Leadership in International Contexts

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Class Room: Jepson 101
Class Time: 1:30pm to 2:45pm Wednesdays and Fridays
Office Hours: I post a sign-up sheet for my office hours on blackboard. Please sign up for office hours there.

Course Description

This course will focus on the ethics of international leadership. We will consider ethical questions relating to leadership in war, poverty, global governance, and related topics. So, we'll clarify and try to answer ethical questions relating to international affairs that leaders and followers confront in politics, the military, business, and the nonprofit sectors. The emphasis of this course is on reasoned debate and argument, and the empathetic understanding of different perspectives.

There are two major components to this course. Two-thirds of this course will give you an overview of major topics in international ethics and this class will operate like a standard course. But we'll do something different in the last third of the course. We'll use role-playing to simulate a pivotal movement in history. Students will be assigned roles and victory objectives that they must pursue with the aid of other students or in competition with them. The settings for our game will be the decision whether to intervene in Rwanda to stop human rights violations in 1994.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to promote the following skills:

- **Writing Skills**: you will need to complete several writing assignments in this class. These assignments will increase your ability to write argumentative essays in a clear and compelling way.
- **Knowledge of Ethics & International Affairs**: this course will provide you with deep knowledge about international affairs and the role that ethical reasoning can play in them.
- **Rhetorical Skills**: you'll hone your ability to engage in public speaking through class debate and discussion. Furthermore, as part of the historical simulation, you will need to make speeches and learn how to persuade other players to support you.
- **Teamwork & Leadership**: the historical simulation will require you to work with other students in order to achieve your victory objectives and you may need to take on a leadership role to do this.

Course Requirements
Here’s a general comment about the philosophy that motivates the course requirements. The goal of this course is to maximize your learning. To this end, I’ve done my best to consult educational research in order to find out what most effectively promotes learning. This is why this course includes the following components:

- **Active Learning.** This class will often engage in “active learning” practices. Although I will give short lectures, most of this class will not involve passive listening and notetaking. Instead, you’ll engage in class discussions with other students and work together to interpret and apply the course material in creative and novel ways. The available research shows that active learning is usually a superior approach to the alternative.¹ This is also why we’re using a historical simulation in this class—this is a potent active learning strategy. Educational researchers have studied historical simulations and have found that they promote rhetorical skills, deep learning, empathy, and teamwork.²

- **Frequent Retrieval Practice.** A robust result from educational research is that quizzing promotes learning and retention.³ There are several reasons for this. One reason is that quizzes give you an incentive to study the course material carefully. But another reason is that the practice of retrieving information from your memory in itself promotes learning (this is called the “retrieval effect”). While I understand that you may not enjoy frequent quizzes, this is one of the most powerful learning tools available to us. Thus, you’ll complete brief quizzes and/or writing exercises in most class sessions.

Now, let me turn to specific course requirements. There is a total of 1000 possible points in this class. The points will be distributed as follows:

1. Class Participation & Activities: 20%
   a. You’re expected to listen attentively to other students and to participate in class discussion.
   b. Some ground rules for class discussion:
      i. Every perspective is welcome in this class as long as you can state reasons for your views and respond to comments/questions about it. I encourage you to try out different perspectives and opinions in class discussion even if you don’t fully endorse them.

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¹ An influential meta-analysis on this topic is: Scott Freeman et al., “Active Learning Increases Student Performance in Science, Engineering, and Mathematics,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111, no. 23 (June 10, 2014): 8410.


ii. You should be respectful of the instructor and other students. Please don’t dismiss other people’s views or make fun of students for holding controversial positions.

c. While attendance is not strictly required, you cannot expect to get a good grade unless you attend the vast majority of classes.

d. You will occasionally complete other activities in class that you’ll submit for a grade. These may include brief writing assignments and reflections. These assignments will count toward your participation grade.

e. The class participation grade is weighted—I’ll assign more credit to your participation during the last five weeks of class. Why does participation matter more for the last third of class? Because the historical simulation will require extensive public speaking and debate. Your active participation will be more crucial for this part of the class.

2. Quizzes: 20%
   a. You’ll take a brief quiz at the beginning of each class session unless noted otherwise on the syllabus. This quiz will ask you to remember information from the reading and may include a brief writing assignment. I expect each quiz to take about 5-15 minutes to complete and I’ll drop your lowest three grades on the quizzes.

