



**REL 3082: GLOBAL ETHICS**  
Spring 2021

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Class schedule: T 5/6, Th 6 periods  
Office hours: By Zoom or phone, by appointment

**ABOUT THE CLASS**

This course will explore the ethical dimensions of global social, political, and environmental issues. Students will learn about diverse theoretical approaches in philosophical and religious ethics and then use those approaches to understand and evaluate the moral issues involved in contemporary global issues, including human rights, war and peace, climate change, and public health. In examining these case studies, students will learn to “do ethics” in a rigorous way, identifying the moral aspects of a social, political, economic, or environmental problem; defining and analyzing the issues clearly; and evaluating the ways different theoretical and methodological approaches help clarify and address the problems.

We will pay particular attention to the roles of religion and cultural traditions in the emergence of problems, in people’s interpretations of and responses to them, and in the

development of solutions. We will also address the relationship between different scales – e.g., local, regional, and national – in both the emergence of these issues and the efforts to understand and address them.

The course will begin with some general works on ethical theory that will help us frame and analyze global issues. We will then turn to case studies. About halfway through the course, students will break into groups to research specific issues.

## **POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES**

1. *Attendance and Participation:* Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies, found in the online catalog at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>. Please let me know about any planned absences (for religious holidays, athletic events, or other reasons) as soon as possible. For unplanned absences (due to illness or emergency), please let me know as soon as possible and provide documentation (e.g, doctor’s note).

2. For those of you taking the class online, please read and follow the [Netiquette Guide for Online Courses](#), produced by the UF Center for Teaching Excellence.

3. *Make-up policy:* I will arrange for a make-up or early in-class exam only with sufficient notice. If you do not receive an extension from the instructor, assignment will be marked down a half grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each day late.

4. *Honor Code:* The honor code applies to this and all courses taken at UF: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment”

(<https://archive.catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617//advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>).

The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Any student(s) demonstrated to have cheated, plagiarized, or otherwise violated the Honor Code in *any assignment* for this course will fail the course. In addition, violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines may result in judicial action and sanctions, as specified in the Student Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>).

5. *Accommodation for Disabilities:* Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

6. *Counseling and Emergency Resources:* Please let me know if you need support facing challenges that affect your academic performance. There are many resources available for students, and I will be glad to help you get the assistance you need in order to thrive at UF. Some resources include:

a. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling;

- b. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling;
- c. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling;
- d. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling.
- e. For security issues, please contact the University Police Department: 392-1111, or 911 for general emergencies.

7. *Software Use:* All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

8. *Privacy:* Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

## **READINGS**

Books will be available on reserve at Library West in addition to the UF bookstore.

Kimberly Hutchings, *Global Ethics: An Introduction* (Polity Press, 2010)

Richard T. Ford, *Universal Rights Down to Earth* (Norton, 2012)

Additional readings will be posted on the class Canvas site.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Full instructions and assignment details, including evaluation criteria, will be provided for each of the out of class essays at least ten days before the due date.

1. Active, informed participation in class discussions, which will take place in person and, for online students, via Zoom meetings.
2. Short essay (about 1000 words), on theoretical frameworks and approaches to global ethics; due Sunday, Feb. 8. 25% of total grade.
3. Short essay (about 1500 words) on human rights, climate change, and war and peace; due

Sunday, March 14. 35% of grade

4. Final research project, examining the ethical dimensions of a selected case study: 40% of grade.

Research report (individual): 20%, due by midnight on Sunday, 4/11

Poster (group project): 10%, due in class on Tuesday, 4/13

Personal reflection (individual): due by midnight on Tuesday, 4/27

## **SCHEDULE**

### Module One: Introduction to Global Ethics

Tu. 1/12 Introduction to the class: syllabus, assignments and expectations

Small group activity: getting to know each other

Th 1/14 Introduction to ethical theory: overview of major theoretical models used to address global ethical problems

