



Department of Philosophy
School of Humanities
University of Hyderabad

Title of the course: **Topics in Ethics**

Course No. **PH 851**

No. of Credits: **4 (Four)**

The Course will be exclusively devoted to the discussion of Rawl's theory of justice. The course will have two parts. The first part will be concerned with Rawl's method that he proposed for to talk about the basic structure of a just society. The second part will be concerned with the application of the method for to delineate the basic principles of justice. The themes to be covered in these two parts may be presented in the following format:

The First Part:

The discussion of Rawl's idea of original position, i.e., we can find out what a just society would be like by discovering what kind of society people in the original position would opt for. The idea of original position will be discussed with reference to Kant's idea of contractualism.

The Second Part:

The discussion will be mainly concerned with the two principles to which Rawls' arrived at through the application of his method, namely, the principle of liberty i.e., certain basic liberties must be protected and the principle of equality i.e., no difference in wealth is to be tolerated unless the difference works for the benefit of the worst off group in the society.

The Concluding Part:

The last part of the course will be concerned with the critique raised against Rawls' model of justice on the ground that it is a historical and counter intuitive.

The List of books to be consulted:

1. John Rawls : *A Theory of Justice*
2. John Rawls : *Political Liberalism*
3. R. Nozick : *Anarchy, State and Utopia*
4. A.K. Sen : *The Idea of Justice*
5. J. Habermas : *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*
6. *Ethics* : 1989, 99 (4) – Symposium on Rawlsian Theory of Justice: Recent Developments