

# Global Justice

## POLS 3280A: Fall SEMESTER 2024

Class Schedule: 2:50 – 4:05 pm Tuesday, Thursday  
Classroom: Old Mill 523  
Instructor: Assistant Professor Minh Ly

Office: 522 Old Mill  
Office Hours: 4:20 – 6:00 pm Tuesday and by appointment  
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### COURSE INTRODUCTION

Do we have duties to help the poor in other countries? Is it right or wrong to wage certain types of war? This seminar introduces students to the most important ethical debates about global politics. The first of these debates is on global poverty. Malaria, a major poverty related disease, kills a child every thirty seconds in the developing world, according to the United Nations. Do we have a duty of justice to prevent and treat illness in other countries? Should we go further, and reduce poverty globally? Or should we give greater priority to people in our country?

After addressing issues of aid, we will turn to questions of global distributive justice. While aid asks how much the wealthy should give to the poor, distributive justice examines how the economic structure distributes wealth and opportunity in the first place. For example, where you happen to be born greatly affects how well or badly your life goes. You will have far more wealth and opportunity if you are born in the United States or Australia instead of sub-Saharan Africa. Is this fair, or is it as morally arbitrary as your life chances being determined by your race or gender?

The third part of the course focuses on the United Nations, World Trade Organization, and other global governance institutions. As countries cooperate more closely to solve the largest ethical issues of our time, from poverty to disease and security, global governance institutions have grown more powerful. How can we ensure that they will also be accountable, legitimate, and fair? How can global governance be made more democratic and responsive to the concerns of ordinary people?

Finally, students will examine the justice or injustice of war – a topic of rising relevance during today's resurgence of international conflict. What are the just or unjust reasons for going to war? What are the limits on the means that we can use in fighting? Should we do more to protect civilians? Through the course, students will develop a deeper understanding of the most vital issues in global justice.

## Course Requirements

### 1. *Attendance and Participation*

Since taking part in the discussion is crucial to your learning, I will take attendance at every seminar. **Attendance counts towards 10% of your grade.**

You are limited to one absence without written documentation. Additional absences must be documented with a written note from a doctor, the administration, or university athletics to be excused. Please note that each unexcused absence reduces your final grade by 1%, meaning that 3 absences will reduce a student's grade from an A- to a B+, for example.

I expect you to finish the assigned reading before class and to come prepared to reflect and deliberate about it with your fellow students. It is highly recommended that you bring a printout or text of the readings with you to class, along with any notes you have taken. **Informed and collaborative participation in class discussion counts 10% of your grade.** Your contributions, to receive a high grade, should be *informed* by a close reading and contemplation of the text. Your discussion should also be *collaborative* in being respectful of the other students and listening attentively to them. You are encouraged to take different viewpoints, but you should do so professionally, treating students as your valued colleagues.

### 2. *Reading Quizzes*

Around once every two weeks, in the first five minutes of the seminar, I will give an unannounced reading quiz. The quiz will either be a brief multiple-choice format, or a short written response to a question. The quiz questions will draw from the major theme of the reading assignment due that day. Quizzes will be graded on a scale from 0 to 10. If you are absent the day I give a quiz, you will receive a score of zero on the quiz. **There are no make-up quizzes, but I will drop your lowest quiz score when calculating your final grade.** If you are present in class but didn't do the reading and you simply answer "present" for your quiz, you will get an automatic three points. **The reading quizzes will account for 10% of your final grade.**

### 3. *Midterm*

A midterm will be held in class on **Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**, in our usual classroom, Old Mill 523. The exam will involve short answer questions along with longer essay questions. **The midterm is worth 20% of your final grade.**

### 4. *Paper*

To strengthen your skills at writing and analysis, you will write a paper, 8 to 10 pages long. This is your opportunity to develop your critical thinking, reflect on the readings, and share your resulting insights on crucial issues of global justice. The paper is due **Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>** at 11:59pm uploaded to Brightspace. **The paper will be worth 25% of your final grade.**

- **Academic Integrity and AI: Generative AI tools should not be used in the completion of graded course assignments. Plagiarism is also prohibited.** This course aims to strengthen your critical thinking and writing, and that is not possible if a machine substitutes for your original thought and voice.
- *Late Paper Policy:* papers that are submitted a day after the due date will lose a third of a grade. Papers sent in up to a week late will lose two-thirds of a grade. If a paper is submitted more than a week late but by the last class, a full grade will be deducted.

