

PHIL 2304

Global Ethics

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

Dr. Claudio D'Amato
claudio1@vt.edu



Spring 2021 Online Synchronous
CRN 64406 – MWF 5:30-6:45pm – [Canvas website](#)

FORMAT

- ❖ Zoom ID for all class meetings: **871 2852 4222**. There are no in-person meetings.
- ❖ Read this PDF file thoroughly before class begins: [PHIL 2304 Online Policies](#).
- ❖ Students must respect by the Honor System. If you have concerns, you must obtain specific guidance from me: ignorance of the rules does not excuse plagiarism. Find out more at [honorsystem.vt.edu](#).
- ❖ Please send me SSD accommodations by Jan. 29 or one week before the test you want them applied to.

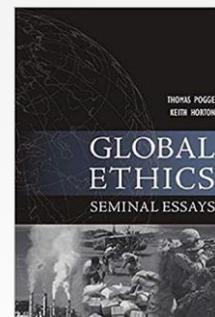
GOALS

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



Pogge & Horton
*Global Ethics:
Seminal Essays*

This book is required.
Any edition is fine,
physical or electronic.

ASSIGNMENTS

Each assignment is worth 20% of the total grade. 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.

Outlines

Summaries of all the readings, plus your own question. Outlines are due on Canvas each class day before 5:30 p.m.

[Outlines Guide](#)

Paper

750 to 1,000-word argumentative essay. You may turn in rough drafts our outlines up to two weeks before it's due.

[Paper Guide](#)

Discussion

Participate regularly during Zoom meetings and on the Canvas forums.

Both the quantity and the quality are important.

Project

Four options: final exam, research paper, art portfolio, or some hours of community service. I must pre-approve it by April 11.

[Project Guide](#)

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 fairly cheap and we use it right away.

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

No. The book is easily found at VT bookstores as well as many other online stores.

The reading is not in the book. Where is it?

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 a daily 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. The slides will be on *Canvas > Files*; the recordings will be on *Canvas > Media*.

I missed class: can I make up for lost credit?

No. The portion of your discussion grade that comes from attendance cannot be made up.

I don't speak up a lot in class. Can I earn participation credit in some other way?

Yes! You may post regularly to the forums under *Canvas > Discussions*. While not as valuable credit-wise as participating in class, it is a valid alternative for those who don't feel comfortable speaking up.

How quickly do you post grades?

For outlines: typically 4-5 days.
For tests: typically 10-14 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 (e.g., 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 87% (B+).

Should my camera be on while in Zoom?

I recommend that it is: it's more rewarding and involving for all of us to see one another.

READING SCHEDULE AND DUE DATES

HOW TO FIND THE READINGS

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

Readings, movies, and assignments must be completed by the day that they are assigned for.
 Outlines are due on Canvas under *Assignments* on each class day before 5:30 p.m.

1. FOUR PERSPECTIVES: ETHICS, LIBERTY, FAIRNESS, IDENTITY

Introduction	Wed, Jan. 20		No reading. Class introduction.	
Ethics	Mon, Jan. 25	(F)	D'Amato : Principles of morality and justice	
Liberty	Wed, Jan. 27	(W)	Carter : Positive and negative liberty 	§1
Fairness	Mon, Feb. 1	(F)	Rawls : <i>A Theory of Justice</i>	
Identity	Wed, Feb. 3	(W)	McAfee : Feminist philosophy 	§2.1, 2.2
		(W)	James & Burgos : Philosophy of race 	§4

2. GLOBAL INEQUITIES: DESTITUTION AND (DE)COLONIZATION

Colonialism and decolonization	Mon, Feb. 8	(F)	Saito : Decolonization, development, and denial	
		(M)	watch movie: Black Panther 	
	Wed, Feb. 10	(G)	Miller : Distributing responsibilities	
Solutions (?) to global poverty	Mon, Feb. 15	(G)	No class. Read: Singer : Famine, affluence, and morality	
	Wed, Feb. 17	(G)	No class. Read: Nagel : Poverty and food: why charity is not enough	
	Mon, Feb. 22	(G)	No class. Read: Pogge : "Assisting" the global poor	
		(M)	Watch: The End of Poverty? 	
	Wed, Feb. 24	(G)	No class. Sen : The concept of development	
The humanitarian aid industry	Mon, Mar. 1	(F)	Regular class resumes. No reading. Catch-up day!	
	Wed, Mar. 3	(F)	Weiss : Principles, politics, and humanitarian action	
FIRST TEST due on Canvas under <i>Quizzes</i> on Fri, Mar. 5 by 11:59 p.m.				
	Mon, Mar. 8	(F)	Cole : The white-savior industrial complex	
		(W)	Kapoor : Celebrity humanitarianism 	
	Wed, Mar. 10	(F)	Le Guin : The ones who walk away from Omelas	

3. GLOBAL LIMITS: NATIONS, BORDERS, RIGHTS

Nationalism and resistance	Mon, Mar. 15	(G)	Beitz: Cosmopolitan ideals and national sentiment
	Wed, Mar. 17		No class. Spring "Break" Day. optional reading: How the north ended up on top of the map
	Mon, Mar. 22	(F)	Eco: Ur-fascism
	Wed, Mar. 24	(F)	Fanon: On violence
		(F)	Torres: Crossroads of the church in Latin America

SECOND TEST due on Canvas under *Quizzes* on **Fri, Mar. 26** by 11:59 p.m.

Human rights	Mon, Mar. 29	(F)	MacKinnon: Are women human?
		(F)	Okin: Gender inequality and cultural differences
	Wed, Mar. 31	(G)	Jaggar: Global justice for women and intercultural dialogue
	Mon, Apr. 5	(G)	Luban: Just war and human rights
		(G)	Walzer: The moral standing of states
	Wed, Apr. 7	(G)	Taylor: Conditions of an unforced consensus on human rights

POSITION PAPER due on Canvas under *Assignments* on **Sun, Apr. 11** by 11:59 p.m.

TERM PROJECT CHOICE due on Canvas under *Quizzes* on **Sun, Apr. 11** by 11:59 p.m.

4. GLOBAL FUTURES: ENVIRONMENT, CAPITAL, LABOR

Humans and the environment	Mon, Apr. 12	(W)	Milman: "We're moving to higher ground"
		(M)	watch movie: An Inconvenient Truth
	Wed, Apr. 14	(G)	Gardiner: The real tragedy of the commons
	Mon, Apr. 19	(F)	Dunaway: Women's labor and nature
	Wed, Apr. 21	(F)	Mies: Patriarchy and accumulation on a world scale
Beyond capital	Mon, Apr. 26		No class. Spring "Break" Day. optional reading: TBA
	Wed, Apr. 28	(F)	Robinson: The new global economy and transnational capitalist class
	Mon, May 3	(F)	Nielsen: A moral case for socialism
		(F)	Löwy: What is ecosocialism?
	Wed, May 5	(W)	Quiggin: The golden age

TERM PROJECT due on Canvas under *Assignments* or *Quizzes* on **Fri, May 7** by 11:59 p.m.