POL 469H1S: Ethics and International Relations

Winter 2012
Day/Time: Monday 12:00-2:00
Room: LA340

Instructor: Rebecca Sanders
Office: TBA
Office Hours: Monday 2:30-3:30
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Course Description

The seminar explores the possibilities for and requirements of ethical action in international affairs. It is common to study international relations in terms of interests and power, but in actual practice, important actors invoke normative language all the time in their international interactions. This has not gone unnoticed, with investigations of ethics in the international arena multiplying in recent years. Drawing on readings from normative international relations theory and political philosophy, the course takes up ethical dilemmas encountered in world affairs in the context of debates about human rights, intervention, development, and international institutions. Students are expected to write a major research paper on an approved topic related to the course.

Prerequisites

Students must have completed POL 208 and at least one additional course in International Relations or Political Theory. Basic knowledge of IR and political theory, world history, and current affairs is presumed.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

Further instructions for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard.

15% - Participation: This is a seminar course. Students are expected to carefully read the assigned course material and come to class prepared to engage in informed, critical discussion. Obviously, in order for you to actively participate in class, you must attend class. If you suffer from social anxiety or some other impediment to full participation, you are urged to discuss this with instructor at the beginning of the course.

10% – Seminar Presentation: Students will do an oral presentation (10 minutes maximum) on the readings assigned for one session. The presentation should outline the main issues addressed in the readings, highlight themes related to ethics and international relations, assess the validity of the author’s positions, and raise questions for further class discussion. Students presenting during the same session should coordinate to avoid too much overlap. Sign up will occur the first week of class.
20% - Critical Reading Response: Students will write a brief summary of and a critical response to the readings (4-5 double spaced pages) assigned for the same seminar in which they are doing an oral presentation. The responses must be posted on Blackboard by Sunday evening at 5:00, before the relevant session. Sign up will occur during the first week of class.

15% - Paper Proposal/Annotated Bibliography: The proposal (2-3 double spaced pages) is aimed at ensuring that students are thinking about the essay in advance. It should include a summary of the paper topic, an explanation of why it was chosen, a statement of the research question, a tentative thesis, an overview of main points to be addressed, and an annotated bibliography of at least 5 sources (1 page per source).

40% - Major Research Essay: The research essay assignment (12-15 double spaced pages) can address any topic of interest relating to ethics and IR. Students should come up with a research question and develop a thesis or argument that answers the chosen question consistently throughout the paper. Students must do research and find evidence to support the paper’s conclusions. The paper should be analytical, not merely descriptive, and incorporate material from the course and other scholarly literature.

Assignment Due Dates and Submission Guidelines

- Oral Presentation and Critical Reading Response: Rolling basis
- Paper Proposal and Annotated Bibliography: February 13 (hardcopy due in class)
- Research Essay: April 5 (submission instructions TBA)

You are strongly advised to make electronic and hard copies of your assignments before submitting them as well as keep drafts and rough work until all assignments have been returned.

Late Penalties: Assignments submitted late, but on the due date will be subject to a 2% late penalty. Assignments submitted after the due date will be subject to a 3% per day late penalty, including each day of the weekend.

Extensions: Students will be granted extensions for legitimate reasons only such as serious illness, bereavement, or religious observance. Documentation is required. Extensions must be requested as soon as possible and will not be granted after a due date has passed. Extensions will not be offered because you are busy doing other things, are going away for the weekend, or just need more time.

Course Policies

Attendance, Participation, and Reading: Students should attend every session and complete assigned readings in advance. Questions are welcome and encouraged. Shy students are urged to speak up while students that are more outgoing should endeavor not to dominate discussion. While we will be addressing controversial topics, students are expected to engage in mature debate. Comments that are racist, sexist, or otherwise disrespectful or offensive will not be tolerated.
Email: Students who wish to communicate via email are welcome to do so. However, the following guidelines apply:

- Use a “utoronto” account to ensure receipt of messages
- Keep your computer anti-virus software up to date
- Identify the course code in the email title
- Use full sentences and proper grammar when composing messages
- Ensure your questions/comments are clear and comprehensible
- Do not email panicked questions about an assignment the night before it’s due
- Avoid unnecessary questions by first consulting the syllabus

I will endeavor to answer emails as soon as I can – sometimes right away, sometimes in a couple of days. Longer questions are best dealt with in office hours. Please note that I cannot proof read assignments via email before they are due.