Tu 1/19 How does ethics change when applied in a global setting?  
 Reading: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 1: What is Global Ethics?  
 “How the Trolley Problem Works”  
<https://people.howstuffworks.com/trolley-problem.htm>  
 Iyad Rahwan, “Sacrifice One Person to Save Five?”  
<https://www.mpg.de/14386104/trolley-dilemma-international>

Recommended: Piotr Sorokowski, et al, “Trolley Dilemma in Papua. Yali horticulturalists refuse to pull the lever”  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13423-019-01700-y>

Activity: Small group discussion of moral dilemmas and globalism

TedTalk: Wanis Kabbaj, “How Nationalism and Globalism Can Coexist.”  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/wanis\\_kabbaj\\_how\\_nationalism\\_and\\_globalism\\_can\\_coexist](https://www.ted.com/talks/wanis_kabbaj_how_nationalism_and_globalism_can_coexist)

Th 1/21 Major rationalist ethical theories (Kant, Utilitarians, Social Contract)  
 Reading: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 2: Rationalist Ethical Theories

Tu 1/26 Alternative theoretical models: strengths and weaknesses  
 Readings: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 3: Alternatives to Ethical Rationalism

Activity: Pros and cons of different ethical models in a global setting

Th 1/28 Distributive justice; ethics of international aid and relief

Reading: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 4: Ethics of International Aid and Development and Ch. 5: Global Distributive Justice

Tu 2/2 Ethics of war and peace  
Reading: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 6: Ethics of War, and Ch. 7: Making and Sustaining Peace

TedTalk: Clemantine Wamariya, “War and What Comes After”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/clemantine\\_wamariya\\_war\\_and\\_what\\_comes\\_after](https://www.ted.com/talks/clemantine_wamariya_war_and_what_comes_after)

Activity: Work on your essays!

Th 2/4 Connecting global and local problems and solutions  
Reading: Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 8: Global Ethics in a Glocal Context

First essay due at midnight on Sunday 2/7

### Module Two: Human Rights as a Framework for Thinking about Global Ethics

Tu 2/9 Human Rights: What are “universal rights”? How did they emerge? Why are they important politically and ethically in an international setting?

Reading: Ford, *Universal Rights Down to Earth*, part 1; and UN Declaration on Human Rights (<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>)

Activity: Choose issues and groups!

Th 2/11 Critiques and questions about global human rights theories and applications.  
Reading: Ford, *Universal Rights Down to Earth*, part 2 and conclusion

### Module Three: War and Peace

Tu 2/16 Just war theory and pacifism  
Reading: James F. Childress, “Just War Theories: Their Bases, Interrelations, Priorities, and Functions of Their Criteria.” *Theological Studies* 39 (1978): 427-445.

Nicholas Parkin, “Pacifism, Supreme Emergency, and Moral Tragedy.” *Social Theory and Practice* 40, No. 4 (October 2014), pp. 631-648.

Activity: Modular debate on just war theory

Th 2/18 Jovana Davidovic, “Should the Changing Character of War Affect Our Theories of War?” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 19 (2016), 603–618

Tu 2/23 Brad Allenby, “The Implications of Emerging Technologies for Just War Theory.” *Public Affairs Quarterly* 27, No. 1 (January 2013), 49-67.

Activity: Guest lecture on ethics of war and technology

Th 2/25 Recharge day – no class

#### Module Four: Climate Change

Tu 3/2 James Sterba, “Rethinking Global Justice from the Perspective of All Living Nature and What Difference It Makes.” *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 66, No. 1 (Jan., 2007), pp. 71-86

Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic”

Activity: Ethics Café: Climate Change

Th 3/4 Chris Cuomo, “Climate Change, Vulnerability, and Responsibility.” *Hypatia* 26, No. 4 (Fall 2011), pp. 690-714

Tu 3/9 Pope Francis I, *Laudato Si’*

TedTalk: Cheryl Holder, “The Link Between Climate Change, Health, and Poverty”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/cheryl\\_holder\\_the\\_link\\_between\\_climate\\_change\\_health\\_and\\_poverty](https://www.ted.com/talks/cheryl_holder_the_link_between_climate_change_health_and_poverty)

Activity: Work on your essays!

