The Morality of War, Terrorism, and Non-Violent Conflict Resolution

Phil 190

Dr. Theresa Tobin
Office Hours: T/R 9:30-10:30am, T 5-6pm, and by appointment
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Course Description
War and terrorism are two of the most significant sources of violence in the contemporary world. The “war on terror” has replaced the Cold War as the biggest threat to global peace and security, at least from the perspective of many members of Western democracies. This course will examine questions surrounding the morality of war and terrorism, and will consider the potential for non-violent conflict resolution in resolving large scale violent conflict and facilitating global peace. The course is designed to approach these issues from a philosophical perspective and is divided into three main sections. The first section examines questions surrounding the morality of war. What distinguishes a just from an unjust war? What are the morally appropriate means for fighting a just war? Is it ever morally permissible to kill non-combatants? Under what conditions, if any, are guerrilla tactics warranted from a moral point of view. The second section explores issues related to terrorism. We will investigate questions such as: What is terrorism and what can count as a terrorist act? Who can be a terrorist? Can terrorism ever be morally justified? Is a military response a morally appropriate response to terrorism? Finally, we will consider philosophical arguments both in support of and in opposition to non-violent action as a response to terrorist and other forms of violent conflict in the contemporary world.

Course Learning Objectives
Upon completing this course students will:
1. Understand and be able to explain some of the basic tenets of just war theory.
2. Understand and be able to explain competing definitions of terrorism and competing accounts of what constitutes a morally appropriate response to terrorism.
3. Be able to articulate and defend a position on a morally appropriate response to terrorism.
4. Understand and be able to explain some of the basic tenets of non-violent conflict resolution.
5. Be able to consider and respond to some objections to non-violent methods for conflict resolution.

Required Texts
Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations,
Assignments and Grades
Your grade for this course will be based on: (1) reaction emails, (2) a mid-term exam, (3) a final position paper, (4) a final class presentation, and (5) class participation.

Reaction Emails: 20% of final course grade
You will be responsible for submitting 10 reaction e-mails to me via D2L throughout the semester. The purpose of these emails is to hold you accountable for the reading and to help generate class discussion of the issues we will be covering. These emails should be two substantial paragraphs in length. The first paragraph should briefly summarize what you take to be the thesis or main point of the reading being discussed. The second paragraph should contain your reaction to the reading. Here, you should be critically evaluating some aspect of the reading: what was particularly interesting, convincing, problematic, confusing, etc.? Your reaction e-mails will not be evaluated for correctness, but they should demonstrate a serious engagement with the reading for class. These emails are worth 10 points each for a total of 100 points possible. The e-mails must be submitted no later than 5pm on the evening before the class in which we cover the reading you discuss. I will not accept emails submitted after the 5pm deadline.

Midterm Exam: 30% of final course grade
You are required to complete one mid-term exam on the material covered during the first half of the course. The exam will be essay format and I will provide some form of study guidelines. The midterm exam will take place on Tuesday, October 16th.

Final Position Paper: 35% of final course grade
In lieu of a final exam you are required to write a 5-7 page final position paper. In this paper you will take and defend a position on some topic that we have covered in this class. This paper will be due on the day of your class presentation. I will hand out a selection of possible paper topics, or you may choose your own. However, if you decide to choose your own topic you MUST get the topic approved by me in advance. I will hand out
detailed instructions for the paper assignment well in advance of
the due date.

**Final Class Presentation: 15% of final course grade**
The last two weeks of this class will be devoted to class
presentations. You are required to give a 25 minute presentation
based on the material you discuss in your position paper. You
will present in groups of 3-4. I am allowing you to be as
creative as you like with this presentation. You may make a DVD,
use power point, music, video clips, etc. I will hand out
detailed instructions for the presentation well in advance of the
due date.

**Attendance and Class Participation**
Attendance is required and I will take attendance regularly. I
will follow the university attendance policy, which you can read
here: [http://www.marquette.edu/rc/bulletin.shtml](http://www.marquette.edu/rc/bulletin.shtml). According to university policy you will not
be dropped from the course for excessive absences. Should you decide you no longer wish to
take this course you must officially drop the course by consulting me and filling out a course
withdrawal slip.

Your class participation can affect your final course grade
either positively or negatively, especially if you have a
borderline grade. Your class participation will be assessed on
the basis of what I call warm-ups and class presence.

**Class Warm-ups:** Philosophy is best done through dialogue
and discussion. While I will provide some lecture in order
to ensure that we understand the basic tenets of the
readings, I will also devote a good portion of most class
meetings to discussion. This means that you need to come
to class regularly and you need to be prepared. You are
prepared for class if you have read *and thought critically
about the reading*. As part of your participation grade you
are responsible for coming to class each day with at least
one critical comment or question about the reading for the
day (what I call warm-ups).

**Class Presence:** We are likely to discuss some very
sensitive subjects in this class that have the potential to
generate emotionally charged and heated discussions. It is
**imperative** that we cultivate a classroom community of
respect where everyone feels comfortable expressing their
views. Part of your class participation grade will be
determined on the basis of your class **presence**. It is not
enough simply to attend class regularly you must also be
present during class and your presence must be positive
rather than negative. **Positive presence** includes actively
and regularly engaging in class discussions, asking
questions, sharing thoughts or comments, etc, in a
respectful manner. **You are not present if** you are
sleeping, reading the newspaper, listening to music, doing work for another class, etc. **Negative presence** includes being disruptive, rude, disrespectful, or offensive toward me or toward other students.