### 5. *Final Exam*

The final exam will be held in class on **Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm** in our classroom, Old Mill 523. The exam will involve short answer questions along with longer essay questions. **The final exam will be worth 25% of your grade.**

To summarize the assignments:

Seminar attendance	10%
Informed and collaborative participation	10%
Reading quizzes	10%
Midterm	20%
Research paper	25%
Final Exam:	25%

**Note: You must complete the paper, midterm, and final to pass the course.**

### Classroom Computer Policy to Enhance Student Learning

**To create an optimal educational environment liberated from distractions, our classroom is free of electronic devices.** This includes laptop computers and phones—they cannot be used in class. Because of privacy regulations, lectures cannot be recorded electronically. Please silence your cell phones before class begins. Studies have shown that taking notes by hand greatly improves retention and enhances student learning.

### Required Books

The following books are available at the UVM bookstore at the Davis Center. They are also available for purchase online. *Please use these editions if you can, so that we're all able to stay on the same page.*

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice* (Cambridge)  
 Peter Singer, *One World Now: The Ethics of Globalization* (Yale)  
 Jonathan Wolff, *The Human Right to Health* (Norton)  
 Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars, Fifth ed.* (Basic Books)

## Brightspace

I have created a webpage for this class through Brightspace, where you will find the course syllabus and course readings organized by week.

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### WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS

#### **PART I: Humanitarian Aid, the Human Right to Health, and Immigration**

##### **Week 1 (August 27 to 29): *The Case for and against the Duty to Aid***

There is no reading assignment for Tuesday, January 17. Please read by Thursday:

Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1(1972): 229-243.

Terence Tao, "A Close Call: How a Near Failure Propelled Me to Succeed," *Notices of the American Mathematical Society*,  
<https://www.ams.org/notices/202007/rnoti-p1007.pdf>

Robert Black, et al., "Maternal and Child Undernutrition: Global and Regional Exposures and Health Consequences," *Lancet* 371 (2008): 243-260.

Richard W. Miller, "Beneficence, Duty, and Distance," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 32 (2004): 357-383.

Peter Singer, *One World Now*, ch. 5.

##### **Week 2 (September 3 to 5): *Is There a Human Right to Health?***

Jonathan Wolff, *The Human Right to Health*, chapters 1-5.

William Easterly, "Human Rights Are the Wrong Basis for Healthcare," *Financial Times* (October 19, 2009): 9.

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 4.

**Note:** There will be no class meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup> due to the American Political Science Association (APSA) conference.

##### **Week 3 (September 10 to 12): *Do the Global Poor Have the Right to Immigrate?***

Joseph Carens, "Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders," *Review of Politics* 49:2 (1987): 251-273.

David Miller, "Immigration: The Case for Limits," in *Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics*, eds. Andrew I. Cohen and Christopher Heath Wellman (Wiley 2005), 363-375.

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 8.

Idrees Kahloon, "Economists Love Immigration. Why Do So Many Americans Hate It?" *New Yorker* (June 5, 2023),

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/06/12/immigration-economy-book-reviews>.

## **PART II: What Principles of Distributive Justice Apply to the Global Economy?**

### **Week 4 (September 17 to 19): *Cosmopolitan Theories of Distributive Justice***

Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton University Press 1999), 126-153.

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 1-3.

Simon Caney, "Cosmopolitan Justice and Equalizing Opportunities," *Metaphilosophy* 32:1-2 (2001): 113-134.

**In class exercise:** the distributive justice game.

**Optional:** Martha Nussbaum, "Beyond the Social Contract: Capabilities and Global Justice," *Oxford Development Studies* 32:1 (2004): 3-18.

