

POLI 345

Ethics in International Relations

Instructor:

Dr. Scott Watson (Fall 2020)

Course description:

Some of the most pressing issues in international politics require difficult ethical assessment and decision: should states militarily intervene to prevent gross human rights violations? Are states justified in restricting immigration, even of refugees? Is there a moral duty to redistribute wealth globally? Who bears primary responsibility for the costs of preventing, mitigating, or adapting to climate change? Are there situations in which states may legitimately wage war, and is it ever acceptable to target non-combatants? All of these questions are of current importance and involve difficult moral decisions. The goal of this course is to introduce different traditions of moral thought and to explore their implications for contemporary international issues.

Prerequisites: None

Course outcomes/objectives:

- Understand major approaches to international ethics
- Introduce issues which present ethical dilemmas for practitioners and students of international politics
- Develop core undergraduate skills such as effective writing, analysis, and argumentation

Topics may include:

Theories of international politics
Immigration, citizenship and community
“Just” warfare
Environmental challenges

Course delivery: In the Fall 2020 term, this course will include some synchronous sessions on Tuesdays and Wednesdays only. The majority of the course will be delivered asynchronously.

This online summary is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. Detailed course outlines will be made available for all registered students on the first day of class. Only those outlines are to be considered official.