

POL 2226F: ETHICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Fall 2025, Mondays 11-1. Exclusion: POL 469

Instructor: Professor Nancy Bertoldi

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You can also always email me via Quercus.

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30-12 on zoom by Quercus appointment only

Zoom link for office hours appointments is available on Quercus under announcements.

Please book your office hours appointment in advance on the Quercus calendar.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course explores the possibilities for ethical action in international affairs. It is common to theorize international relations in terms of interests and power, but this fails to account for the frequent invocation of the language of justice and fairness in actual international interactions. Drawing on readings from political philosophy, normative international relations theory, feminist theory, critical theory, and post-colonial theory, the course addresses ethical dilemmas encountered in world affairs.

The course is a research-intensive seminar, where students conduct independent research on an approved topic of relevance to course themes that they present in a student conference at the end of the semester. The culmination of student research is a part of the course curriculum: this gives students the chance to shape the curriculum and to learn about issues on ethics and international relations that reflect their own interests. Students receive several opportunities to develop and refine their research. Three course components serve that purpose: the research proposal, the research paper, and the research presentation. Students are expected to work closely with the instructor in all stages of their research and are encouraged to book multiple meetings in office hours to receive feedback on their work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course will meet for 2 hours of in-person seminar discussion per week. Attendance and informed participation in seminar discussions is mandatory and is assessed every week. Students who register late or who have other acceptable reasons for being absent should arrange to make up the required attendance and participation for missed weeks. Successful seminar participation presupposes familiarity with assigned readings, so students should complete readings before the start of each class. All assigned readings are available online, either as online resources from U of T libraries or in pdf form under the library reading list in Quercus.

Performance in the course will be evaluated based on the following components:

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| Research proposal (500 words) | 10% | due on Quercus on <u>October 6</u> (meeting required) |
| Research paper (3000 words) | 35% | due on Quercus on <u>November 17</u> |
| Research presentation (500 words) | 10% | in class on <u>November 24</u> and <u>December 1</u> |
| Reading presentation (500 words) | 10% | in class (individual dates to be assigned) |
| Participation | 35% | required and graded every week |

A proposal meeting during office hours in September is required for the proposal to be accepted.

Detailed instructions for each required course component are available on Quercus under assignments.

The use of generative artificial intelligence tools or apps for any assignment in this course, including tools like ChatGPT and any other AI writing or coding assistants, is prohibited.

The University of Toronto grading scale is used in the marking of all required course components and should be used as a rubric of expectations. The University of Toronto designates the A range to refer to excellent performance that demonstrates strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; and evidence of extensive knowledge base. The B range indicates good performance that demonstrates evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; and evidence of familiarity with literature. Anything below the B range refers to inadequate performance for graduate students. For graduate work in the Department of Political Science, B- and B are adequate for passing; B+ indicates satisfactory performance; A- indicates very good performance, A designates excellent performance; and A+ singles out outstanding performance.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

There is no class on October 13 (due to Thanksgiving holiday) and on October 27 (due to the fall reading week). Drop deadline is October 27.

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| Sep 8 | Overview |
| Part I | Ethics of International Relations |
| Sep 15 | Realist ethics |
| Sep 22 | Liberal ethics |
| Sep 29 | Rawlsian ideal ethics |
| Oct 6 | Rawlsian non-ideal ethics |
| Part II | International Relations of Ethics |
| Oct 20 | Anarchy |
| Nov 3 | Nation-States |
| Nov 10 | Gender |
| Nov 17 | Race and empire |
| Part III | Ethics and International Relations: Applications |
| Nov 24 | Presentations 1 (Individual student schedule to be assigned) |
| Dec 1 | Presentations 2 (Individual student schedule to be assigned) |

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Overview

- No reading assignment.

Realist ethics

- Terry Nardin, "Ethical traditions in international affairs," in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 1.
- Steven Forde, "Classical realism," in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 4.

- Jack Donnelly, “Twentieth century realism,” in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 5.
- Duncan Bell, “Political Realism and the Limits of Ethics,” in Duncan Bell (ed.), *Ethics and World Politics*, (Oxford, 2010), ch. 5.

