

This assignment is due on Monday, June 4, at class. Late papers will be subject to grade penalty. Please note that the due date is different from what was announced in the course introductory handout.

Construct an essay of about six to eight pages on one of the topics below. Please indicate clearly which topic you have selected.

1. “Distribution should be sensitive to choice but not to circumstance,” writes Ronald Dworkin, describing his ideal of distributive justice—equality of resources. This ideal blends personal responsibility and egalitarianism in a way that is criticized by Elizabeth Anderson and Samuel Scheffler, who independently espouse a rival ideal that Anderson calls “democratic equality.” Expound Dworkin’s ideal of equality of resources and assess it in the light of some significant criticisms advanced by Anderson and Scheffler.

2. Welfarism is the claim that the appropriate measure of a person’s condition for purposes of a theory of justice is her quality of life, the degree to which her life goes well for her. In chapters one, two, and six of *Sovereign Virtue*, Ronald Dworkin rejects welfarism while holding that “from the standpoint appropriate to the government of a political community, it is equally important that each person’s life go well” but “nevertheless each person has a special responsibility for his own life.” State Dworkin’s main arguments against welfarism and for his resource-focused alternative. Attack or defend his position on this issue.

3. According to David Schmitz, the elements of justice are reciprocity, need, equality, and desert. He describes how these elements fit together in a theory he calls “contextual functionalism.” By way of explaining his idea of what a theory is, he compares theories to maps. Expound each of these features of Schmitz’s view, develop one or more significant criticisms, and defend or attack Schmitz on the terrain you have staked out.

4. Develop either a critique of Ronald Dworkin’s theory of justice from the standpoint of David Schmitz’s rival view or a Dworkinian critique of Schmitz’s theory of justice. Be sure your essay elucidates the theory under attack and includes your own assessment of the critique.

Your essays will be graded according to the clarity of your prose, the cogency of the arguments you advance, and the soundness of the understanding of course materials you exhibit. Avoid long quotations from course texts. University rules and common morality forbid plagiarism.