

## **QUEST 1: IDS 1114 ETHICS IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE**

FALL 2025 (3 credits)

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### **21388: Section 2306**

M W—Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 AM) CSE E222

F—Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 AM) TUR 2354

### **21389: Section 2423**

M W—Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 AM) CSE E222

F—Period 5 (11:45 AM – 12:35 PM) WEIL 0238

### **21390: Section 2555**

M W—Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 AM) CSE E222

F—Period 6 (12:50 – 1:40 PM) MAT 0005

### ***A Note on the Syllabus***

This syllabus is like a contract that is semi-binding. It is binding insofar as the assignments and points allotted to them, rules about grades, and the grading scale. It is also binding in terms of attendance policy. However, it is not binding in terms of the reading schedule and reading assignments. The instructor reserves the right to cancel or amend the reading schedule based on the class's performance.

### ***General Education***

This course fulfills Humanities and Writing (2,000 words) Gen Ed requirements. Note that a minimum grade of 'C' is required for General Education credit.

### ***Course Description***

Examination of the ways in which ethical concerns are aired and debated in the public sphere, including civic institutions, media organizations, and the market. Questions explored may touch on such topics as honesty in media, humility in the face of disagreement, and the pursuit of justice in a contentious society.

### ***Course Materials***

Readings for the course will be made available on Canvas, and several can be accessed as links in the Reading and Assignment schedule below.

### ***Student Learning Outcomes***

Reflecting the curricular structures of Quest 1 and these Gen Ed designations, after taking Ethics and the Public Sphere students will be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and explain how the resources available in the humanities can help with becoming a more informed and engaged citizen. (Content SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1)
2. Identify and analyze the histories of and relations among different theoretical frameworks in humanistic traditions of thought (Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1)
3. Identify, analyze and evaluate moral themes in public discourse (Critical Thinking SLO for Gen Ed Humanities)
4. Analyze and evaluate the particular, public ethical issues that we discuss in the course (including free speech, economic inequality, sexual violence) (Critical Thinking SLO for Gen Ed Humanities)
5. Analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on connections between course content and their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Critical Thinking SLO for Q1)
6. Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions about important public ethical issues in oral and written forms appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1).

### ***Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion***

Our readings will include scholarly works in philosophical and religious ethics as well as legal arguments, papal encyclicals, pastoral letters, historical analyses, and news articles. The crucial skills we will emphasize throughout the class include identifying the moral dimensions of legal, political, and economic problems; critically evaluating traditions and perspectives; appreciating the diversity of perspectives on these controversial issues; thinking beyond one's own interests; and approaching disagreement with open-mindedness and a willingness to be rationally persuaded.

The class is appropriate for students from any major who want to explore public moral challenges in rigorous, creative ways. Assignments will include short writings on the topics listed above and a capstone project in which students address the ethical dimensions of a public issue of importance to them. The class is discussion-based and includes a variety of interactive projects and activities.

### ***Ethics And Society Certificate***

The class counts toward the certificate program in Ethics and Society. This certificate trains students in the ethical analysis of problems in public life and the professions. Students will learn about major theories and issues in ethics as a scholarly field and have the opportunity to gain specialized knowledge in areas such as medical, engineering, business, or environmental ethics. For more information, please contact the certificate administrator, Dr. Anna Peterson [annap@ufl.edu](mailto:annap@ufl.edu)

## Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

The final grade for this course is based on 1000 possible points.

### **Attendance and Participation: 200 points**

Class attendance and participation are mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. You can miss seven sessions without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will detract 50 points from your grade (5% of the grade). Excused absences are consistent with university policies as listed in the undergraduate catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) and require appropriate documentation. Class will begin and end on time. Three late arrivals (anything over 5 minutes) will be considered one absence.

A Note on the Readings: The readings for this class are dense, and you should spend at least 2 hours preparing the readings for each lecture session. Failure to complete the readings will slowly deteriorate your performance in this course, since the questions in the quizzes and the prompts of the essay assignments will really test conceptual comprehension.

