

## **PHIL 235A (001) – Contemporary Moral Issues**

Winter Term 1, 2016 – 17

Mon, Wed, Fri, 14:00 – 15:00

Hugh Dempster Pavilion (DMP), Room 301

Instructor: Bruno Guindon

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### **Course description**

Canada has been an active participant in war in all but two of the last 25 years. The United States have had an active presence in war in 27 of the last 34 years. We may think that participation in some of these armed conflicts is morally unproblematic. Indeed, perhaps participation is morally required. Yet, it is a troubling reality that not all wars are morally justified, if any. This course offers an introduction to the ethics of war, torture, and terrorism. Questions to be addressed include: When, if ever, is war just? What are the rules of engagement, and how are these rules justified? Is terrorism and torture ever morally permissible? Is terrorism an act of war? If so, are there rules of engagement for terrorism? What is the moral status of drone attacks? What should we do once war is over?

While this is primarily a lecture-based course, many classes will involve active student-participation and discussion. This means that you will be required to have done the readings and have thought carefully about the material before each class. No prior familiarity with philosophy is required for this course.

### **Required Text**

- Frowe, Helen (2015). *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. New York: Routledge, 256 pages. (Available for purchase at the UBC bookstore)
- In addition to the above reader, we will be reading various philosophy journal articles, all of which will be freely accessible via *Connect*. See provisional reading schedule for further details.

### **Evaluation**

- Six reading reflections, six questions, and at least two responses, posted on *Connect* (15% total)
- Two in-class quizzes (10% each)
- Short paper, 3 – 4 pages (25%)
- Final paper, 6 – 8 pages (35%)
- Participation (5%)

### **Reading reflections, discussion questions and responses**

Starting in week 2, you will be expected to submit six reading reflections of either chapters from Frowe (2015) or of journal articles. Which chapters or articles you write on is entirely up to you. However, *it is also entirely your responsibility to make sure you submit six reflections by*

*the end of term.* These reflections need not be long: one or two paragraphs will often suffice, and you can provide reflections of optional readings if you wish. Additionally, you are required to end each reflection with a discussion question that relates to the reading. This question should invite further thought and consideration about a topic or concept from the reading that you found interesting or challenging. *Reading reflections and discussion questions must be submitted via Connect before the beginning of the class in which the reading is being discussed.* Under no circumstances will reflections and discussion questions be accepted once the class has begun.

In addition to submitting reading reflections and discussion questions, you will be required to respond to *at least two questions* posed by your fellow classmates via *Connect*. Again, when you choose to answer these questions is entirely up to you, but you must respond to the questions within the week they are posted. For example, you will not be able to respond to a question in week 6 that was posted in week 4. Again, you are responsible to ensure that you respond to at least two questions by the end of term.

### **Handouts, slides etc.**

Handouts and paper topics will be distributed via *Connect*; announcements will also be distributed through the announcement functions available here: thus, check *Connect* routinely.

### **Participation**

As stated above, your participation in the course counts for 5% of your final mark. There are no specific criteria by which I evaluate student participation. Your participation in this course will be evaluated holistically. That is, there are various ways one can obtain participation marks. These include, but are not limited to the following: active contribution in class, asking questions, offering comments, coming to office hours, and generally engaging with the course material. *It should be noted that merely attending classes is not sufficient to receive full participation marks.*

### **Policy on Lateness**

Essays which are turned in late without an extension will be penalized at the rate of 5% *per calendar day*. No extensions will be given on assignments or essays except for medical reasons. The deadline for requesting an extension is one business day before an assignment is due. Differed midterm quizzes will not be considered except for medical reasons.

### **Academic honesty and integrity**

Here is a statement from the UBC website:

“Academic honesty is essential to the continued functioning of the University of British Columbia as an institution of higher learning and research. All UBC students are expected to behave as honest and responsible members of an academic community. Breach of those expectations or failure to follow the appropriate policies, principles, rules, and guidelines of the University with respect to academic honesty may result in disciplinary action.

**It is the student's obligation to inform himself or herself of the applicable standards for academic honesty.** Students must be aware that standards at the University of British Columbia may be different from those in secondary schools or at other institutions. If a

student is in any doubt as to the standard of academic honesty in a particular course or assignment, then the student must consult with the instructor as soon as possible, and in no case should a student submit an assignment if the student is not clear on the relevant standard of academic honesty. If an allegation is made against a student, the Registrar may place the student on academic hold until the President has made his or her final decision. When a student is placed on academic hold, the student is blocked from all activity in the Student Service Centre.”

Students should also familiarise themselves with UBC regulations on plagiarism:

“Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments.”

