

Morality and Ethics in International Politics

Instructor: Mgr. Camila Schifffl / camila.schifffl@gmail.com

Mondays and Thursdays, 8:50 – 10:20

Description: International politics is full of moral dilemmas. Cultural relativism versus the universality of human rights (should human rights always outweigh religious beliefs and cultural practices?); the ethics of security and war (can freedom be sacrificed for security? when is war – and its ‘collateral damage’ – morally acceptable?); development versus environmental protection (is it acceptable to push forward a global agenda for development despite of the limited natural resources?); the issue of global distributive justice (do citizens in the developed world have duties to those elsewhere on the globe?). The aim of this course is to provide students with the necessary tools to think critically about these moral puzzles. We will begin by looking at different theoretical approaches to morality and proceed by using these approaches to make sense of the way moral and ethical arguments work in international politics. By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to identify, understand and explain the impacts of moral concerns on the norms, institutions, and practices of international relations.

Week 1 (Feb 19, 22)

- Session 1
- Session 2: **Introduction: where does morality come from?**

Required: Haidt, J. (2012) “Where does morality come from?” In: The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion. Penguin Books, pp 3-31

Week 2 (Feb 26, Mar 1)

- Session 1: **Intuition comes first, rationalization comes second**

Required: Haidt, J. (2012) “Elephants Rule” In: The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion. Penguin Books, pp 61-83

- Session 2: **Then what about the rationalist takes on morality?**

Recommended: Hutchings, K. (2010) “Rationalist Ethical Theories”, *Global Ethics. An Introduction*, Polity Press, Cambridge: pp 28-50

Week 3 (Mar 5, 8)

- Session 1: **The moral foundations of politics**

Required: Haidt, J. (2012) “The Moral Foundations of Politics” In: The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion. Penguin Books, pp 150-179

- Session 2: **Alternatives to rationalism and the possibility of ‘global ethics’**

Recommended: Hutchings, K. (2010) “Alternatives to Ethical Rationalism”, *Global Ethics. An Introduction*, Polity Press, Cambridge: pp 54-79

Hutchings, K. (1992) ‘The Possibility of Judgment: Moralizing and Theorizing in International Relations’, *Review of International Studies* 18(2): 51-62

Week 4 (Mar 12, 15)

- Session 1: **Human Rights (Cultural Relativism vs. Universalism)**

Required: Donnelly, J. (2013) “The Relative Universality of Human Rights” and “Universality in a World of Particularities”. In: *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. Cornell University Press: 93-118

Recommended: Evans, T. (2005) ‘International Human Rights Law as Power/Knowledge’; *Human Rights Quarterly*, 27(3): 1046-1068.

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 5 (Mar 19, 22)

- Session 1: **Women’s Rights**

Required: Alison M. J. (2005) ““Saving Amina”: Global Justice for Women and Intercultural Dialogue.” *Ethics & International Affairs* 19, 3

Recommended: Robinson, F. (1997) “Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory and International Relations,” *Alternatives* 22, 1

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 6 (Mar 26, 29)

- Session 1: Schuyler Foerster’s visit
- Session 2: **Poverty and Global Distributive Justice**

Required: Pogge, T. (2009) “World Poverty and Human Rights”, *Ethics & International Affairs: a reader*. Rosenthal, J. H. and Barry, C., editors.—3rd ed. Georgetown University Press, 307-315

Risse, M. (2009) “Do We Owe the Global Poor Assistance or Rectification?” *Ethics & International Affairs: a reader*. Rosenthal, J. H. and Barry, C., editors.—3rd ed. Georgetown University Press, 317-328

Week 7 (Apr 2, 5)

Recess – Reading week

Week 8 (Apr 9, 12)

- Session 1: **Development aid**

Required: Everjoice, Win (2004): “If It Doesn’t Fit on the Blue Square It’s Out!’ An Open Letter to My Donor Friend”. In: Groves, Leslie – Rachel, Hinton (ed.): *Inclusive Aid. Changing Power and Relationships in International Development*. London: Earthscan, s. 123–127.

Binyavanga Wainaina: How to write about Africa (<http://www.granta.com/Archive/92/How-to-Write-about-Africa/Page-1>)

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 9 (Apr 16, 19)

- Session 1: **Environment and Sustainability**

Required: Singer, P. (2004) “One Atmosphere”, *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 26-50

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 10 (Apr 23, 26)

- Session 1: **Humanitarian Intervention**

Required: Nardin, T. (2009) “The Moral Basis of Humanitarian Intervention”, *Ethics & International Affairs: a reader*. Rosenthal, J. H. and Barry, C., editors.—3rd ed. Georgetown University Press, 85-101

Recommended: Bellamy, A. (2005). ‘Responsibility to Protect or Trojan Horse? The Crisis in Darfur and Humanitarian Intervention after Iraq’. *Ethics & International Affairs* 19, 2

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 11 (Apr 30, May 3)

- Session 1: **Ethics of migration**

Required: Miller, D. (2005) “Reasonable Partiality towards Compatriots,” *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 8, 1/2

Recommended: Risse, M. (2008) “On the Morality of Immigration,” *Ethics & International Affairs* 22, 1

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 12 (May 7, 10)

- Session 1: **The Ethics of Security and War**

Required: Michael Walzer (2002) ‘The Triumph of Just War Theory (and the Dangers of Success), *Social Research*, 69(4): 925-944.

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 13 (May 14, 17)

- Session 1: **Media Ethics**

Required: Ward, S.J.A. (2008) “Global Journalism Ethics: widening the conceptual base”. *Global Media Journal* Volume 1, Issue 1, pp. 137-149

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 14 (May 21, 24)

- Session 1: **The Ethics of New Technologies**

Required: Al-Rodhan, N. (2015) “The Many Ethical Implications of Emerging Technologies”. *Scientific American*. Available at: www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-many-ethical-implications-of-emerging-technologies/

- Session 2: case study / debate

Week 15 (May 28, 31)

- Session 1: Movie session + debate
- Session 2: Final assessment – deadline for seminar reports

Evaluation:

Participation (20%): students are expected to attend lectures and seminars, be on time, commit themselves to the weekly readings and engage on debates during class.

Short tests (30%): in the first minutes of the lectures, students will be asked to fulfill short tests assessing their knowledge of the week’s required readings. The number of tests and their dates will not be specified. If a test is missed due to a *justified* absence, it may be taken on another date, upon agreement.

Seminar leadership and report (50%): students are expected to lead a seminar session, presenting to the class a concrete case and instigating questions relevant to that week’s topic. The student is responsible for leading the entire session – 90 min – so the reliance on a variety of sources (audio, video, image, and text) is recommended as an effort to motivate others to share their thoughts. By the last day of the semester (May 31), students are expected to deliver a report (2500 words, max.) of their seminar session (which was the case selected; why was the case selected; what is the moral dilemma involved in it; how different parts rationalize their moral stands; how the class reacted to the case; how classmates rationalized their own stands)