### **Essays: 200 points**

The essays will be assigned, submitted, and graded on Canvas (E-Learning). The essays can be organized either as one long paragraph (7-10 sentences) or three short paragraphs (each consisting of at least 3 sentences). Each essay is worth 50 points. There will be five essays in total, and the lowest grade will be dropped for each student. Missed essays should be completed within two weeks. No Extension permitted. These are the due dates for the five essays: **Essay 1: September 7, September 21 by midnight, October 12, November 2, and November 16 (all dates fall on a Sunday and all due at midnight).**

### **Friday Discussion Session Assignments: 300 points**

These assignments, given at the end of the discussion session on Fridays, will include a mix of quizzes and reflection pieces (totaling 6 at 40 points each), plus an “event report” worth 60 points. The event report will require students to attend a public event, on or off campus, and write up a one-page double-spaced report detailing what happened at the event and how it relates to topics covered in the class.

### **Film Review: 100 points**

The film review is a 500-word essay on a film of your choice that addresses the themes covered in this course. You are welcome to go with either a film or a documentary. The essay on your film/documentary should be both descriptive and analytical. In the descriptive part, you should discuss the director, the work's plot and character development, cinematography, and reception. In the analytical part, you should relate the film's content to the course's themes. While you are not required to consult outside sources beyond the class readings, you are permitted to do so. Please use Chicago style for citations. Please make sure that the essay has a clear conceptual focus (for example, it should pertain to only 3-4 main concepts and not be vague in terms of relating the film to the course themes). **Film Review Due Sunday November 30 by midnight**

### **Final Paper: 200 points**

The final paper for this course will be an argumentative essay in which you take an ethical and/or a political position. Student-specific prompts will be issued two weeks in advance of the due date for the final paper. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas a month prior to the due date.

**Final Paper Due on Wednesday Dec. 10 by midnight**

### **Grading Scale**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Grade</b>
945-1000	94.5-100	A
900-944	90.0-94.4	A-
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+
834-866	83.4-86.6	B
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+
734-766	73.4-76.6	C
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+
634-666	63.4-66.6	D
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-
0-599	0-59.9	E

Additional information about UF's grading policy can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## ***Academic Honesty***

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) (a) quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution, and (b) submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." In other words, you may not copy verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without proper citation and quotation marks, nor may you paraphrase or restate in your own words text or ideas written by someone else without proper citation.

ChatGPT and similar programs pose new and complicated ethical challenges for students and instructors. UF has some guidelines and information that can help you understand what might be acceptable uses of ChatGPT. It is never acceptable to submit written work that you did not create. Using and copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from ChatGPT or any other AI software for any kind of course assignments will constitute plagiarism in this class and will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures.

I will check references if I have any questions about authorship, and I may ask for notes, outlines, and other supporting material to demonstrate that you researched and wrote an assignment yourself. Please keep dated copies of your outline, notes, and rough drafts and be ready to submit them in the event that questions arise about the authenticity of your work.

If you do not have convincing evidence that you authored the work yourself, I will start the honor code process. Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy. In addition, proven plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for this class.

## ***Students Requiring Accommodations***

Students with disabilities requesting accommodation should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Disabilities:**

“If you are a student with a disability and would like to request disability-related accommodations, you are encouraged to contact me and the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as

possible. The Disability Resource Center is located in 001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). Their phone number is 392-8565.”

#### Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways: [1] The email they receive from GatorEvals; [2] Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals; or [3] The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluer.com>. Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

#### Recording of Class Sessions:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

#### Critical Thinking

Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

### ***Class Demeanor***

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, stay the full class period, and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Electronic devices should be turned off and placed in closed bags. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be kept to a minimum.

### **Counseling and Wellness Center**

For counseling services, contact the Counseling and Wellness Center, 352-392-1575.

