



**UNSW**  
SYDNEY

Australia's  
Global  
University



## **ARTS2383**

Ethics: Theory and Practice

Term Three // 2019

## Course Overview

### Staff Contact Details

#### Convenors

| Name        | Email  | Availability | Location | Phone    |
|-------------|--|--------------|----------|----------|
| Jeremy Moss | <a href="mailto:jmoss@unsw.edu.au">jmoss@unsw.edu.au</a> |              | 322      | 93852357 |

#### Lecturers

| Name           | Email  | Availability | Location | Phone |
|----------------|--|--------------|----------|-------|
| Daniel Burkett | <a href="mailto:daniel.burkett@unsw.edu.au">daniel.burkett@unsw.edu.au</a> |              | 318      |       |

### School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

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Phone: +61 2 9385 1681

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## Course Details

### Credit Points 6

### Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Philosophy*

In this course you will consider some of the most pressing practical ethical issues faced by society and by individual people in their everyday lives. We will analyse the ethical arguments behind issues such as (but not limited to): climate change, international aid, the market, new technologies or disability. The course will introduce you to key concepts in ethics such as responsibility, justice and well-being. You will be encouraged to examine your own ethical beliefs in the light of these concepts and consider the role that ethics can play in everyday life.

### Course Learning Outcomes

1. Identify and explain the main ethical issues that arise when considering topics in applied ethics and our individual collective obligations to produce effective change.
2. Apply philosophical methods to examine and evaluate various dimensions of an issue pertaining to topics in applied ethics.
3. Distinguish and evaluate frameworks for personal and collective decision making in relation to topics in applied ethics.
4. Read and comprehend major philosophical texts, historical and contemporary, examining personal and collective moral obligations.
5. Write clear and cogent analyses of various issues in moral philosophy.

### Teaching Strategies

The mode of delivery will be two hours of lectures and 1 hour of tutorial.

Through a selection of readings, exercises, small group discussions, and modelling, this course aims to develop skills in philosophical reasoning and teach students key concepts in moral philosophy.

We expect students to participate in this course by attending lectures, engaging with others in tutorials, and completing the required reading in preparation for tutorials. The purpose of lectures in this course will introduce and develop philosophical concepts, and apply these to issues of applied ethics. Lectures will also include class discussions.

Tutorials in this course will take place in the hour following the lecture and discuss material covered therein. The purpose of tutorials is to provide an opportunity for students to collectively clarify philosophical concepts and critically discuss material covered in lectures. Students taking this course will develop skills of interpretation, critical thinking, and argument. Hence, students will be expected to read the set material before class, critically analyse the material, and allow it to challenge their own beliefs.

## Assessment

### Assessment Tasks

| Assessment task | Weight | Due Date            | Student Learning Outcomes Assessed |
|-----------------|--------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| In-class test   | 10%    | 02/10/2019 05:00 PM | 1,2,5                              |
| Essay           | 30%    | 24/10/2019 04:00 PM | 1,2,3,4                            |
| Final essay     | 60%    | 22/11/2019 04:00 PM | 1,2,3,4,5                          |

### Assessment Details

#### Assessment 1: In-class test

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Details:** Students complete a test with short answer questions, equivalent to ca. 500 words in total. Students will receive a mark and feedback via in class discussion.

**Turnitin setting:** This is not a Turnitin assignment

#### Assessment 2: Essay

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Details:** Students write a 1,500 word essay. Students will receive individual comments.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

#### Assessment 3: Final essay

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Details:** Students write a 2,500 word essay. Students will receive individual comments. This is the final assessment for attendance purposes.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