3. Two Argumentative Essays: 35%
   a. You’ll complete two argumentative essays during the first ten weeks of the class. These papers will be about 1500-2000 words long. You’ll have a chance to revise these essays in light of my feedback for a higher grade. If the paper substantially improves, it will receive a 1/3 to 2/3 grade increase. To revise your papers, you must turn in a letter that details the changes that you have made to your paper in response to my comments.
   b. To turn in your paper, you should copy it to a google doc and share it with me. I’ll provide you with instructions on exactly how to do this in class.
   c. If you need an extension, you need to request one at least 24 hours before the paper is due. Computer problems are not a valid excuse for late papers (for this reason, I strongly recommend that you use google drive or drop box to save your work as you write).
   d. Late penalties: if you turn in your paper late, I will drop it by 1/3 of a grade. I will then continue to drop your grade by 1/3 for every day that passes.
   e. The first paper is worth 15% of your grade and the second is worth 20%.

4. Persuasive Essays for Speeches: 25%
   a. For the historical simulation, you will prepare two formal speeches which you will deliver to the class. You will also submit written versions of your speeches (think of this as an “ideal” version of your speech, a script that you prepare and then memorize the main points of, but do not read aloud), along with any other written assignments required by your role, to me for grading. The written “ideal speech” is due on the day that you give the
speech in class. The written version of your speech will be about 750-1000 words due before the class in which you give a speech.

5. I plan to upload rubrics on each course requirement to blackboard in the folder “Instructions and Rubrics.”

Policies

1. Please do not use your laptop, ipad, or phone during class unless I explicitly instruct you to do so. We will often use laptops during class, but only when I ask you to take them out.
2. I can only offer make up assignments in cases of extreme duress like documented medical emergencies and/or religious observance.
3. If you have a documented disability and would like some form of academic accommodation, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss whether such accommodation can be provided.

Feedback

I’m trying out several new teaching techniques this semester. Like I mentioned earlier, I’m doing this because the research suggests that these techniques are effective ways to promote learning. But, sometimes when you try out new things, you make mistakes. To increase the odds that things run smoothly, I’m going to use a app called Class Pulse to solicit your feedback throughout the course. This is an app that allows me to poll the class about your experience and you can leave me anonymous feedback as well. If something in this class is not working, I’d appreciate it if you let me know and I’ll seriously consider changing it. But here’s my rule: I won’t make any changes to this class that I think will detract from your learning. And, if you do send a message to the whole class, please make sure that your comments are respectful and constructive.

Required Texts

There is only one required book this semester. It is:


I have not ordered this book through the campus bookstore. Please order it yourself through Amazon or other sites. However, make sure to order the fifth edition of this book!

All other readings are available on the blackboard page for this class.

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4 I have adapted this course requirements from Rebecca Stanton’s Reacting class: https://reacting.barnard.edu/sites/default/files/rttp_program_2017_for_website.pdf from
5 Why do I put restrictions on laptop use? A growing body of research finds that the use of laptops and cell phones in class significantly diminish student learning. For example: Arnold L. Glass and Mengxue Kang, “Dividing Attention in the Classroom Reduces Exam Performance,” *Educational Psychology* (forthcoming): 1–14.
Week 1: Realism and Idealism

Description of Week 1: The first week will be an introduction to the course and international ethics. We’ll examine the status of ethics and moral reasoning in international affairs and consider the realist view that moral reasoning is somehow inappropriate or dangerous in this domain. The class will read a famous dialogue by the ancient Greek author Thucydides who wrote a history of the struggle between Sparta and Athens. In this dialogue, the Athenians and their opponents, the Melians, debate whether justice has a role to play in conflicts between states.

Wednesday, August 29th: Introduction
- Mark Amstutz, “Ethics and Foreign Policy” in *International Ethics* (IE), chapter 3.
- Recommended: Bob Fischer, “Introduction to Ethics.”

Friday, August 31st: Realism versus Idealism
- Amstutz, IE, chapter 4.
- Recommended: Richard Wasserstrom, “Does Morality Apply to War?”

