



**REL 3082: GLOBAL ETHICS**  
Spring 2021  
**CURE Section**

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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. CURE students will be expected to participate in discussions and complete class readings for the first module, to ensure that you are familiar with the theoretical and methodological frameworks we will use to analyze global ethical issues. After this first module, CURE students will be engaged in small group research projects, supported by the instructor and a graduate assistant. The timeline and expectations for the small group projects are specified below.

## 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.

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

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

Additional readings will be posted on the class Canvas site. These readings will address our four case studies – war and peace, economic justice, climate change, and public health. Please look at some of these articles during the first module, so that you have a basis for selecting the case studies on which you will focus on for the remainder of the course.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **Required Assignments**

1. Active, informed participation in class discussions during the first module, either in person or via Zoom/Hyflex. For the first module, all students (CURE and not) will meet together, with some in person and some joining virtually. After the first module, CURE students will meet in their small groups on Thursdays, often with the graduate assistant. On most Tuesdays, you will join the class and work in small groups for the second hour, consulting with the instructor as needed.
2. Short essay (about 1000 words), on theoretical frameworks and approaches to global ethics; due Sunday, Feb. 7. 25% of total grade.

The remaining CURE assignments will be based on your research, conducted in groups of 2 or 3, addressing the ethical dimensions of a specific case study. You will be able to choose from among four global issues:

1. War and peace, especially post-war reconciliation
  2. Climate change
  3. Economic justice
  4. Public health
3. Poster session: On March 25, all CURE students will participate in a poster session online. There are three components to this assignment, which you will complete in small groups/pairs:
1. Abstract – 5% of grade
  2. Poster – 15% of grade
  3. Three-minute video – 15% of grade
4. Article based on your research, due April 15 to the *Journal of Undergraduate Research* and also uploaded to Canvas. These will also be written in small groups/pairs. – 40% of grade

## **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

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  
Reading: 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

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 by midnight on Sunday, 2/7**

#### Module Two (CURE): Independent research on case studies

Tu 2/9 Meet with graduate assistant to select your issues and groups

Th 2/11 Independent/small group research, with help from RA as needed

Tu 2/16 6<sup>th</sup> period: Modular debate on just war theory

Th 2/18 Independent/small group research, with help from RA as needed

Tu 2/23 6<sup>th</sup> period: Guest lecture on ethics of war and technology

- Th 2/25 Recharge day – no class
- Tu 3/2 6<sup>th</sup> period: Ethics Café: Climate Change
- Th 3/4 Independent/small group research, with help from RA as needed
- Tu 3/9 Work on posters, with help from RA as needed
- Th 3/11 Work on posters, with help from RA as needed
- Tu 3/16 6<sup>th</sup> period: Explore <https://ourworldindata.org/global-economic-inequality> in small groups
- Th 3/18 Work on posters, with help from RA as needed
- Tu 3/23 Finalize posters; meet with instructor and RA during 6<sup>th</sup> period
- Th 3/25 CURE Poster Session
- Tu 3/30 6<sup>th</sup> period: Activity: Ethics Café: Is health care a right?
- Th 4/1 Work on essays, with help from RA as needed
- Tu 4/6 Work on essays, with help from RA as needed
- Th 4/8 Work on essays, with help from RA as needed
- Tu 4/13 Work on essays, with help from RA as needed
- Th 4/15 Articles due to *Journal of Undergraduate Research*
- Tu 4/20 Join regular class for final presentations and discussion (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> periods)