PHILOSOPHY 1940/GOVERNMENT 2947: GLOBAL THINKING
SYLLABUS

“Global Thinking” is an interdisciplinary discussion of central issues of international justice. We will be especially concerned with moral questions raised by international inequality, war and threats to the global environment. What responsibilities do people in developed countries have to take measures that would help needy people in developing countries (not just through foreign aid, but also through trade and immigration policies)? When is war justified and what conduct in war is morally acceptable? How much should be done to limit global warming and how should the burdens of this effort be divided among different countries? The course has no prerequisites. There is a detailed schedule of lecture topics and assigned readings at the end of this syllabus.

Format: When we meet as a whole class on Mondays and Wednesdays, lectures will be interspersed with class discussions. Still, inevitably, the major opportunity for students to exchange views, questions and arguments will be in discussion sections. These are an essential and required part of the course, and will sometimes have their own reading assignments.

Readings: A number of our readings will be from these two books, required purchases which are on sale at the Campus Store:
Michael Walzer, *Unjust and Unjust Wars* (Basic Books)
The rest of our readings will be posted in the Course Documents section of our Blackboard site, PHIL1940-Global Thinking. For copyright reasons, it will have a password, which I will announce at the first class.

Course requirements:
1.) Written work will consist of three papers, 5-7 pages in length, and a final exam. In each paper, you will be asked to write on one of a list of questions, distributed at least 12 days in advance. The first paper (on topics in part IA in the lecture/readings schedule) is due February 28. The second (on topics in IB and all but the last topic in II) will be due April 4. The third (on the remaining topics) will be due on May 6. The final will cover all material in the course.
2.) Students are expected to attend lectures and sections, having done the reading assigned in the syllabus for that day.
3.) The written work will be weighted as follows to arrive at a "benchmark" grade: 20% for each paper, 30% for the final exam, 10% for the quality and frequency of participation in class and section discussions.
Office hours:
My office hours are MW, 4:00-5:00, 329 Goldwin Smith. My e-address is rwm5@cornell.edu.

Schedule of lectures and readings:
GE= the anthology that I have asked you to buy, Pogge and Horton, Global Ethics. Readings that are not from GE or Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars will be posted in the Course Documents section of our Blackboard site in order of assignment. I may make a few changes in reading assignments, announced well in advance.

Week I
1/24: Introductory lecture

PART I: GLOBAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE
A. General principles -- what duties do people in developed countries have to give up advantages in the interests of needy people in developing countries?
1/28 section topic – Do people have a duty to give up all luxuries and frills so long as this will help the world’s neediest?

Week II
1/31: The debate continued -- how much must we do for distant strangers? -- Richard Miller, “Moral Closeness and World Community” in GE; Peter Singer and Richard Miller, an exchange on world poverty.
2/4 section topic – Do Americans have a duty to reduce international economic inequality?

Week III
2/11 section topic: What is so special about our compatriots?

Week IV
2/18 section topic: how much have developed countries done that creates responsibilities to relieve poverty in developing countries?

Week V
B. The Ethics of Globalization -- to what extent are the processes and institutions typical of globalization morally flawed?


2/25 section topic: Is the present course of globalization morally flawed?

Week VI


3/4 section topic: to what extent are immigration restrictions justifiable?

PART II: JUSTICE AND WAR – When is making war justified, and what acts in war are morally permissible?

Week VII


3/11 section topic: is going to war ever justified in modern circumstances?

Week VIII


3/18 section topic: was the Iraq War justifiable? Additional reading: “Iraq as Humanitarian or Preventive War.”

[Spring Break]

Week IX


4/1 section topic: what should the U.S. do with its military forces in Afghanistan?

Week X
4/4: Guest lecture, Jeffrey Gettleman, East Africa Bureau Chief, New York Times will speak and answer questions on how global justice plays out on the ground in Somalia, Congo, Sudan and the other hotspots he covers. Readings TBA. Second paper due.


4/8 section topic: Is the modern American way of war just?– Evan Wright, Generation Kill (2004), excerpts; Geneva Conventions, excerpts

PART III: GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE – The Ethics of Global Climate Change

Week XI

4/15 section topic: How much should we do to limit greenhouse gas emissions?

Week XII


4/22 section topic: What response to dangers of climate change is fair?

PART IV: THE GLOBAL POLITICAL PROCESS


4/29 section topic: how tolerant should the human rights regime be?

Week XIV


5/6 section topic – what are the most promising ways to make the world more just? Third paper due.

Final exam: Monday, May 15, starting at 2:00 PM