

PHIL 2304

Global Ethics

office hours: 10-11am daily
Zoom ID: 591 824 3118

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Summer I, 2021 – Online Asynchronous – CRN 63753 – [Canvas website](#) ↗

FORMAT

- ❖ There are no in-person or Zoom meetings.
- ❖ Read this PDF file thoroughly before class begins: [PHIL 2304 Online-Asynchronous Class Policies](#). ↗
- ❖ Students must respect the Honor System. If you have concerns, you must obtain specific guidance from me: ignorance of the rules does not excuse cheating or plagiarism. Find out more at [honorsystem.vt.edu](#). ↗
- ❖ Please send me SSD accommodations by May 31 or one week before the test you want them applied to.

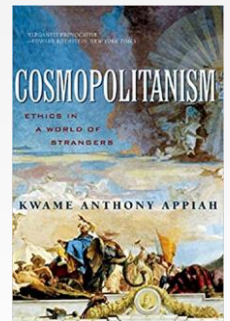
GOALS

Even as national boundaries are quickly losing relevance in our world, no cosmopolitan order exists yet. How does this semi-globalization affect our everyday lives? How do we carve ourselves a role as “global” citizens?

In this class you will:

- learn various moral theories and refine your grasp of the concepts of morality, justice, liberty, power, and oppression;
- be able to interpret concepts and events through the lens of moral philosophy, including social media and the news;
- understand how historical power relations (of gender, sex, race, class, and ability) influence many ethical and political features of public life;
- discuss several current dilemmas about global events, including human rights, border policy, capital-labor relations, and the environmental crisis;
- relate those dilemmas to everyday life, focusing especially on how our cultural and financial habits influence the lives of distant strangers; and
- challenge your beliefs in light of what you learn, refining your arguments and keeping an open mind—but not so open that your brain falls out!

BOOK



Kwame A. Appiah

*Cosmopolitanism:
Ethics in a World of Strangers*

This book is required.

Any edition is fine,
physical or electronic.

ASSIGNMENTS

Total possible points: 200. No curving.

Tests

Two, online, open-book, timed: 120 minutes each.

Tests are mostly multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and matching.

30 points each

Outlines

Summaries of all the readings, plus your own question. Outlines are due on Canvas each Sunday before 11:59 p.m.

[Outlines Guide](#) ↗

30 points total

Review

750 to 1,000-word analytical review of Appiah's book. You may turn in a rough draft up to one week before the due date.

[Review Guide](#) ↗

40 points

Discussion

Participate regularly on the Canvas forums during the term.

I recommend at least 2-3 quality posts each week to earn full credit.

30 points

Final

The final exam is similar to the other two tests, but it is worth more points and it is primarily essay-based and not multiple-choice. It is online, open-book, and timed (240').

40 points

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: READ BEFORE ASKING

I don't feel comfortable talking about some of these topics. What can I do?

Discuss it with me! Most of the times it is possible to make alternative arrangements. I'm pretty flexible.

When should I buy the book?

Immediately. It's due in July but you want to space it out.

I don't have the book. Can you send me a copy?

No. The physical book or the e-book version is easily found at VT bookstores and many other online stores.

I can't find the readings. Where are they?

See the instructions on p. 3 of this syllabus, just above the schedule of readings.

How do I submit the _____ ?

Check the instructions for each assignment, including the PDFs in *Canvas > Files*.

Can I submit an outline late?

No. The goal of the outlines is to be completed regularly to keep up with the readings.

Can I submit a test, paper, or project late?

Late assignments incur a 10% per day grade penalty. I may grant extensions for illness, VT-sponsored events, or other extenuating circumstances. E-mail me.

I missed class: can I get the notes?

Yes, on Canvas: the slides are in *Files* and the recordings are in *Media Gallery (Course)*.

I fell behind in my reading. What can I do?

Send me an email and/or come to office hours and we will plan a catch-up schedule.

I don't like posting to the Canvas forums. Can I earn participation credit in some other way?

No. As there are no live class meetings, there is no other way. However, do feel free to come to my office hours and discuss why you would rather not post to the forums: I will try to help if I can.

How quickly do you post grades?

