Global Studies 250

Value Systems in Cross Cultural Perspective:
Toward A New Global Ethics

Winter 2022

Syllabus and Course Policy Statement

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Wooten (Pronouns: he, him, his)

Contacts: Email: swooten@uoregon.edu
Zoom Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 to 3:00 pm and Thursdays 9 to 10 am or by appointment
Join URL: https://uoregon.zoom.us/j/91752697524?pwd=ZzRZZXRhZXBCVmh4c1pBWGp0TkN2QT09

Teaching Team:
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Course Description:
Gone are the days of truly isolated cultures and communities with their “unique” value systems and worldviews – if they ever really existed at all. Contemporary residents of planet earth live in an increasingly interconnected world where one’s values and actions influence and are influenced by others and by the emerging circumstances, we find ourselves within. As we all become more aware of our place within a global community our ways of seeing the world and of evaluating what is “right” and “just” in it are bound to be challenged – by others with alternate values and by new dilemmas or concerns that arise as life unfolds on a wider global scale. In fact, with so much hybridity and cultural mixing, we may even find ourselves of “two (or more!) minds” on a particular issue depending on what values we embrace and prioritize at a given moment or for a given reason. And, we may change our minds over time to boot.

This situation compels us to reflect anew on eternal questions of “what is right?” and “what is just?” and to do so critically and reflexively so that we can be better prepared to understand contemporary global ethical challenges and to act in an informed and thoughtful fashion. This course is designed to help make this process possible. It provides an introduction to the field of “global ethics,” a new and productive way of understanding the ethics and challenges of our global community. The course examines the theories that inform the “global ethics” perspective in order to help us develop a “toolkit” that can be used to better understand and engage with specific real-world concerns and issues – human scale injustice, suffering and threats. The goal is to gain an appreciation for the range of ethical responses people have to challenges we face in our globalized world and to use that appreciation to foster the development of an informed ethical position that conditions our actions. The first part of the course explores theories, approaches and perspectives, while the latter portion examines how this conceptual terrain frames our engagement with real-world concerns such as poverty, war, and gender inequality.

Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

a) Articulate the key features of the "global ethics" approach.
b) Discuss and evaluate the three key theoretical approaches to global ethics: the moral, political and rights perspectives.
c) Identify and appreciate the main ethical challenges we face today as members of a global community and the actions that are relevant to our engagement with them.
In addition, you will also have an increased the ability to:

a) Critically analyze academically robust information, data and problems.

b) Interpret and synthesize academic writing.

c) Communicate effectively through written and oral communication.

**Course Format:**
Key readings are assigned for each week and should be completed prior to attending lecture and sections. Lectures includes presentation and elaboration on substantive outline slides. The material covered in each lecture develops themes and issues presented in the assigned readings. On occasion outside videos will be included to aid our explorations to the topics.

**Expected Time Allocation:** According to the University of Oregon’s policy, one undergraduate credit hour is equivalent to approximately 30 hours of student work, both in class and out of class. Thus, a 4-credit course like this one should engage students for 120 hours over the course of the class. This means that you should expect to spend about 12 hours a week reading, working through the modules, watching lectures, completing assignments, and attending section.

**Readings/Texts:**
*Global Ethics: An Introduction* by Heather Widdows (2011)
This book was selected as our core text because it offers a unique combination of theory and issues and does so in an accessible, engaging and productive way. First, the author has succeeded in presenting and synthesizing challenging philosophical ideas and insights about “values” and “ethics” in a non-technical, non-specialist way. Second, she is committed to the coupling of theory and practice – to seeing how and why ethics are relevant in the real world. Third, she is a true “globalist” in the sense that she is aware of and sensitive to the interconnections between people, places and processes in our contemporary world. Fourth, she is concerned with inequality and injustice on the local and global scales. Overall, the book combines traditional academic writing with more stimulating and user-friendly components like first person accounts and summary “boxes.” The book is available in eBook form via the UO Library. There is a direct link to the book in the module section of Canvas. Discussion sections will involve engagement with supplemental readings and resources. These materials will be linked from Canvas as well. If you prefer a print copy of the textbook, new and used books are widely available via online vendors and local stores.

**Requirements:**
Your performance in this course will be evaluated on the following components:

**Mid Term Exam:** You will complete a timed essay style mid-term exam based on modules, readings, films and discussions from the first part of the course. (40% of your grade)

**Final Exam:** You will complete a timed style final exam based on modules, readings, films and discussions from the last part of the course. (40% of your grade)

**Reflection Papers:** Each week, prior to your discussion section, you will complete a short writing exercise called a “reflection paper.” You will respond to a prompt based on the week’s material. Your response will be submitted via Canvas and will be due BEFORE your scheduled section – by 8 am each Friday. The ideal response will be about 200 words in length and will focus on a specific theory, approach, concept or concern raised in the assigned material for that section. Be as substantive as you can in the short time/space you have. Vague or loose thoughts that are not linked to your assigned materials will not earn you full credit. These “reflection papers” will be graded by your GE. GEs will use a simple scale in grading them: 10 = perfect, 9 = very good, 8 = good, 7 = ok, 6 = poor, 0 = missing. Late submissions or submissions without attendance in section will be marked down by 2 points for each 24 hours. We will drop your lowest score on these papers. (20% of your grade)
Policies:

Missed Assignments
No make ups will be offered for scheduled exams or assignments EXCEPT in the case of a significant illness, injury, or family emergency. If you should run into one of these exceptional situations, you are required to notify me by email BEFORE the scheduled exam or assignment. We will discuss your situation and any possible accommodations that might be warranted.

Participation
In order to engage the assigned material thoroughly you should be actively engaged throughout the term, from day to day and week to week. This involves on schedule completion of the assignments and participation in discussion section.

Cheating and Academic Dishonesty
All assignments in this class are designed to assess your individual knowledge and understanding of the material covered/presented in the course. Thus, cheating or plagiarism – in any form – will not be tolerated. The work you present must be entirely your own. All individuals involved in an act of academic dishonesty will fail the course and will be reported to the proper University contacts as required. I do not expect to encounter any problems in this area but feel you should be forewarned. The Student Conduct Code can be found here: [https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code](https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code)

Diversity, Inclusion and Campus Safety
Our campus is welcoming and responsive. The University is a place where people from different cultures and experiences learn together; understanding and respecting these differences are critical for the University to be a place of open-minded inquiry where, in challenging the boundaries of knowledge, we include and value all members of our community. Students who may have experienced prohibited discrimination or discriminatory harassment including, sexual discrimination, harassment or violence, can find a complete listing of confidential resources both on and off-campus here: [https://safe.uoregon.edu/services](https://safe.uoregon.edu/services). If you need support please reach out and let us know.

Accessible Education
If you have a condition that inhibits learning or evaluation under customary circumstances, please let me know. In addition, please request a letter from the Accessible Education Center (541-346-1155, 360 Oregon Hall) that verifies your disability and states the accommodations that I can make. I will make any reasonable adjustments necessary to improve your learning experience. Information on Accessible Education support can be found here: [https://aec.uoregon.edu/](https://aec.uoregon.edu/)

Basic Needs
Any student who has difficulty affording groceries, lacks a safe and stable place to live, or is experiencing other problems meeting basic needs is urged to visit this helpful UO specific website: [https://blogs.uoregon.edu/basicneeds/](https://blogs.uoregon.edu/basicneeds/) and to contact the Office of the Dean of Students Office (346-3216) for support. Furthermore, if you are comfortable doing so, please let me know about your situation so I can help point you in the right direction for assistance.

Wellbeing
Life at college can be very complicated. Students often feel overwhelmed or stressed, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationships, or just need help navigating challenges in their life. If you're facing such challenges, you don't need to handle them on your own – here's help and support on campus. As your instructor if I believe you may need additional support, I will express my concerns, the reasons for them, and refer you to resources that might be helpful. It is not my intention to know the details of what
might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I care and that help is available. Getting help is a courageous thing to do – for yourself and those you care about.

University Health Services help students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. If you need general resources on coping with stress or want to talk with another student who has been in the same place as you, visit the Duck Nest (located in the EMU on the ground floor) and get help from one of the specially trained Peer Wellness Advocates. Find out more at health.uoregon.edu/ducknest.

University Counseling Services (UCS) has a team of dedicated staff members to support you with your concerns, many of whom can provide identity-based support. All clinical services are free and confidential. Find out more at counseling.uoregon.edu or by calling 541-346-3227 (anytime UCS is closed, the After-Hours Support and Crisis Line is available by calling this same number).

COVID-19 Safety
We are moving forward together in a new chapter in the fight against COVID-19. We all play a role in protecting ourselves and each other. We are prepared with strong plans and safety tools. coronavirus.uoregon.edu/

Class Outline and Schedule
(Subject to Change Based on Our Progress – Stay Aware of Shifts)

Week One (1/4-1/6)
   Syllabus and Introductions
   What is Global Ethics? The Case Studies (Read Chapters 1 and 2)

Week Two (1/11-1/13)
   Moral Theory (Read Chapter 3)

Week Three (1/18-1/20)
   Political Theory (Read Chapter 4)

Week Four (1/25-1/27)
   Rights Theory (Read Chapter 5)

Week Five (2/1-2/3)
   Synthesis and Catch Up

* Mid-Term * - Posted on Canvas by 5 pm on Friday, 2/4 and due by 5 pm Monday, 2/7.