Week 2: Themes in International Ethics

Description of Week 2: This week we’ll read about two major themes in international ethics: the scope of community and the challenge of cultural diversity. These themes define many of the other controversies that we’ll discuss in this course. On Wednesday, we’ll explore the question: do we owe more to the members of our own national community? Or do have the same fundamental obligations to all of humanity? On Friday, the class will read about human rights and cultural relativism. The question we’ll be asking is: are there universal moral standards that apply to all societies? Proponents of universal human rights say “yes” while defenders of cultural relativism say “no.” Who has the better argument?

Wednesday, September 5th: Nationalism versus Cosmopolitanism
- Amstutz, IE, chapter 2, pp. 23-29.
- Peter Singer, “One Community.”

Friday, September 7th: Human Rights and Cultural Diversity
- IE, chapter 6.
  - James Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism.”

Week 3: Writing and the Ethics of War

Description of Week 3: On Wednesday, we’ll take a break from the main content of this course to focus on writing. What counts as good writing for the purposes of this class? We’ll read advice on good writing and sample student essays. This session will prepare you to write your first papers for this class.
Wednesday, September 12th: Writing Day
• Anthony Weston and David Morrow, “Extended Arguments” and “Argumentative Essays.”

Friday, September 14th:
• Class canceled for “hurricane.”

Week 4: The Ethics of War

Description of Week 4: This week will introduce the ethics of war. When (if ever) is war justified? There are several major ethical traditions on how to respond to war. On Wednesday, we’ll read about one tradition: pacifism, the view that war is always or almost always wrong. While many people quickly dismiss pacifism, there are powerful arguments in its favor, and this week we’ll examine some of them. On Friday, we’ll read about the just war tradition. The just war tradition holds that war can be justified if it satisfies several stringent conditions. We’ll consider these conditions and examine how to apply them to actual cases. The class will also read selections from Michael Walzer, an influential modern proponent of the just war tradition.

Wednesday, September 19th:
• IE, chapter 7, pp. 113-118.
• Douglas Lackey, “Pacifism.”

Friday, September 21st:
• IE, chapter 7, pp. 118-128.
• Michael Walzer, “Law and Order in International Society.”

Week 5: Irregular War and Foreign Aid

Description of Week 5: This week will continue discussing the ethics of war. On Wednesday, we’ll consider how to apply just war principles to “irregular” conflicts between states and non-state actors and investigate the ethics of torture. On Friday, the class will discuss a new topic: foreign aid. Are we obligated to aid the global poor? If so, how? We’ll examine debates about foreign aid and consider Peter Singer’s influential argument for the view that we have demanding obligations to aid the global poor.

Wednesday, September 26th:
• IE, chapter 8.
• Fritz Allhoff, “Ticking Time-Bomb and Torture.”
• Recommended: Bob Brecher, “Torture and Its Apologists.”

Thursday, September 27th:
• First argumentative paper due at midnight. Submit your paper through blackboard.
Friday, September 28th:
- IE, chapter 11.
- Peter Singer, “The Life You Can Save.”

**Week 6: Foreign Aid and Migration**

**Description of Week 6:** We’ll start off this week by continuing our discussion of foreign aid. On Wednesday, the class will review Singer’s arguments and consider Jason Brennan and Bas van der Vossen’s rebuttal to Singer. On Friday, we’ll turn to a new subject: immigration. Are states obligated to open their borders? Or are there justified limits on immigration? We’ll read about the ethical dimensions of immigration policy and Joseph Carens’ argument for open borders.

Wednesday, October 3rd:
- Jason Brennan and Bas van der Vossen, “International Aid and Global Charity.”

Friday, October 5th:
- IE, pp. 29-39.
- Joseph Carens, “Migration and Morality.”

**Week 7: Migration and Trade**

**Description of Week 7:** On Wednesday, we’ll consider arguments for some limits on immigration. Some of these arguments appeal to states’ moral rights to exclude (Wellman), while other arguments invoke the bad consequences of unlimited immigration (Hrishikesh). On Friday, we’ll read about the moral dimensions of international trade. What are the costs and benefits of international trade? How should trade be regulated? In his contribution, Fernando Teson argues that justice requires free trade. Is Teson right that states should pursue a policy of free trade?

Wednesday, October 10th:
- Christopher Wellman, “Immigration and Freedom of Association.”
- Joshi Hrishikesh, “For (Some) Immigration Restrictions.”

Friday, October 12th:
- IE, chapter 10.
- Fernando Teson, “Why Free Trade is Required by Justice.”