### **Week 5 (September 24 to 26): *Nationalist Theories of Distributive Justice***

Thomas Nagel, "The Problem of Global Justice," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33 (2005): 113-147 [Bb].

David Miller, "National Responsibility and Global Justice," *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 11:4 (2008), 383-399.

John Rawls, *Law of Peoples* (Harvard University Press, 1999), 82-83; 115-120.

### **Week 6 (October 1 to 3): *Global Justice and Rights to Natural Resources***

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 5

Leif Wenar, "Property Rights and the Resource Curse," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 36 (2008): 2-32 [Bb].

Peter Singer, *One World Now*, 111-121.

Christopher Wellman, "The Resource Curse and Leif Wenar's 'Clean Hands Trust,'" *Cato Unbound* (2008) [Bb]

John Ghazvinian, "The Wenar Proposal vs. Realpolitik," *Cato Unbound* (2008).

**Exercise to present in class:** Before class, research the origins of a product that you use every day. Where is it made? What are the source countries for the natural resources, such as the minerals, oil, and metals, used to make the product? Are those countries democracies, autocracies, or dictatorships? Have they recently experienced civil war? Please present your findings.

### **Week 7 (October 8 to 10): *The Justice of Fair Labor and Trade***

Iris Marion Young, "Responsibility and Global Labor Justice," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 12 (2004): 365-388 [Bb].

Ethan Kapstein, "The Corporate Ethics Crusade," *Foreign Affairs* 80 (2001): 105-119 [Bb].

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 6.

Peter Singer, *One World Now*: 69-116.

### **PART III: The Justice of Global Institutions**

#### **Week 8 (October 15 to 17): *The World Trade Organization, TRIPS, and patent protections for AIDS medications***

##### **Midterm Exam, Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**

Fabienne Orsi and Cristina d'Almeida, "Soaring Antiretroviral Prices, TRIPS and TRIPS flexibilities," *Current Opinion in HIV and AIDS* 5 (2010): 237-241.  
Lisa Forman, "Trade Rules, Intellectual Property, and the Right to Health," *Ethics and International Affairs* 21 (2007): 337-357 [Bb].  
Henry Grabowski, "Patents, Innovation, and Access to New Pharmaceuticals," *Journal of International Economic Law* 5 (2002): 849-860 [Bb].

#### **Week 9 (October 22 to 24): *Global Warming and the Kyoto Protocol***

Chris Armstrong, *Global Distributive Justice*, ch. 7.  
Peter Singer, *One World Now*, ch. 2.  
Eric Posner and Cass Sunstein, "Global Warming and Social Justice," *Regulation* (2008): 14-20: <http://www.ericposner.com/GWSJ.pdf>.  
Simon Caney, "Just Emissions," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 40 (2012): 255-300 [Bb].

#### **Week 10 (October 29 to 31): *Is There a Human Right to Democracy?***

Thomas Christiano, "An Instrumental Argument for a Human Right to Democracy," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 39 (2011): 142-176 [Bb].  
Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value," *Journal of Democracy* 10 (1999): 3-17.  
Liu Xiaobo et. al. "China's Charter 08," trans. Perry Link, *New York Review of Books* (January 15, 2009) [Bb].  
Charles R. Beitz, *The Idea of Human Rights* (2011): 174-185.  
John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (1999), part II.

#### **Week 11 (November 5 to 7): *Can International Organizations be Made More Democratic?***

Robert Keohane, Stephen Macedo, and Andrew Moravcsik, "Democracy-Enhancing Multilateralism," *International Organization* 63 (2009): 1-31.  
Ronald Dworkin, "A New Philosophy for International Law," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 41:1 (2013): 2-30.  
Robert Dahl, "Can International Organizations Be Democratic: A Skeptic's View," *Democracy's Edges* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 19-36.  
Allen Buchanan and Robert Keohane, "The Legitimacy of Global Governance Institutions," *Ethics and International Affairs* 20 (2006): 405-437.

## PART IV: The Justice of War and International Security

### Week 12 (November 12 to 14): *When is It Just or Unjust to Wage War?*

Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, chs. 1-2, 4.

