

Ethics in International Affairs

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: INTA

Course number: 2030

Section: A

CRN

35135

Instructor first name: Mikulas

Instructor last name: Fabry

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

The purpose of this course is to survey central ethical problems in international relations. These include questions such as: What are a country's obligations to foreign states or peoples? Under what circumstances may armed force be used, and by whom? What should be the role of human rights in foreign policy? When is external intervention in civil conflicts acceptable? Can international law ever be justifiably defied? Is terrorism always wrong? Is torture always wrong? Is liberal democracy for everybody? To what extent are countries responsible for the mitigation of extreme poverty or environmental degradation beyond their borders? The course is divided into two parts. The first introduces major traditions of reflection on international ethics. It seeks to articulate their common assumptions and claims while paying attention to their internal richness and varying viewpoints. The second part then elaborates on some of the most significant contemporary issues in international ethics, integrating recent empirical cases into the discussion. The key focus is on issues related to the use of armed force, human rights, and international distributive justice.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that falls under the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities, and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion