

New York University

**Normative Issues in International Affairs
(G53-1730)**

**Spring Term 2006
Mondays 4 - 6 p.m.**

**Joel H. Rosenthal
(212) 838-4120 office
e-mail: jrosenthal@cceia.org**

Course Description

What values guide us as we make choices about the use of force, resolving conflict, promoting human rights and social justice, encouraging democracy and development, preserving the environment, and participating in international organizations?

This course is designed to provide analytical rigor to the perennial question: what role do ethical considerations play in the conduct of international affairs? Two basic questions provide its structure: Is ethical action possible given the realities of national interests and power politics? And how, in ethical terms, can international acts and institutions be evaluated? We begin with reconsiderations of the two dominant paradigms in international relations today, realism and globalization. We then address several thematic issues of immediate policy relevance.

Course Requirements

- * Students will be required to hand in 1-2 page "response to reading" memos at each class. Memos should raise at least 2-3 points that the student would like to discuss in class. These memos, along with class participation, will count for 50% of the final grade.
- * Students will also be required to lead off the discussion (along with one or two fellow students) in at least one class session.
- * 1-2 page prospectus of research seminar paper.

DUE February 27

- * 7-8 page interim report reviewing topic and bibliography to be used in the final paper.

DUE April 3

- * 20-25 page final seminar paper containing three elements: (1) factual description and historical background of a particular issue/case study in the normative dimension of international affairs; (2) an explication of the moral issues involved; (3) analysis and conclusions. Or students may write a review essay of similar length on a particular normative analyst of international affairs. The instructor will provide a list of potential subjects. This paper will account for 50% of the final grade.

DUE May 1

Required Texts

Joel H. Rosenthal, ed., Ethics & International Affairs: A Reader
(Georgetown University Press, 1999, 2nd edition)

James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy (McGraw Hill, 1998)

John J. Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (WW Norton, 2001)

Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant (Oxford University Press, 2000)

Peter Singer, One World: The Ethics of Globalization (Yale University Press, 2002)

Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars (Basic Books, 1999)

Martha C. Nussbaum, ed., For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism (Beacon Press, 1996)

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom (Knopf, 1999)

All texts have also been placed on reserve at the Bobst Library.

Course Outline

Week I January 23 *INTRODUCTION*

Week II January 30 *ETHICS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:
AN OXYMORON?*

Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics Chapters 1, 2

Rosenthal, "Ethics" in Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Policy (Vol.2) 105-108

Week III February 6 *MORAL ARGUMENT*

James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy (McGraw Hill, 3rd ed. 1998) 1-29; 117-126; 180-193

Frances Harbour, "Basic Moral Values: A Shared Core" (in Rosenthal, Reader)

Isaiah Berlin, "My Intellectual Path," NY Review of Books (1998)

Week IV February 13 *REALISM RECONSIDERED Part I*

Ann Marie Slaughter, A New World Order (2004) 1-35; 131-165

Week V February 20 *NO CLASS (PRESIDENTS DAY)*

Week VI February 27 *REALISM RECONSIDERED Part 2*

Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant, 1-96

Week VII March 6 *TODAY'S PARADIGM: GLOBALIZATION*

Peter Singer, One World: The Ethics of Globalization

Course Outline

Week VIII March 13 *NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)*

Week IX March 20 *COSMOPOLITANISM AND ITS LIMITS*

Martha Nussbaum, For Love of Country

Michael Ignatieff, "Human Rights as Idolatry"

Michael Ignatieff, "Is Nothing Sacred?: The Ethics of Television"

Week X March 27 *JUSTICE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY (Part 1)*

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom 1-111

Week XI April 3 *JUSTICE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY (Part 2)*

Andrew Bacevich, "Strategy of Openness," in American Empire (2002), 79-116

Thomas Donaldson, "Moral Minimums for Multinationals," (in Rosenthal, Reader)

Iris Young, "From Guilt to Solidarity: Sweatshops and Political Responsibility," Dissent (Spring 2003)

Week XII April 10 *JUST WAR?*

Walzer, Just & Unjust Wars

Week XIII April 17 *THE POLITICS OF RECONCILIATION*

Lyn S. Graybill, "South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Ethical and Theological Perspectives," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 12) 43-62

David Crocker, "Reckoning With Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 43-64

Course Outline

David Little, "A Different Kind of Justice: Dealing with Human Rights Violations in Transitional Societies," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 65-80

Susan Dwyer, "Reconciliation for Realists," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 81-98

Week XIV April 24 *ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AS AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE*

Daniel S. Smith, "Place-Based Environmentalism and Global Warming," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 15.2) 117-134

Robert Goodin, "International Ethics and the Environmental Crisis," (in Rosenthal, Reader)

Steven M. Gardiner, "The Global Warming Tragedy and the Dangerous Illusion of the Kyoto Protocol," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 18.1) 23 - 39

Elizabeth R. DeSombre, "Global Warming: More Common Than Tragic," Ethics & International Affairs (vol. 18.1) 41-46

Week XV May 1 *STUDENT REPORTS*