Liberal ethics

- Thomas Donaldson, “Kant’s global rationalism,” in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 7.
- Anthony Ellis, “Utilitarianism and international ethics,” in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 8.
- David Mapel, “The contractarian tradition and international ethics,” in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 9.
- Michael Joseph Smith, “Liberalism and international reform,” in Terry Nardin & David Mapel (eds), *Traditions of International Ethics*, (Cambridge, 1992), ch. 10.

Rawlsian ideal ethics

- John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, (Harvard, 1999), preface, introduction, parts I, II, and IV.
- John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, (Harvard, 2001), part I.

Rawlsian non-ideal ethics

- John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, (Harvard, 1999), part III.
- Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations*, (Princeton, 1999), part III and afterword.

Anarchy

- Benjamin de Carvalho, Halvard Leira, and John Hobson, “The Big Bangs of IR: The Myths That Your Teachers Still Tell You about 1648 and 1919.” *Millennium* 39 3 (2011): 735-758.
- Hedley Bull, “Does order exist in World politics?” in Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, (Macmillan, 1977), ch. 2.
- Nancy Bertoldi, “Property and International Relations,” *International Theory* 16 1 (2024): pp. 1-25.
- Sheryl Lightfoot, “Decolonizing Self-Determination: Haudenosaunee Passports and Negotiated Sovereignty,” *European Journal of International Relations* 27 4 (2021): pp. 971-994.

Nation-States

- Emanuel Adler, “Changing Identities: The Road to Peace” in Emanuel Adler, *Communitarian International Relations*, (Routledge, 2005), ch. 10.
- Edward Said, “A Method for Thinking About Just Peace,” in Pierre Allan and Alexis Keller (eds.), *What is a Just Peace?* (Oxford, 2006), ch. 7.
- Iris Marion Young, “Self-Determination as Non-Domination: Ideals Applied to Palestine/Israel,” in Iris Marion Young, *Global Challenges*, (Polity, 2007), ch. 3.
- Farid Abdelnour, “Irreconcilable Narratives and Overlapping Consensus: The Jewish State and the Palestinian Right of Return,” *Political Research Quarterly* 68 1 (2015), pp. 117-127.

Gender

- Jacqui True, “Anarchy and Patriarchy in World Politics,” in Hidemi Suganami, Madeline Carr, and Adam Humphreys (eds), *The Anarchical Society at 40: Contemporary Challenges and Prospects*, (Oxford, 2017), ch. 14
- Carol Cohn, “Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 12 4 (1987), pp. 687-718.
- Iris Marion Young, “The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State,” in Iris Marion Young, *Global Challenges*, (Polity, 2007), ch. 6.
- Fiona Robinson, “Feminist foreign policy as ethical foreign policy? A care ethics perspective,” *Journal of International Political Theory*, 17 1 (2021), pp. 20-37.

Race and empire

- Charles Mills, “Race and Global Justice,” in Duncan Bell (ed.) *Empire, Race, and Global Justice*, (Cambridge, 2019), ch. 4.
- Duncan Bell, *Reordering the World*, (Princeton, 2016), ch. 4.
- Margaret Kohn, “Globalizing Global Justice,” in Duncan Bell (ed.), *Empire, Race, and Global Justice*, (Cambridge, 2019), ch. 7.
- Thomas Piketty, *A Brief History of Equality*, (Harvard, 2022), ch. 4.

Presentations:

- Student handouts will be posted on Quercus. No additional reading assignments beyond that.

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment submission: All written assignments must be submitted online on Quercus by the due date.

Late penalties: Late assignments will be penalized by **2% per late day**, weekends included. The number of late days will be determined by submission times on Quercus. In general, late assignments will not be accepted after marked assignments have been returned to the class.

Length penalties: Students should include word counts in all written assignments. Assignments that are more than 10% longer or shorter than the assigned word count will be penalized by **5%**.

