and racial), welfare (what it is, how or if we can measure it), and reparations. By semester's end students should have acquired a solid understanding of the arguments that constitute the Capability Approach, its strengths and weaknesses, and some of the salient alternatives within the literature, and how this understanding can inform our responses to important socio-economic policy questions and developing challenges. They should also have acquired critical thinking skills and the capability to express their thoughts and arguments cogently and effectively.

## Preparation Before Each Session

This course requires frequent writing by students, which will be held to high standards. To meet those standards, you will have to:

1. Complete each and every required reading *before* the session in which it is discussed.
2. Actively participate in each and every session. *Two absences* for good reason, sent to me via email and approved in advance, will be permitted.

## Readings

Required readings will be uploaded to the course Moodle.

## Assessment

If the below does not work with your program of study, contact us and we will figure it out!

### For 2 ECTS:

Active Participation + Short Papers (with passing grade)

### For 3–4.5 ECTS:

Active Participation + Short Papers (15% each) + Final Paper (55%)

### For 5–6 ECTS:

Active Participation + Short Papers (10% each) + Midterm Paper (30%) + Final Paper (40%)

## Active Participation

First, attendance to every meeting is expected – two absences with good reason will be permitted (sent to me by email in advance and approved). In truly exceptional cases, contact us. Second, you must actively participate in each session's discussion and activities. Active Participation will be pass/fail. **You must pass this component to earn any credit for this course.**

## Short Papers ('SP's)

Each short paper will be a **single-spaced, single-page (A4, 2-cm margins)** paper responding to a particular reading from the schedule. These will be graded on the 1.0–5.0 scale. A handout with further information will be provided.

*Note:* I encourage you to submit revisions of your SPs. There is no hard limit on the number of revisions you may submit, though this principle always applies: **respect your time and mine!** All revisions should be arranged with us, in advance, by email. We reserve the right to refuse on a case-by-case basis.

## Midterm and Final Papers

The midterm paper will be **approximately 2000 words**, and the final paper will be **approximately 4000 words**. Each must engage with several of the readings from the schedule, and must substantively develop your own arguments. These will be graded on the 1.0–5.0 scale. Handouts for each paper will be provided.

*Note:* for 3–4.5 ECTS, you must complete only the final paper.

*Note:* for 5–6 ECTS, you must complete both the midterm and final papers.

Seminar Schedule		Assignment Due
10.10	<i>No reading</i> – Introduction	
17.10	Rawls, “Justice as Fairness”	
24.10	Sen 1, “Equality of What?”	<i>Due 27.10:</i> Rawls or Sen 1
31.10	Sen 2, “Capability and Well-Being”	
07.11	<i>No class</i> – Student Representative Council Meetings	
14.11	Robeyns, “The Capability Approach: A theoretical survey”	<i>Due 17.11:</i> Sen 2 or Robeyns
21.11	Discussion day <i>Re-read:</i> Rawls, Sen 1, Sen 2, Robeyns	
28.11	Okin, “Poverty, Well-Being, and Gender: What Counts, Who’s Heard?” <i>Note:</i> this is long! Start early.	
05.12	Nussbaum, “On Hearing Women’s Voices: A Reply to Susan Okin”	
12.12	<i>No class</i> – Jared and Niël away	<i>Due 15.12:</i> Okin or Nussbaum
19.12	Discussion day <i>Re-read:</i> Okin, Nussbaum	
26.12	<i>No class</i> – Christmas holiday	
02.01	<i>No class</i> – Christmas holiday	
09.01	Dowding, “What is Welfare and How Can We Measure It?”	
16.01	Cohen, “Equality of What? on Welfare, Goods, and Capabilities”	<i>Due 19.01.2024:</i> Midterm paper
23.01	Táiwò, <i>Reconsidering Reparations</i> , ch. 3, “The Constructive View”	
30.01	Táiwò, <i>Reconsidering Reparations</i> , ch. 4, “What’s Missing”	
		<i>Due 01.03.2024:</i> Final paper