The course is organized to discuss selected issues in public policy from the perspective of normative considerations of justice. More specifically, the course will explore the implications of liberal egalitarianism, now the dominant philosophical outlook within contemporary political theory, for a number of policy problems that have attracted significant public attention in recent decades. The choice of policy problems will be guided either by their centrality from the point of view of the overall justness of society, such as healthcare or education, or by the special nature of the theoretical challenges they represent, such as genetic intervention and long-term climate change. Liberal egalitarianism has been developed into a number of distinct and well-specified rival versions over the last three decades, and its internal controversies may occasionally have important consequences for the policies different versions recommend, but all versions share a couple of central commitments that significantly constrain the range of policies that they may regard as acceptable from the point of view of justice. All of them are committed to some variation of the following ideas: that 1) every individual should have the opportunity to develop and realize her own conception of the good life, that 2) the state should be neutral regarding these conceptions, that 3) from the point of view of the government the success of each individual life is equally important, and 4) that as far as the distribution of the resources necessary for the realization of different life plans are concerned, no one should be disadvantaged by such unchosen circumstances that are beyond their control. The course will mainly be devoted to discussing the policy implications of these general commitments. The range of questions to be discussed will include the following: What does educational equality mean? Is it compatible with school choice? Does health, and health inequalities have special moral significance? How healthcare resources ought to be allocated under circumstances of resource constraint? Is it permissible to take into consideration the age or the expected quality of life of the potential recipients of such resources? Is access to genetic enhancement on the basis of ability to pay compatible with liberal equality? Are markets in human organs morally permissible, and if so, under what conditions?

Evaluation: the final grade will be based on active participation in the seminar discussions (25%), a short position paper (25%) and a final paper (50%).

Week 1: Introduction: Liberal Egalitarianism

I. Justice in Education
Week 2: What Does Educational Equality Mean?
Week 3: Equality or Adequacy? Objections to Educational Equality

Week 4: Is School Choice Compatible with Educational Equality?

II. Justice in Healthcare
Week 5: Is Health Morally Special?
- James Wilson, “Not So Special After All? Daniels and the Social Determinants of Health” *Journal of Medical Ethics* 35:1 (2009), pp. 3-6 (recommended).


Week 7: Allocating Healthcare Resources: Can Quality of Life Be Considered?

Week 8: Allocating Healthcare Resources: Can Age Be Considered?

III. Justice and Genetic Technology
Week 9: Is there a Problem with Genetic Enhancement?

**Week 10: Genes and Justice**
- Peter Singer: “Shopping at the Genetic Supermarket”
- Julian Savulescu, “Enhancement and Fairness,” *Journal of Medical Ethics* (2009), pp. 1-21 (recommended)

**IV. Justice and the Body**

**Week 11: Arguments For and Against Organ Trade and Distribution**

**Week 12: Arguments For and Against Organ Trade and Distribution**