Grading scheme: The University of Toronto grading scale is used in the marking of all required course components. For graduate students, numeric grades are placeholders for letter grades as per the University of Toronto numeric grading scheme. Numeric grades are used to communicate grades in Quercus, but only a letter grade will be submitted as the final grade for the course. More information about the meaning of grades and the conversion of numeric grades to letter grades is available at:

- <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-1-2020>
- <https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/general/grading-policy/>

Grade appeals: Students who have concerns about the mark they received can request that their work be remarked within two weeks after their marked assignments have been returned. Appeal requests must be submitted in writing and must include a statement of what students feel was overlooked in the marking of

their work. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the instructor. In accordance with University of Toronto policies, grades may go up, stay the same, or go down in the appeals process.

Extensions and make-ups: No extensions or make-ups will be granted on any course requirement, unless students have acceptable reasons that are documented, such as illness or unexpected personal circumstances beyond the student's control that interfere with the completion of academic obligations. Appropriate documentation must be submitted within one week of missed work. Assignments and tests from other courses scheduled for the same day, work or co-curricular commitments, or transportation problems do not constitute acceptable reasons, so students should plan accordingly in advance. No extensions will be granted after marked assignments have been returned to the class.

Absences or missed work due to illness: Students must contact the instructor immediately in cases of illness and must submit appropriate documentation to support accommodations, such as the University's verification of student illness or injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting student privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. Students can also submit a letter from a doctor in lieu of the VOI, as long as it is an original medical document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). More information on the VOI is available at <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. Students who suffer from concussion, fracture, or another injury or condition with ongoing impact should also register with accessibility services.

Academic integrity:

- Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).
- All sources used in written assignments must be properly cited. Failure to acknowledge sources constitutes plagiarism which is a serious academic offense. Students should review "How Not to Plagiarize" and other advice on using sources at www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources.
- The University of Toronto expects students to complete assignments on their own, without any outside assistance, unless otherwise specified. No outside assistance is permitted on any assignment for this course. The use of AI tools or any other outside assistance on course assignments will be considered an "unauthorized aid" under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* and will be treated as "any other form of cheating".

Code of conduct: The University of Toronto expects all its members to treat each other with courtesy and respect at all times. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and voice different views. Students should make sure to read the University's Student Code of Conduct <<https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-student-conduct-december-13-2019>> and the University's policy on the Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology <<https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/planning-policy/information-communication-technology-appropriate-use/>>.

RESOURCES

Accessibility services: Students with special needs or disabilities should register with accessibility services to arrange appropriate accommodations for their needs.

Graduate office support: Students should contact their graduate office promptly if they experience unexpected challenges during the course that may require accommodation.

Writing support:

- Students can visit www.writing.utoronto.ca for information on all aspects of academic writing. Advice files are available at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs>. The advice files on how not to plagiarize and on standard documentation formats are particularly important and are listed at <http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources>.
- Writing centers offer individualized consultations on written assignments. Interested students should book their appointments early, as they fill up fast. More information about the writing centers is available at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>.
- For group instruction on writing and study skills, students can take advantage of the “Writing Plus” workshop series. More information is available at <https://uoft.me/writingplus>.
- International students can find information about the English Language Learning program (ELL) at <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/english-language-learning>. For more information, contact the ELL coordinator Leora Freedman at ell.newcollege@utoronto.ca.

Health and wellness: The University’s mental health portal <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/> lists a wide range of available resources that support student wellbeing. Students can also consult the programs that are listed at: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>

Crisis support: If you’re experiencing distress, you are not alone! Please reach out for help!

Many free crisis lines and support services are available at U of T and the City of Toronto including:

- U of T Telus Health Student Support (formerly My SSP) available 24/7. Call 1-844-451-9700. Outside of North America, call 001-416-380-6578. Online information: <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/telus-health-student-support/>
- University of Toronto: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/support-when-you-feel-distressed/>
- Good 2 Talk Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454
- Gerstein Crisis Centre: 416-929-5200
- City of Toronto crisis services: <https://www.toronto.ca/home/311-toronto-at-your-service/find-service-information/?ctx=homepage&keywords=crisis>
- Distress Centres of Greater Toronto: 416-408-HELP (4357), <https://www.dcoft.com>
- The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): 250 College Street (walk-in)

Many of these services are available 24 hours a day every day and some have expertise in addressing specific problems that students may be experiencing. It is always a good idea to also inform your graduate office of your circumstances as soon as you are able.