Blackboard: The course syllabus and assignment instructions are available on Blackboard. Course readings and links to resources are also available. From time to time, I may also post announcements or other articles or links of interest. Students are responsible for checking Blackboard regularly.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a very serious offense that cheapens students’ learning experience, wastes instructors’ time, and will seriously damage your academic career if caught. The first step in avoiding plagiarism is to understand what it is. Ignorance is not an excuse. You are guilty of plagiarism even if you plagiarized by accident, unintentionally, or unknowingly. The following are all examples of academic offenses:

- Quoting someone verbatim without attribution
- Paraphrasing someone or borrowing their idea without attribution
- Manufacturing fake citations or references
- Passing off someone else’s work as your own with or without their consent
- Resubmitting a paper to different courses or recycling work without permission
- Purchasing a paper from an essay mill
- Helping someone else plagiarize

All students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the university’s plagiarism policy. See “How Not To Plagiarize” at http://www-writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize.

Grade Appeals: Instructors are human and occasionally make grading errors. If you truly believe your grade is unfair, you can submit a written appeal explaining your substantive reasons within two weeks of receiving your grade. Appeals lacking written explanation or substantive rationales will not be considered. Re-graded assignments may end up with a higher, lower, or unchanged grade.

Accessibility Needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or course materials, please let me know and/or contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible at disability.services@utoronto.ca or http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility.
Course Readings and Schedule

Almost all of the required readings are available electronically as a .pdf or Internet link under course documents on Blackboard. Recommended readings are not mandatory, but may be of interest. Students should consider purchasing Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel, eds., Traditions of International Ethics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) online as a useful background text. You may also choose to order Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars, fourth edition (New York: Basic Books, 2006), which we will read towards the end of the course. These books have been placed on reserve at Robarts.

January 9: Introduction

- Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War (the “Melian Dialogue”).

January 16: Realism

- Edward Hallett Carr, The Twenty Years’ Crisis, Chapters 4 and 5.

Recommended

- Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince, Chapters XV-XIX.

January 23: Liberalism and Cosmopolitanism

- Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch.”

Recommended


**January 30: Order, Justice, and Legitimacy in International Organization**


Recommended

**February 6: Poverty and Redistribution**

- Thomas Pogge and critics, Symposium on *World Poverty and Human Rights, Ethics & International Affairs* 19, 1 (March 2005).
- Nancy Kokaz, “Poverty and Global Justice,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 21, 3 (Fall 2007).

Recommended

**February 13: Environment and Sustainability**

- Sujatha Byravan and Sudhir Chella Rajan, “The Ethical Implications of Sea-Level Rise Due to Climate Change,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 24, 3 (Fall 2010).

Recommended

**February 27: Citizenship, Migration, and Borders**

• Ayelet Shachar and Ran Hirschl, “Citizenship as Inherited Property,” *Political Theory* 35, 3 (June 2007).

Recommended

**March 5: Feminism and Women’s Rights**

• Alison M. Jaggar, “‘Saving Amina’: Global Justice for Women and Intercultural Dialogue,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 19, 3 (Fall 2005).

Recommended
March 12: Just War


Recommended

- See http://www.justwartheory.com for a compilation of useful sources.
- John Kelsay, “Just War, Jihad, and the Study of Comparative Ethics,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 24, 3 (Fall 2010).
- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), Chapter 1 (“On Violence”).
- Albert Camus, *Neither Victim Nor Executioner*, “Two Answers,” “Saving Our Skins,” and “Towards Sociability.”

March 19: Humanitarian Intervention

- Jennifer Welsh, “Civilian Protection in Libya: Putting Coercion and Controversy Back into RtoP,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 25, 3 (Fall 2011).

Recommended

- Alex J. Bellamy, “Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 19, 2 (2005).
March 26: The “War on Terror”


Recommended


Date TBA: Responsibility and Accountability

(This session will be rescheduled at a time of mutual convenience to the class)


Recommended