Th 3/11 Catriona McKinnon, Climate Change: Against Despair.” *Ethics & the Environment* 19, Number 1 (Spring 2014), pp. 31-48

TedTalk: Xiye Bastida, “If You Adults Won’t Save the World, We Will.”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/xiye\\_bastida\\_if\\_you\\_adults\\_won\\_t\\_save\\_the\\_world\\_we\\_will](https://www.ted.com/talks/xiye_bastida_if_you_adults_won_t_save_the_world_we_will)

**Second essay due at midnight on Sunday 3/14**

#### Module Five: Economic Justice

Tu 3/16 Read: Lauri Peterson, “The Measurement of Non-economic Inequality in Well-Being Indices.” *Social Indicators Research* 119, No. 2 (November 2014), pp. 581-598.

Anna Barford, “Challenging Assumptions: The causes of international inequality,” *Geography* 99, No. 2 (Summer 2014), pp. 104-107

Activity: Explore <https://ourworldindata.org/global-economic-inequality> in small groups

Th 3/18 Ursula LeGuin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas.”

Tu 3/23 David Zoller, “Moral Responsibility for Distant Collective Harms.” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* (2015) 18:995–1010.

Activity: Modular debate about responsibility and rights

Th 3/25 Read: Florencia Torche, “Intergenerational Mobility and Inequality: The Latin American Case.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 40 (2014), pp. 619-642.

TedTalk: Auret van Heerden, “Making Global Labor Fair.”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/auret\\_van\\_heerden\\_making\\_global\\_labor\\_fair/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/auret_van_heerden_making_global_labor_fair/transcript)

#### Module Six: Public health

Tu 3/30 Access to health care and global ethics

Read: Rachel Hammonds, Gorik Ooms, Moses Mulumba, and Allan Maleche, “UHC2030’s Contributions to Global Health Governance that Advance the Right to Health Care: A Preliminary Assessment.” *Health and Human Rights* 21, No. 2 (Dec. 2019), pp. 235-250.

TedTalk: Mary Bassett, “Why Your Doctor Should Care about Social Justice”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/mary\\_bassett\\_why\\_your\\_doctor\\_should\\_care\\_about\\_social\\_justice](https://www.ted.com/talks/mary_bassett_why_your_doctor_should_care_about_social_justice)

Activity: Ethics Café: Is health care a right?

Th 4/1 AIDS

Read: Young Soo Kim, “World Health Organization and Early Global Response to HIV/AIDS: Emergence and Development of International Norms,” *Journal of International and Area Studies* 22, No. 1 (June 2015), pp. 19-40.

Tu 4/6 COVID-19

Pierre Somse and Patrick M. Eba, “Lessons from HIV to Guide COVID-19 Responses in the Central African Republic.” *Health and Human Rights* 22, No. 1 (June 2020), pp. 371-374

The Hastings Center, “Bringing Ethics into the Global Coronavirus Response”  
<http://www.bioethics.net/2020/06/bringing-ethics-into-the-global-coronavirus-response/>

Maxwell Smith and Ross Upshur, “Pandemic Disease, Public Health, and Ethics.”  
*The Oxford Handbook of Public Health Ethics*, ed. A. Mastroianni, J. Kahn, and N. Kass.

<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190245191.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190245191-e-69>

Activity: Group work

Th 4/8 COVID-19 – readings TBD

TedTalk: Fareed Zakaria, “How the Coronavirus Pandemic is Changing the World.”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/fareed\\_zakaria\\_how\\_the\\_coronavirus\\_pandemic\\_is\\_changing\\_the\\_world](https://www.ted.com/talks/fareed_zakaria_how_the_coronavirus_pandemic_is_changing_the_world)

#### Module Seven: Final Presentations

Upload research reports by midnight on Sunday, 4/11

Posters due in class on Tuesday 4/13

Tu 4/13 Presentations TBD

Th 4/15 Presentations TBD

Tu 4/20 Presentations TBD

Reflection paper due by midnight on Tuesday, 4/27