

**Part I. English Academic Writing (50%)**

Read the following excerpt from Michael J. Sandel's *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*, and then write a response essay (400-500 words) with a clear thesis and arguments supported by reference to writers, scholars, artists, political leaders, or any others—ancient or modern, eastern or western.

You will be evaluated on the quality of your writing as well as thoughtfulness and specificity, but not on your preferred position.

**Justice and the Good Life**

Over the course of this journey, we've explored three approaches to justice. One says justice means maximizing utility or welfare—the greatest happiness for the greatest number. The second says justice means respecting freedom of choice—either the actual choices people make in a free market (the libertarian view) or the hypothetical choices people *would* make in an original position of equality (the liberal egalitarian view). The third says justice involves cultivating virtue and reasoning about the common good. As you've probably guessed by now, I favor a version of the third approach. Let me try to explain why.

The utilitarian approach has two defects: first, it makes justice and rights a matter of calculation, not principle. Second, by trying to translate all human goods into a single, uniform measure of value, it flattens them, and takes no account of the qualitative differences among them.

The freedom-based theories solve the first problem but not the second. They take rights seriously and insist that justice is more than mere calculation. Although they disagree among themselves about *which* rights should outweigh utilitarian considerations, they agree that certain rights are fundamental and must be respected. But beyond singling out certain rights as worthy of respect, they accept people's preferences as they are. They don't require us to question or challenge the preferences and desires we bring to public life. According to these theories, the moral worth of the ends we pursue, the meaning and significance of the lives we lead, and the quality and character of the common life we share all lie beyond the domain of justice.

This seems to me mistaken. A just society can't be achieved simply by maximizing utility or by securing freedom of choice. To achieve a just society we have to reason together about the meaning of the good life, and to create a public culture hospitable to the disagreements that will inevitably arise.

It is tempting to seek a principle or procedure that could justify, once and for all, whatever distribution of income or power or opportunity resulted from it. Such a principle, if we could find it, would enable us to avoid the tumult and contention that arguments about the good life invariably arouse.

But these arguments are impossible to avoid. Justice is inescapably judgmental.

Whether we're arguing about financial bailouts or Purple Hearts, surrogate motherhood or same-sex marriage, affirmative action or military service, CEO pay or the right to use a golf cart, questions of justice are bound up with competing notions of honor and virtue, pride and recognition. Justice is not only about the right way to distribute things. It is also about the right way to value things.

## Part II. Textual Analysis and Critical Commentary (50%)

The following is 'Love's Alchemy' by John Donne. Please write a **500-word** essay that analyzes Donne's poetic language and examines the ways in which the poetic issues are addressed. You will need to make clear Donne's position, the use of the poetic imagery as well as his major claims in this poem.

### 'Love's Alchemy' by John Donne

Some that have deeper digg'd love's mine than I,  
Say, where his centric happiness doth lie.

I have loved, and got, and told,  
But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,  
I should not find that hidden mystery.

O! 'tis imposture all:

And as no chemic yet the elixir got,  
But glorifies his pregnant pot,  
If by the way to him befall  
Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal,  
So, lovers dream a rich and long delight,  
But get a winter-seeming summer's night.

Our ease, our thrift, our honour, and our day,  
Shall we for this vain bubble's shadow pay?

Ends love in this, that my man,  
Can be as happy as I can; if he can  
Endure the short scorn of a bridegroom's play?

That loving wretch that swears,  
'Tis not the bodies marry, but the minds,

Which he in her angelic finds,  
Would swear as justly, that he hears,

In that day's rude hoarse minstrelsy, the spheres.

Hope not for mind in women; at their best  
Sweetness and wit, they are but mummy, possessed.