

Kevin Theall

## Interdisciplinary Major Proposal: Social Justice

### Justification

The proposed Social Justice Major is designed to provide me with the resources I need to understand and work towards the conditions of equal social opportunity. The major will allow me to study the meaning of justice from a philosophical standpoint, as well as give me a healthy foundation of knowledge on the social and political structures in which poverty and other social inequalities exist. The purpose of this body of knowledge is to develop a method of analyzing existing social and political structures in order to “theorize about practical ways to create a fair and just society.” In addition to theory, the major will also focus on a method of living social justice on a day to day basis through service or other alternative methods. To do this I have divided the major into three categories which will increase my understanding of: the individuals and groups who are not receiving a fair distribution of the burdens and benefits of society, how to promote social opportunity, and the meaning of social justice.

The classes can be divided into three categories: Theory and Philosophy, Sociology and History, and Political Science. The first of these three categories pulls classes from the Philosophy department, the Religious Studies department, and the Sociology department. These classes were chosen because they offer the critical thinking experience and the theoretical background required to analyze ethical dilemmas and social forces, determine just outcomes, and actively live social justice. The second category is comprised of Sociology and History courses chosen to build a background of general knowledge about the communities that suffer from social injustice. The third category, Political Science, draws from politics courses to provide a basic understanding of the World’s political powers and the role the government plays/ has played in promoting or repressing social justice.

By combining the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, history, and politics, I hope to prepare for a life of active social justice which may lead me to a career in development, social work, community organizing, law, or public policy/public service.

### Courses

#### I. Theory and Philosophy

(4 of the following 7 classes)

Course	Status
PHIL 201 Focus: Ethics in the Face of Poverty	Completed: Spring 2010
POLI 240 Western Political Thought	
RELI 280 Issues: Religion & Challenges of Development	Enrolled: Spring 2012
POLI 326 International Human Rights	Enrolled: Spring 2012
PHIL 310 Feminist Thought	
SOCI 365 Picturing Society: Readings in Social Thought	Completed: Fall 2011
PHIL 360 Social and Political Philosophy	Enrolled: Spring 2013

II. Sociology and History  
(4 of the following 6)

HIST 214 Poverty and Welfare in America	Completed: Spring 2010
SOCI 270 Racial and Ethnic Minorities	
HIST 281 Aid and Development in Africa	Enrolled: Spring 2012
SOCI 335 Sociological Research Methods	Completed: Fall 2011
SOCI 360 Social Change/ Social Movements	Completed: Spring 2011
HIST 360 Vietnam in the 1960s	Enrolled: Fall 2012

III. Political Science  
(4 of the following 7)

POLI 235 Public Policy	Completed: Spring 2011
POLI260 Political Economy	Completed: Spring 2011
POLI 283 Model United Nations	Enrolled: Spring 2012
POLI 322 American Constitutional Law: Individual Rights and Liberties	
POLI 321 American Constitutional Law: Federal System	
POLI 440 Topics: Politics of Development	Completed: Fall 2011
POLI 380 Gender, Sexuality, and American Politics	

IV. Supplemental Courses

ECON 340 Environmental Economics	Completed: Fall 2010
BUSI 250 Principles of Statistics	Completed: Fall 2010
EDUC 315 Critical Issues in Education	Enrolled: Spring 2013

**Capstone Experience**

In addition to these courses I will also complete a senior capstone experience. I will complete a senior thesis based on independent research on a topic of my choosing which will address issues of social justice in an interdisciplinary way. Although I intend to structure this capstone as an independent study with a professor of my choosing, I will collaborate with all my faculty advisors on this research.

**Faculty Committee**

Dr. Peg Falls-Corbitt, Committee Chair: Peg Falls-Corbitt

Date: 4/20/2012

Dr. Daniel Whelan, Supervisory Committee Member: DJL

Date: 4/20/2012

Dr. Lisa Leitz, Supervisory Committee Member: Lisa Leitz

Date: 4/20/2012