If you have a borderline grade and you regularly fail to come to class **(more than 6 absences)**, or fail to come to class with a class warm-up, or if you are either not present or if your presence is negative I may lower your final course grade by 1/3 of a grade (a B would become a BC). On the other hand, if you have a borderline final course grade but you have demonstrated excellent presence over the course of the semester I may bump your grade up. For example, if you ended up with a final course grade of 87.43, which is a B, but had demonstrated excellent presence over the course of the semester, I may raise your grade to an AB. This bump-up option is reserved for those who exceed the requirements.

**Grading Scale**
I will use the following grading scale for all assignments and to calculate the final course grades.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>AB</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>BC</td>
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**D2L**
I will be using D2L for class email and to post relevant course material. Accordingly, even if you usually use another email account, e.g., hotmail, Comcast, yahoo, etc., you also **MUST** check your Marquette account for class emails. I will hold you responsible for any material I send out over email. I will also post the course syllabus, handouts, etc. on D2L.

**Make-up Work**
Students may schedule make-up work only for excused absences. Absences are excused only for (1) officially sanctioned University activities and (2) unavoidable absence due to illness or personal emergencies. Excused absences must be substantiated by an official note. If you will miss class for an officially sanctioned University activity you must notify me in advance in order to make up missed work. If you miss class for any reason it is your responsibility to obtain notes from another student.

**Statement on Disability**
If there are any students with disabilities, please notify me as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made. If you have not already done so you must also contact the office
of disability services located in the Alumni Memorial Union in Room 317.

**Academic Honesty**
I will not tolerate any act of academic dishonesty including plagiarism or the use of unauthorized materials during an exam. Acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Chair of the Philosophy Department and may result in a failing grade for the assignment in question or for the course, depending on the severity of the case. Acts of academic dishonesty include copying material from a website and submitting it as your own work, directly quoting from a document without citing the reference, and extensively paraphrasing someone else’s work without citing the reference. Other examples of academic dishonesty can be found in Marquette’s College of Arts and Sciences Policy on Academic Honesty, which you can access at: [http://www.marquette.edu/academics/regulations/acaddishonesty.htm](http://www.marquette.edu/academics/regulations/acaddishonesty.htm)

If in doubt about whether or not a particular behavior counts as plagiarism or cheating please do not hesitate to consult me prior to completing the assignment.

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments**
What follows is a tentative schedule of readings and assignments. Exam, paper, and presentation dates will not change, but reading assignments and dates are subject to change based on the pace of our class discussions. All readings come from required texts (see abbreviations) or are posted on D2L.

**Just and Unjust Wars**
- **T 8/28**  Introduction to the course and to each other
- **R 8/30**  Walzer, chapters 2, 3
- **T 9/4**  Walzer, chapters 4
- **R 9/6**  Walzer, chapters 5
- **T 9/11**  Walzer, chapter 6, pp. 86-91 and 101-108
- **R 9/13**  Walzer, chapter 7
- **T 9/18**  Walzer, chapter 8
- **R 9/20**  Walzer, chapters 9, 11

**Terrorism**
- **T 9/25**  Zimbardo “The Lucifer Effect” chapters 14, and New Yorker article (e-reserve)
  Recommended: “The Lucifer Effect”, chapter 15
  Guest Speaker, Dr. Nancy Snow on Abu Ghraib
- **R 9/27**  Jaggar, “What is Terrorism, Why is it Wrong, and Could it Ever Possibly be Justified?” (D2L)

- **T 10/2**  Chomsky, “Terror and Just Response” (TIJ)
  Kassam, “Can A Muslim be a Terrorist?” (TIJ)
R 10/4 Baier, “Violent Demonstrations” (VTJ or e-reserve)

T 10/9 Held, “Terrorism, Rights, and Political Goals” (VTJ, or e-reserve)

**Simmons Lecture, by Fr. John Haughey**

R 10/11 Pojman, “The Moral Response to Terrorism and Cosmopolitanism” (TIJ)

T 10/16 Midterm Exam
R 10/18 No Class—Fall Break

T 10/23 Archibugi and Young, “Envisioning a Global Rule of Law” (TIJ)

Card, “Making War on Terrorism in Response to 9/11” (TIJ)

Non-Violent Conflict Resolution
R 10/25 Jones, “Mao, Martin, or Malcolm?” (D2L)

T 10/30 McGary, “On the Use of Violence in Liberation Struggles” (D2L)
R 11/1 Judith Butler, “Violence, Mourning, Politics” (D2L)

T 11/6 Merton, “Gandhi and the One-Eyed Giant” (GNV)
R 11/8 Merton, sections 1, 2 (GNV)

T 11/13 Merton, sections 3, 4 (GNV)
R 11/15 Yoder, “Taking the Question Seriously”, pp11-42 (WWYD)

T 11/20 Yoder, pp62-68, pp78-85, and all of section 3 pp89-141 (WWYD)
R 11/22 No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday

T 11/27 Prep for class presentations
R 11/29 Class Presentations

T 12/4 Class Presentations
R 12/6 Class Presentations