

Ethics of War and Conflict

(01:730:330:01)

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Office hours: Tuesday 1pm-2pm (or by appointment)

Course Outline

This course will explore moral issues raised by collective violence, primarily by way of sustained critical engagement with the traditional theory of just war. Topics may include the foundations of the right of self-defense, the notion of a just cause for war, necessity and proportionality in war, war-profiteering, national self-defense, civil war, terrorism, the use of mercenaries in war, the use of torture in war and conflict, economic sanctions and trade wars, foreign electoral subversion, and more.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation – 10%

Take-home Exam – 45%

Essay – 45%

Attendance and Participation

I expect students to come to class with papers read in advance, ready to discuss the relevant issues. The class will be far more engaging for all involved when you actively participate – raise objections, express confusion, discuss your ideas and arguments, bring up current examples that may help make the relevant issues concrete, and more. Throughout the term, I will be taking note of who contributes, ultimately factoring such contribution into the overall grade.

Exam

The exam will be distributed on *March 13th*, the last day of class before Spring Break. Completed exams are due *March 20th*.

Essay

There will be several essay topics to choose from. I am also happy to allow students to choose their own topic – provided, of course, that they run it by me first. Essays are due *May 4th*, though this date is subject to change.

Grade Breakdown

A: 90-100

B+: 85-89

B: 80-84

C+: 75-79

C: 70-74

D: 60-69

F: 0-59

Course Schedule

(Note: no textbook is required for this course. All readings will be made available through Sakai.)

Self-Defense

Jan 21st: Introduction

Jan 24th: Judith Jarvis Thomson, ‘Self-Defense’

Jan 28th: Jeff McMahan, ‘The Basis of Moral Liability to Defense Killing’

Jan 31st: **NO CLASS**

Feb 4th: Jonathan Quong, ‘Agent-Relative Prerogatives to Do Harm’

Feb 7th: Helen Frowe, ‘Lesser-Evil Justifications for Harming’

Feb 11th: Helen Frowe, ‘A Practical Account of Self-Defense’

Feb 14th: Jason Brennan, ‘When May We Kill Government Agents?’

Core Issues in Just War Theory

Feb 18th: Jeff McMahan, ‘Just Cause for War’, 1-17

Feb 21st: Thomas Hurka, ‘Proportionality in the Morality of War’

Feb 25th: Eamon Aloyo, ‘Just War Theory and the Last of Last Resort’

Feb 28th: Daniel Statman, ‘On the Success Condition for Legitimate Self-Defense’

Mar 3rd: Jeff McMahan, ‘Can Soldiers be Expected to Know Whether Their War is Just?’

Mar 6th: David Estlund, ‘On Following Orders in an Unjust War’

Mar 10th: Jeff McMahan, ‘On the Moral Equality of Combatants’

Mar 13th: Cecile Fabre, 'Guns, Food, and Liability to Attack in War'

SPRING BREAK

Mar 24th: Kieran Oberman, 'War and Poverty'

Mar 27th: Saba Bazargan, 'Varieties of Contingent Pacifism'

Mar 31st: David Rodin, 'The Myth of National Self-Defense'

Apr 3rd: **NO CLASS**

Apr 7th: Jonathan Parry, 'Civil War and Revolution'

Unconventional Forms of Warfare

Apr 10th: Cecile Fabre, 'In Defense of Mercenarism'

Apr 14th: Alison M. Jaggar, 'What is Terrorism, Why is it Wrong, and Could it Ever be Morally Permissible?'

Apr 17th: Jeff McMahan, 'Torture in Principle and in Practice'

Apr 21st: Albert Peirce, 'Just War Principles and Economic Sanctions'

Apr 24th: Cecile Fabre, 'The Case for Foreign Electoral Subversion'

Apr 28th: Cecile Fabre, 'War Exit'

May 1st: Wrap-up

Plagiarism Guidelines

Please be sure to adhere to Rutgers policy on plagiarism and academic integrity. This website should contain the information you need: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Accessibility

As students at Rutgers, you are each entitled to equal access to educational opportunities at this university. (Or to put things in a way we will later come to understand, you each have a *claim-right* against the university that you are afforded such equal access.) Feel free to speak to me about any issues you may have, and please avail yourself of the services provided by the ODS (Office of Disability Services). Here is a link to their website: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Student Wellness

Here are some links that may prove useful during your time here at Rutgers:

Rutgers Student Wellness Program

<https://ubhc.rutgers.edu/swp/index.html>

CAPS

<http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

<http://vpva.rutgers.edu/>