Week Six (2/8-2/10)
   Global Governance & Citizenship (Read Chapter 6)

Week Seven (2/15-2/17)
   Global Poverty (Read Chapter 7)

Week Eight (2/22-2/24)
   Global Conflict (Read Chapter 8)

Week Nine (3/1-3/3)
   Global Gender Justice (Read Chapter 11)
Week Ten (3/8-3/10)
Synthesis and Catch Up    (Read Conclusion)

Final Exam:
Posted on Canvas by 5 pm on Friday, 3/11 and due by 5 pm on Wednesday, 3/16.

Discussion Section Materials
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Week 1: Introduction & What is Global Ethics?
☐ Introductions & discussion section expectations
☐ Discussion
    ☐ Global ethics & female genital mutilation
☐ Article & Video
    ☐ What is female genital mutilation or FGM?
☐ Video
    ☐ Watch “The Cut” video within the article above
☐ Reflection Essay Prompt: In what ways has FGM become a “global” ethical issue?

Week 2: Moral Theory
☐ Discussion: the variety of moral theories
☐ Videos
    ☐ Utilitarianism - https://youtu.be/-a739VjqdSI
    ☐ Kantianism - https://youtu.be/8bIys6JoEDw
    ☐ Virtue Ethics - https://youtu.be/PrvtOWEXDIQ
☐ Reflection Essay Prompt: What are some key differences among the “varieties” of moral theory?

Week 3: Political Theory
☐ Discussion
    ☐ Cosmopolitanism
    ☐ Nationalism
☐ Article
    ☐ The urgency of a cosmopolitan ideal as nationalism surges - https://www.huffingtonpost.com/elif-shafak/urgency-cosmopolitan-ideal-nationalism_b_4732212.html
☐ Videos
    ☐ Appiah on individual rights  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ovdh5-1t310
    ☐ Kabbaj on nationalism and globalism https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDCIQv1SeeE
☐ Reflection Essay Prompt: Why isn’t the strongest version of “nationalism” compatible with global ethics?
Week 4: Rights Theory and Mid-Term Orientation
- Discussion
  - Midterm review
  - Negative/positive rights, intrinsic/instrumental rights, & Shue’s basic rights/duties
- Videos
  - On Natural Law [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_UfYY7aWKO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_UfYY7aWKO)
  - On Locke [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-a4ueSsa3Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-a4ueSsa3Y)
- Reflection Essay Prompt: Explain why “natural” law may not be so natural after all.

Week 5: Midterm Exam & Global Governance & Citizenship
- Discussion
  - Global citizenship
- Video
  - What does it mean to be a citizen of the world? Hugh Evans TedTalk - [https://youtu.be/ODLg_00f9BE](https://youtu.be/ODLg_00f9BE)
- Reflection Essay Prompt: What do you see as the costs and benefits of being a global citizen?

Week 6: Global Governance & Citizenship continued
- Discussion:
  - Global governance & citizenship
  - Economic migration & remittances
- Article
  - Interactive map of Remittance flows worldwide in 2016 - [http://www.pewglobal.org/interactives/remittance-map/](http://www.pewglobal.org/interactives/remittance-map/)
- Video
  - Dilip Ratha: The hidden force in global economics - sending money home [https://youtu.be/Oj8eFu72_fc](https://youtu.be/Oj8eFu72_fc)
- Reflection Essay Prompt: In what ways do remittances foster lasting connections to home communities?

Week 7: Global Poverty
- Discussion
  - Sustainable and capabilities approaches - fair trade example
- Video
  - Fair Trade: the first step - [https://youtu.be/Q1gIKo0kti4](https://youtu.be/Q1gIKo0kti4)
- Reflection Essay Prompt: What are some pros and cons of “fair trade”?

Week 8: Global Conflict
- Discussion
  - Just War Theory - jus ad bellum & jus in bello
- Videos
  - Michael Walzer on just war theory - [https://youtu.be/LcBovmGZSPU](https://youtu.be/LcBovmGZSPU)
  - Red Cross study shows shifting global views on war - [https://youtu.be/mdELHJbLty4](https://youtu.be/mdELHJbLty4)
- Reflection Essay Prompt: Why are some people becoming more “comfortable” with torture as a practice?
Week 9: Global Gender Justice

- Discussion
  - Gender violence
  - Intersectionality

- Videos
  - Delhi rape and changing conditions of women in India - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eOAqQ4jczg
  - Urgency of Intersectionality https://youtu.be/akOe5UsQ2o

- Reflection Essay Prompt: Why is intersectionality such a powerful lens?

Week 10: Synthesis and Reflection

- Review final exam instructions and questions
- Reflection Essay Prompt: What are your top three “takeaways” from this course? Explain.