



REL 3082: GLOBAL ETHICS
Spring 2025

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Class schedule: T5-6/R6, in Anderson 19
Office Hours: Tues. 8th period, Thurs. 4th period in person, and by appointment on Zoom

ABOUT THE CLASS

When is it morally justified to go to war? Do all people have a right to health care? Which human rights are truly universal? Who is responsible for addressing climate change?

If you like to ask big questions, this course is for you! It will give you knowledge and tools to reflect on the ethical dimensions of global issues including human rights, war and peace, health disparities, and climate change.

The class is taught in a conversational format, emphasizing discussion and critical thinking. Students will learn about different theories 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.

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](#). 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. *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.

3. *Honor Code*: The [UF 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.”

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/>).

4. *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.

5. *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.

6. *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.

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)

Additional readings will be posted on the class Canvas site.

REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

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

1. Active, informed participation in class discussions. Participation grade will be based on attendance, engagement, and unannounced reading quizzes. 10% of final grade.
2. First short essay (about 750 words), on theoretical frameworks and approaches to global ethics; due Sunday, Feb 9. 20% of total grade.
3. Second short essay (about 750 words), on war and peace and human rights; due Sunday, March 16. 20% of grade
4. Third short essay (about 750 words) on climate change, due Sunday, April 6. 20% of grade
5. Fourth short essay (about 750 words), on health equity, due Sunday, April 27 by midnight. 20% of grade.

SCHEDULE

Module One: Introduction to Global Ethics

Tu. 1/14 Introduction to the class: syllabus, assignments, and expectations

Th 1/16 Globalizing the Trolley Problem
Josh Clark, "[How the Trolley Problem Works](#)"

[Iyad Rahwan, "Sacrifice One Person to Save Five?"](#) Max Planck Gesellschaft (Jan. 22, 2020)

Sorokowski, P., Marczak, M., Misiak, M. *et al.* [“Trolley Dilemma in Papua. Yali horticulturalists refuse to pull the lever.”](#) *Psychon Bull Rev* 27, 398–403 (2020).

- Tu 1/21 Introducing global ethics
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 1: What is Global Ethics?
- Th 1/23 Major rationalist ethical theories (Kant, Utilitarians, Social Contract)
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 2: Rationalist Ethical Theories
- Tu 1/28 Alternative theoretical models: strengths and weaknesses
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 3: Alternatives to Ethical Rationalism
- Th 1/30 Distributive justice; ethics of international aid and relief
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 4: Ethics of International Aid and Development and Ch. 5: Global Distributive Justice
- Tu 2/1 Ethics of war and peace
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 6: Ethics of War, and Ch. 7: Making and Sustaining Peace
- Th 2/6 Connecting global and local problems and solutions
Hutchings, *Global Ethics*, Ch. 8: Global Ethics in a Glocal Context
- Sun 2/9 First essay due by midnight**

Module Two: Religion and Global Human Rights

- Tu 2/11 Global Human Rights
[UN Declaration on Human Rights](#) (1949)
Michael Perry, “Are Human Rights Universal?” *Human Rights Quarterly* 19, No. 3 (Aug. 1997), pp. 461-509.
- Th 2/13 Human Rights in Christianity
Zachary Calo, “Catholic Social Thought and Human Rights.” *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 74, No. 1, (Jan. 2015), pp. 93-112
- Tu 2/18 Human rights Islam
Abdul Aziz Said, “Precept and Practice of Human Rights in Islam.” *Universal Human Rights*. 1, No. 1 (Jan. - Mar., 1979), pp. 63-79.
- Th 2/20 Women’s rights and human rights
Susan Moller Okin, “Feminism, Women's Human Rights, and Cultural Differences.” *Hypatia* 13, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), pp. 32-52.

Module Three: Religion, War, and Peace

- Tu 2/25 Religion’s multiple roles in war

Prince Sorie Conteh, "The Role of Religion During and After the Civil War in Sierra Leone." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 24, No. 1 (2011), pp. 55-76.

- Th 3/1 Religion and conflict resolution
Duncan Forrester, "Violence and Non-Violence in Conflict Resolution: Some Theological Reflections." *Studies in Christian Ethics* 16, no. 2 (2003), 64–79.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/095394680301600205>
- Tu 3/4 Just war theory
Michael Walzer, "The Triumph of Just War Theory (and the Dangers of Success)." *Social Research*. 69, No. 4 (winter 2002), pp. 925-944.
- Th. 3/6 Just war theory in Islam
Davis Brown, "The Permissive Nature of the War Ethic in Islam." *Journal of Religion and Violence* 2, No. 3 (2014), pp. 460-483
- Tu 3/11 Pacifism
Theresa Der-lan Yeh, "The Way to Peace: A Buddhist Perspective." *International Journal of Peace Studies*. 11, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2006), pp. 91-112
- Th 3/13 The changing nature of war
Jovana Davidovic, "Should the Changing Character of War Affect Our Theories of War?" *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 19 (2016), 603–618.
- Sun. 3/16 Second essay due by midnight**

Week of March 17: Spring Break, no class

Module Four: Religion and Climate Change Ethics

- Tu 3/25 Climate change as an ethical problem
David Hicks, "Learning to See Climate Change." *Teaching Geography* 40, No. 3 (Autumn 2015), pp. 94-96
- Th 3/27 Religion and climate change
Willis Jenkins, et al., "Religion and Climate Change." *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* (2018).
- Tu 4/1 Environmental justice, religion, and climate change
Pope Francis I, *Laudato Si'* (May 2015).

[TedTalk](#): Cheryl Holder, "The Link Between Climate Change, Health, and Poverty"
- Th 4/3 Hope and responsibility

Jochen Kleres and Åsa Wettergren, "Fear, hope, anger, and guilt in climate activism." *Social Movement Studies* 16:5 (2017), 507-519.

[TedTalk](#): Xiye Bastida, "If You Adults Won't Save the World, We Will."

Third short essay due Sunday, April 6 by midnight

Module Five: Religion and Global Health

- Tu 4/8 Religion and Global Health
Brodit et al., "Global Health Equity." *Journal of Best Practices in Health Professions Diversity* 11, No. 2 (Fall 2018), pp. 150-154
["Religion and Global Health: An Interview with Dr. Susan Holman"](#)
- Th 4/10 Religion and Global Bioethics
[Global Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights](#)
Munyaradzi Felix Murove, "African Bioethics: An Explanatory Discourse." *Journal for the Study of Religion* 18, No. 1 (2005), pp. 16-36
- Tu 4/15 COVID-19 and global health ethics
Lisa Forman, "The Evolution of the Right to Health in the Shadow of COVID-19." *Health and Human Rights* 22, No. 1 (June 2020), pp. 375-378

Ebenezer Obadare, ["The Spiritual Dimension of COVID-19 in Africa"](#)
Think Global Health (July 6, 2022).
- Th. 4/17 Guest lecture; instructor out of town for a conference
- Tu 4/22 Instructor out of town for a conference – work on papers!
- Sunday 4/27 Final paper due by midnight**