In class film: *The Fog of War* (winner, Academy Award for Best Documentary)

**Research paper due: Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**

### Week 13 (November 19 to 21): *The United Nations and Humanitarian Intervention*

Peter Singer, *One World Now*, chapter 4.

Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust War*, ch. 6.

Adom Getachew, "Holding Ourselves Responsible," *Boston Review* (September 11, 2019), <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/adom-getachew-holding-ourselves-responsible/>

### Week 14 (November 26 to 28)

Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)

### Week 15 (December 3 to 5): *What are the Moral Limits of War against Civilians?*

Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust War*, chs. 8-10, 16.

Joy Gordon, "Accountability and Global Governance: The Case of Iraq" *Ethics and International Affairs* 20 (2006): 79-98.

Summary and overview of readings to prepare for the final exam.

**Final exam date: Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm in Old Mill 523**

## **CLASSROOM PROTOCOL**

The Department of Political Science requires that this classroom protocol, defining minimum standards of conduct, be included in all syllabi.

1. Students are expected to attend and be prepared for ALL regularly scheduled classes.
2. Students are expected to arrive on time and stay in class until the class period ends. If a student knows in advance that he/she will need to leave early, he/she should notify the instructor before the class period begins.
3. Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow students with respect. For example, students must not disrupt class by leaving and reentering during class, must not distract class by making noise, and must be attentive to comments being made by the instructors and by peers.

### **Covid Policy**

Since some students are in contact with older relatives, or immunocompromised, it is strongly advised as a responsible member of your community that you wear a mask during class and in office hours. Students are encouraged to stay in their residence and contact Student Health Services (SHS) if they feel ill.

If a student will not be able to attend in-person classes for qualifying health reasons, SHS will send a notification to the appropriate student services office or designated staff member informing them of this along with the dates the student is unable to attend. The SHS notification will specify whether the request for flexibility is only around in-person class attendance or includes additional flexibility for assignments and tests because the student is too ill to participate. Students are responsible for working with their faculty to make up class content and work they miss due to a documented illness.

### **Religious Holidays**

If you wish to be excused from class or work because of a religious holiday, please email me about the holiday(s) by the end of the second week of class, and we'll work something out.

### **Students with Disabilities**

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact ACCESS, the office of Disability Services on campus. ACCESS works with students and faculty to create reasonable and appropriate accommodations via an accommodation letter to professors with suggested accommodations as early as possible each semester. Contact ACCESS: A170 Living/Learning Center; 802-656-7753; [access@uvm.edu](mailto:access@uvm.edu); or [www.uvm.edu/access](http://www.uvm.edu/access).



## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### **Student Learning Accommodations**

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact SAS, the office of Disability Services on campus. SAS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations, which are communicated to faculty in an accommodation letter. All students are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty to discuss the accommodations they plan to use in each course. A student's accommodation letter lists those accommodations that will not be implemented until the student meets with their faculty to create a plan.

Contact SAS: A170 Living/Learning Center; 802-656-7753; [access@uvm.edu](mailto:access@uvm.edu)  
[www.uvm.edu/access](http://www.uvm.edu/access)

**Academic Integrity:** The policy addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating. <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

**Grading:** For information on grading and GPA calculation, go to <https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/grades>

**Code of Student Conduct:** <http://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/studentcode.pdf>

**FERPA Rights Disclosure:** The purpose of this policy is to communicate the rights of students regarding access to, and privacy of their student educational records as provided for in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974.  
<http://catalogue.uvm.edu/undergraduate/academicinfo/ferparightsdisclosure/>

**Promoting Health & Safety:** The University of Vermont's number one priority is to support a healthy and safe community.

**Center for Health and Wellbeing:** <https://www.uvm.edu/health>

**Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS)** Phone: (802) 656-3340

**C.A.R.E.** If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380). If you would like to remain anonymous, you can report your concerns online by visiting the Dean of Students website at: <https://www.uvm.edu/studentaffairs>

**Final Exam Policy:** The University final exam policy outlines expectations during final exams and explains timing and process of examination period:  
<https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/final-exams>