**Week 8: Climate Change**

**Description of Week 8:** The theme for this week is international cooperation. How should states cooperate to tackle global problems? Is international cooperation feasible? Our main case study will be climate change. On Wednesday, we’ll read about the general contours of global governance and the ethics of climate change. On Friday, we’ll consider challenges to international cooperation on climate change that explain why this cooperation is difficult to achieve. The class will also investigate alternative
approaches to addressing climate change that don’t rely on extensive international cooperation.

Wednesday, October 17th:
- Amstutz, IE, chapter 12.
- Peter Singer, “Climate Change.”

Friday, October 19th:
- Bjorn Lomborg, “Let’s Keep Our Cool About Global Warming.”

Week 9: Sweatshops

Description of Week 9: We’ll consider ethical dilemmas in international business ethics this week. Multinational corporations operate “sweatshops” in poor countries, factories that offer relatively low wages and risky working conditions. Is this morally acceptable? Should sweatshops be banned? Matt Zwolinski argues that corporations should be allowed to operate sweatshops. Is Zwolinski right? On Friday, class is cancelled because I’ll be away at a conference.

Monday, October 22nd:
- Second argumentative paper due at 5pm.

Wednesday, October 24th:
- No quiz.

Friday, October 26th:
- Class cancelled.

Week 10: The Needs of Others

Description of Week 10: This week we'll begin preparing for our historical simulation on humanitarian intervention and human rights. On Wednesday, we'll read about the setup for this game and about the skills that it promotes. One of these skills is public speaking. To develop this skill, we'll do an in-class workshop on public speaking and how to do this better. On Friday, I'll assign your roles for the simulation and we'll read about the historical background on Rwanda as well as international human rights law.

Wednesday, October 31st:
- The Needs of Others, pages 4-18.
- “Reacting to the Past: Pedagogical Introduction” and “Speaking to Connect.”
- Speaking to connect workshop in-class.

Friday, November 2nd:
• Roles assigned.

Week 11: The Needs of Others

Description of Week 11: We'll continue discussing the background reading for the game on Wednesday. This reading is about the ethics of humanitarian intervention. Some authors, like Michael Walzer, are skeptical of humanitarian intervention, while other authors argue that humanitarian interventions are more often justified—who has the better argument? On Friday, the class will take an exam that covers all of the necessary material for the game—but this will be the last exam for the class. We'll complete any unfinished discussion of the readings, clarify the rules of the game, and get the game started. If time permits, the American players will talk amongst themselves about American policy and how they will address the Security Council at its first meeting.

Wednesday, November 7th:
• The Needs of Others, pages 88-120.

Friday, November 9th:
• Exam on the material from October 31st to November 7th. This will be the last exam in this class!
• Finish discussing readings.
• American faction meets.

Week 12: The Needs of Others

Description of Week 12: On Wednesday, we'll have the first meeting of the Security Council and the first set of press conferences. The meeting will be primarily composed of set piece speeches by members of the Security Council along with questions and answers. On Friday, we'll conduct the second meeting of the Security Council and the second set of press conferences. A few students will make speeches, but the meeting will mostly be free flowing debate.

Wednesday, November 14th:
• Game Session 1.

Friday, November 16th:
• Game Session 2.

Week 13: The Needs of Others

Description of Week 13: Thanksgiving Break!

Wednesday, November 21st:
• Thanksgiving.
Friday, November 23rd:
• Thanksgiving.

**Week 14: The Needs of Others**

Description of Week 14: On Wednesday and Friday, we’ll conduct the third and fourth meetings of the Security Council and the final set of press conferences. A few students will make speeches, but the meetings will mostly be free flowing debate.

Wednesday, November 28th:
• Game Session 3.

Friday, November 30th:
• Game Session 4.

**Week 15: The Needs of Others**

Description of Week 15: On Wednesday, we’ll conduct the final meeting of the Security Council. I’ll announce at the beginning of the class how long the meeting will last and explain how I’ll evaluate the results. On Friday, we’ll conduct a post-mortem on how this historical episode really played out and what we’ve learned from the simulation. I’ll assign the reading for the last session at a later date.

Wednesday, December 5th:
• Game Session 5.

Friday, December 7th:
• Post-mortem.
• Reading TBA.