### ***Writing Studio***

The Writing Studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online or in-person at 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

### **Reading and Assignment Schedule (All readings will be posted on Canvas)**

Friday August 22: Introductions

Monday August 25

“Plato’s Ethics,” from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2023/entries/plato-ethics/>

Wednesday August 27

“Aristotle’s Ethics,” from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics/>

Friday August 29: Break-Out Session

Monday September 1—No Class (Labor Day)

Wednesday September 3

“Virtue Ethics,” from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/>

Friday September 5: Break-Out Session

**\*\*\*Essay 1 Due Sunday September 7 by midnight**

Monday September 8

“Environmental Ethics,” from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-environmental/>

Wednesday September 10

“Feminist Ethics,” from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-ethics/>

Friday September 12: Break-Out Session

Monday September 15

Cora Diamond, "Eating Meat and Eating People." *Philosophy* 53, no. 206 (1978): 465–79.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0031819100026334>

Wednesday September 17

"Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics" from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-ai>

Friday September 19: Break-Out Session

**\*\*\* Essay 2 Due Sunday September 21 by midnight**

Monday September 22

Isma'il Kushkush, "A Boat Ride to the Confluence of the Two Niles."

Wednesday September 24

Adriana Carranca, "Absolution."

Friday September 26: Break-Out Session

Monday September 29

Andrea Brady, "Internal Affairs."

Wednesday October 1

Raphaella Rosella and Nicole R. Fleetwood, "The Right to Intimacy."

Friday October 3: Break-Out Session

Monday October 6

Anna Badkhen, "The Pandemic, Our Common Story."

Wednesday October 8

Cat Flyn, "Winterkill."

Friday October 10: Break-Out Session

**\*\*\* Essay 3 Due Sunday October 12 by midnight**

Monday October 13

Ramy Ali, "Ordinariness of Ethics."



Wednesday October 15

Radhika Govindrajan, “Labors of Love.”

Friday October 17—No Class (Homecoming)

Monday October 20—In-Class Viewing of *A Separation*, dir. Asghar Farhadi

Wednesday October 22—In-Class Viewing of *A Separation*, dir. Asghar Farhadi

Friday October 24—In-Class Viewing of *A Separation*, dir. Asghar Farhadi

Monday October 27

Maira Hayat, “Good Bureaucrats and God.”

Wednesday October 29

Paolo Heywood, “Blessed Acts of Oblivion: On the Ethics of Forgetting.”

Friday October 31: Break-Out Session

**\*\*\*Essay 4 Due Sunday November 2 by midnight**

Monday November 3

Amira Mittermaier, “Bread, Freedom, Social Justice: The Egyptian Uprising and a Sufi Khidma.”

Wednesday November 5

Steven C. Caton, “Abu Ghraib and the Problem of Evil.”

Friday November 7: Break-Out Session

Monday November 10

Heonick Kwon, “The Ghosts of War and the Ethics of Memory.”

Wednesday November 12

Jacques Rancière, “Should Democracy Come? Ethics and Politics in Derrida.”

Friday November 14: Break-Out Session

**\*\*\*Essay 5 Due Sunday November 16 by midnight**

Monday November 17

Sophie Day, “Ethics between Public and Private: Sex Workers’ Relationships in London.”

Wednesday November 19

Michel Foucault, “Friendship as a Way of Life” and “Sexual Choice, Sexual Act.”

Friday November 21: Break-Out Session

Monday November 24—No Class, Thanksgiving Break

Wednesday November 26—No Class, Thanksgiving Break

Friday November 28—No Class, Thanksgiving Break

**\*\*\* Film Review Due Sunday November 30 by midnight**

Monday December 1

Michael Foucault, “Technologies of the Self.”

Wednesday December 3

Terry Eagleton, “Conclusion,” from *Trouble with Strangers: A Study of Ethics*.

**\*\*\*Final Paper Due Wednesday Dec. 10 by midnight**