For outlines: typically 1-2 days.
For tests: typically 4-5 days.
End of term: two days after final.

I don't like my grade. Can you change it?

Let's talk about it! If you can prove I made a mistake (like a counting error), I'll fix it. If it's just your opinion, make your case, but you need to have evidence.

What grade do people usually get?



In past years, my students from PHIL 2304 have averaged around 85% (B).

I don't understand what you want. What do?

Ask me in an email and I'll try to be clearer!

READING SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES





HOW TO FIND THE READINGS

(F) = reading is on Canvas under *Files* **(W)** = on external websites: click on [links](#)  to open
(M) = movies: click [links](#)  to see streaming options **(A)** = in the Appiah book

Readings, movies, and assignments must be completed by the end of each week.

All outlines are due on  Canvas under *Assignments* on each Sunday before 11:59 p.m.



Week 1 (May 24–May 30): Introduction to moral and political philosophy

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 5/30
Theoretical basics of the ideas of justice, freedom, & fairness.	<p>F D’Amato: Principles of morality and justice</p> <p>W Carter: Positive and negative liberty  §1</p> <p>F Rawls: <i>A Theory of Justice</i></p> <p>W McAfee: Feminist philosophy  §2.1, 2.2</p> <p>W James & Burgos: Philosophy of race  §4</p>	<p>reading outlines</p> <p> <i>Assignments</i></p>
	<p><i>optional readings</i>: Rachels 1, V. Held, Hobbes, Locke, Lorde</p>	

Week 2 (May 31–June 6): Decolonization and global distributive justice

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 6/6
How should we undo the legacies of colonialist oppression?	<p>M watch movie: Black Panther </p> <p>F Saito: Decolonization, development, and denial</p> <p>F Nagel: Poverty and food: why charity is not enough</p> <p>F Pogge: “Assisting” the global poor</p> <p>F Sen: The concept of development</p>	<p>reading outlines</p> <p> <i>Assignments</i></p> <p>first exam</p> <p> <i>Quizzes</i></p>
	<p><i>optional readings</i>: Singer, Nell, Nussbaum, Miller, Torres, Fanon</p>	

Week 3 (June 7–June 13): Global humanitarian aid and the savior complex

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 6/13
What is the best way to fix global poverty?	<p>F Weiss: Principles, politics, and humanitarian action</p> <p>F Cole: The white-savior industrial complex</p> <p>W Kapoor: Celebrity humanitarianism </p>	<p>reading outlines</p> <p> <i>Assignments</i></p>
	<p><i>optional readings</i>: Keating, Rorty, Said, Le Guin, Spivak</p>	

Week 4 (June 14–June 20): The new global capitalism and the socialist alternative

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 6/20
Are there alternatives to current forms of free-market capitalism?	F Robinson : The new global economy	reading outlines 🌀 <i>Assignments</i> second exam 🌀 <i>Quizzes</i>
	F Mies : Patriarchy and accumulation on a world scale	
	F Nielsen : A moral case for socialism	
	F Löwy : What is ecosocialism?	
	F Quiggin : The golden age	
	<i>optional readings</i> : Griswold, Herman, Rothman, Bookchin, Ross	

Week 5 (June 14–June 27): Climate ethics and the environmental crisis

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 6/27
How do we deal with the climate crisis that is impending?	M watch movie: <i>An Inconvenient Truth</i> ↗	reading outlines 🌀 <i>Assignments</i>
	W Milman : “We’re moving to higher ground” ↗	
	F Leopold : The land ethic	
	F Gardiner : The real tragedy of the commons	
	F Dunaway : Women’s labor and nature	
	<i>optional readings</i> : Broome, Shue, O’Laughlin	

Week 6 (June 28–July 2): Cosmopolitanism and the global community

Topic	Readings to do and outline this week	Tasks due: 7/2
How do we coexist with people that we disagree with about everything?	F Taylor : Conditions of unforced consensus on human rights	reading outlines 🌀 <i>Assignments</i>
	A Appiah : <i>Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers</i> Chapters 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	book review 🌀 <i>Assignments</i>
	<i>optional readings</i> : Walzer 1, Walzer 2, Rachels 2, D. Held	final exam 🌀 <i>Quizzes</i>