See the following link for further information about academic dishonesty and plagiarism:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/?tree=3,54,111,959>

## Provisional Reading Schedule

### PHIL 235A (001) – Contemporary Moral Issues

Winter Term 1, 2016 – 17

Mon, Wed, Fri, 14:00 – 15:00

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Date	Topic	Readings	Notes
<b>Week 1</b>			
Wed. 7 Sept.	▪ Introduction	▪ Course syllabus	
Fri. 9	▪ Reading philosophy	▪ Korcz. What is Philosophy?	▪ Class cancelled
<b>Week 2</b>			
Mon. 12	▪ The meaning of moral terms	▪ Handout on moral semantics	
Wed. 14	▪ Introduction to just war theory	▪ Frowe. Introduction	
Fri. 16	▪ Self-defence	▪ Frowe. Ch. 1 ▪ Aquinas. <i>Summa Theologica</i> (excerpt)	
<b>Week 3</b>			
Mon. 19	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Wed. 21	▪ War as self-defence?	▪ Frowe. Ch. 2	
Fri. 23	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
<b>Week 4</b>			
Mon. 26	▪ <i>Jus ad bellum</i> : The morality of entering into war	▪ Frowe. Ch. 3	
Wed. 28	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Fri. 30	▪ Pacifism	▪ Cochran (1996). <i>War-Pacifism</i> .	Optional reading: ▪ Norman (1988). <i>The Case for Pacifism</i> .
<b>Week 5</b>			
Mon. 3 Oct.	▪ Pre-emption, prevention, and intervention	▪ Frowe. Ch. 4	
Wed. 5	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Fri. 7	▪ <i>Jus in bello</i> : The morality in war	▪ Frowe. Ch. 5	Short paper topics posted on Connect
<b>Week 6</b>			

Mon. 10	▪ University Closed		▪ Thanksgiving Day
Wed. 12	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Fri. 14	▪ In-class quiz		▪ Open-book: notes must be printed or hand-written, no computers or smart phones allowed

<b>Week 7</b>			
Mon. 17	▪ The moral status of combatants	▪ Frowe. Ch. 6	
Wed. 19	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Short paper due at the beginning of class
Fri. 21	▪ Non-combatant immunity	▪ Frowe. Ch. 7	

<b>Week 8</b>			
Mon. 24	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Wed. 26	▪ Challenges to non-combatant immunity	▪ Frowe. Ch. 8	
Fri. 28	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	

<b>Week 9</b>			
Mon. 31	▪ Non-combatants and responsibility	▪ Primoratz (2002). <i>Michael Walzer's Just War Theory: Some Issues of Responsibility.</i>	
Wed. 2 Nov.	▪ The moral status of terrorism	▪ Frowe. Ch. 9	Optional readings: ▪ Primoratz (1990). <i>What is terrorism?</i> ▪ Primoratz (1997). <i>The morality of terrorism</i>
Fri. 4	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	Optional reading: ▪ Walzer (2006). <i>Terrorism and Just war</i>

<b>Week 10</b>			
Mon. 7	▪ Terrorism and torture	▪ Frowe. Ch. 10.	Optional reading: ▪ Shue (1978). <i>Torture.</i>
Wed. 9	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	
Fri. 11	▪ University Closed		▪ Remembrance Day

<b>Week 11</b>			
Mon. 14	▪ Ticking time bomb scenario	▪ Dershowitz. (2002). <i>Should the Ticking Bomb Terrorist Be Tortured?</i> ▪ Bufacchi and Arrigo. (2006). <i>Torture,</i>	Optional reading: ▪ The Association for the Prevention of Torture (2007). <i>Defusing the Ticking-Time Bomb Scenario: Why we must say 'No' to torture, always.</i>

		<i>Terrorism, and the State: A Refutation of the Ticking-Bomb Argument.</i>	
Wed. 16	▪ Remote warfare	▪ Frowe. Ch. 11	
Fri. 18	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	

<b>Week 12</b>			
Mon. 21	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Killmister. (2008). <i>Remote Weaponry: The Ethical Implications</i>	▪ Final paper topics posted on Connect
Wed. 23	▪ <i>Jus post bellum</i> : The morality after war	▪ Frowe. Ch. 12	Optional reading: ▪ Orend. (2000). <i>Just Post Bellum</i> .
Fri. 25	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Cont'd.	

<b>Week 13</b>			
Mon. 28	▪ Cont'd.	▪ Lazar. (2012). <i>Skepticism about Jus Post Bellum</i> .	
Wed. 30	▪ TBD	▪ TBD	
Fri. 2 Dec.	▪ In-class quiz	▪	▪ Open-book: notes must be printed or hand-written, no computers or smart phones allowed

Final paper due by Friday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>, BUCH E370, 15:00.