

**Tufts University
Summer School 2011 - Session II**

Ethics and Global Citizenship (CSS 0093BC)

Instructor: Mario De Caro (mario.decaro@tufts.edu)

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Class meetings: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-4:00 PM (Olin 112)

Office Hours: After the meetings or by appointment.

Course Description

In an epoch of polarized political opinion and divisive cultural issues, questions of morality and ethics are often lost amidst the muddle of ideological simplicity. More and more, our culture insists that you must either be totally for or totally against any given idea. Consider the plethora of political and social problems which allow for moral ambiguity – international conflicts, abortion, gay marriage, poverty, global economy, genetic engineering – these issues are never as black-and-white as our cultural ideologues, or “talking heads,” would have us believe. The most productive way of resisting such absolutism is to try to understand what is important in each of the conflicting points of views and think critically rather than emotionally about what is ethically sound rather than expedient.

The Ethics and Global Citizenship is a lively and provocative course which will require you to confront, rather than avoid, moral ambiguity in reflecting about the most relevant problems of our global age. Whatever your future path, taking on a role of leadership requires this sort of nuanced approach to thinking through ideologically and morally complex issues. If you’re considering a career in such disparate fields as law, medicine, finance, education, international relations, religion, social

work or journalism, you will no doubt constantly find yourself confronted with the difficult question of *What is the right thing to do?*

In this class, you will engage with a variety of classical and modern texts—as well as movie and music clips and newspaper articles— in order to construct a methodology which will allow you not only to identify the Ethical Act, but to argue for it in a rhetorically responsible and persuasive way. Most importantly, the structure of the class will emphasize reasoned and respectful discussion; the one-note simplicity of the “talking heads” will be replaced with the subtlety of interpersonal communication.

Ultimately, the Ethics and Global Citizenship program will provide you with the critical and intellectual resources to participate in our global society as an informed, articulate, and motivated citizen and leader.

Grading

- 20 %: Class attendance, participation and presentations.**
- 30 %: Mid-term paper (10,000 – 12,000 words)**
- 50 %: Final exam (in class)**

The grade of late papers will be lowered (a third of letter grade per day will be deducted from late papers).

There will be some extra work for students enrolled for one academic credit.

General info

- Clips from movies/documentaries will be shown during the meetings.
- Some meetings will involve guest speakers.
- Some readings will be available on Blackboard, others are available on the internet.

Course Outline

July 5: Introduction: what is global citizenship?

Punishment and death penalty

July 7: Racism and other forms of discrimination

Readings:

Aristotle, *Politics* (sections III to VII):

http://www.constitution.org/ari/polit_01.htm

Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, "Group Identity Maintenance" from *Human Ethology* (on Blackboard)

July 12: Is there such a thing as a just war?

Readings:

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/j/justwar.htm>

Michael Walzer, "The Triumph of Just War Theory (and the Dangers of Success)" from *Arguing About War* (on Blackboard)

July 14: Freedom, Responsibility and Control

Reading:

Soon et al., "Unconscious determinants of free decisions in the human brain" (from *Nature Neuroscience*)

July 19: Religions, science and ethics

Readings:

<http://www.actionbioscience.org/evolution/nhmag.html>

P. Boyer and B. Bergstrom, "Evolutionary Perspectives on Religion" (on Blackboard)

July 21: Bioethics: euthanasia and cloning

Mid-term paper due!!!

Readings:

H. Kuhse and P. Singer, "What is Bioethics? A historical Introduction", from the *Blackwell Companion to Bioethics* (on Blackboard)

James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"

http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/SocialSciences/ppecorino/DeathandDying_TEXT/Rachels_Active_Passive.htm

July 26: Humans and other animals

Readings:

Carl Cohen, "The Case for the Use of Animals in Biomedical Research" (on Blackboard)

Bernard Rollin, "The moral status of animals and their use as experimental subjects", from the *Blackwell Companion to Bioethics* (on Blackboard)

July 28: The evolution and development of morality

Readings:

Frans De Waal, "Chimpanzee Politics", from *Machiavellian Intelligence* (on Blackboard)

Paul Bloom, "The Moral Life of Babies"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/09/magazine/09babies-t.html?pagewanted=all>

August 2: Ethics and Impartiality

Reading:

Peter Singer, *One World (fragments)* (on Blackboard)

August 4: Business ethics

Reading:

P.H. Werhane and R.E. Freeman, from the *Blackwell Companion to Ethics* (on Blackboard)

August 9: Freedom and the media

Reading:

Deni Elliott, "Essential Shared Values and 21st Century Journalism", from *The Handbook of Mass Media Ethics* (on Blackboard)

August 11: FINAL EXAM