## Attendance Requirements

## Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

### Timetable

| Date                                | Type    | Content  |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--|
| Week 1: 16 September - 20 September | Lecture | <p><b>Outline of Course Structure and Content:</b> An introduction to the role of ethics in analysing international crises. It will include a summary of some of the key ethical frameworks to be used throughout the course, including distributive justice, the harm principle, and consequentialist reasoning.</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Moss, J., Kath., R. (2017), 'Justice and Climate Transitions', <i>University of Tasmania Law Review</i>, 37/2, 2018.</p>  |
| Week 2: 23 September - 27 September | Lecture | <p><b>CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE GLOBAL CARBON BUDGET</b></p> <p><b>Week 2:</b></p> <p><b>The Global Carbon Budget:</b> The carbon budget (CB) is the amount of remaining greenhouse gases (GHGs) that the world can emit and still avoid dangerous climate change. This lecture will include: a discussion of how the CB can be a tool to aid a just distribution of climate harms and benefits; an outline of the problems associated with dividing the CB; and an introduction to distributive justice and the historical responsibility, ability to pay, and equal per capita proposals. We will look at what countries have actually pledged and whether these pledges are sufficient.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> |

|   |                |   |
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|   |                | <p>Caney, S. (2005), 'Cosmopolitan Justice, Responsibility, and Global Climate Change', <i>Leiden Journal of International Law</i> 18: pp. 747–775.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Energy. (2016), 'National greenhouse accounts factors'. (<a href="#">Link</a>)</p> <p>Bell, D. (2008), 'Carbon Justice? The Case against a Universal Right to Equal Carbon Emissions'. In Wilks, S. (ed.) <i>Seeking Environmental Justice</i> (Amsterdam: Rodolphi).</p> <p>Shue, H. (1999), 'Global Environment and International Inequality', <i>International Affairs</i>, 75, 531-45.</p> <p>Gardiner, S. (2010), <i>Climate Ethics: Essential Readings</i>. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Page, E. A. (2012), 'Give It Up for Climate Change: A Defence of the Beneficiary Pays Principle', <i>International Theory</i> 4: 300-30.</p> <p><a href="http://trillionthtonne.org/">http://trillionthtonne.org/</a></p> |
| <p>Week 3: 30 September - 4 October</p> | <p>Lecture</p> | <p><b>Week 3:</b></p> <p><b>Climate and Historical Injustice:</b> This lecture will discuss whether countries who have emitted more</p>   |

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|                                |         | <p>in the past ought to have a lesser share of the future carbon budget.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> <p>Duus-Otterström, G. (2014), 'The problem of past emissions and intergenerational debts', <i>Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy</i> 17(4), 448-69.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Almassi, B. (2012), 'Climate Change and the Ethics of Individual Emissions', <i>Perspectives: International Postgraduate Journal of Philosophy</i>, 4-21.</p> <p>Barry, C., and Øverland, G., (2015), 'Individual responsibility for carbon emissions: is there anything wrong with overdetermining harms?'. In Moss, J. (ed.) <i>Climate Change and Justice</i>, 165-183. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).</p> <p>Broome, J. (2008), 'The ethics of climate change', <i>Scientific American</i> 298(6), 96-102.</p> <p>Morrow, D. R. (2016), 'Climate Sins of Our Fathers? Historical Accountability in Distributing Emissions Rights', <i>Ethics, Policy &amp; Environment</i> 19(3): 335-49.</p> <p>Roser, D. &amp; Seidle, C. (2017), <i>Climate Justice</i>, (New York, NY, Routledge), Chapter 13.</p> |
| Week 4: 7 October - 11 October | Lecture | <b>WHO IS CAUSING HARM, AND WHAT IS THE BEST ACTION TO TAKE?</b>   |

#### **Week 4:**

**Harm and Causation:** This lecture will discuss the harm principle as a way of understanding how individuals and countries cause harm. Issues discussed will include: causal chains leading to harm; causing versus enabling harm; and being complicit in harm. We will focus on considering how individuals and countries cause harm through producing fossil fuels and GHGs, with a special focus on the case of Australian exports.

Required reading:

Shue, H., (2015), 'Historical Responsibility, harm prohibition, and preservation requirement: core practical convergence on climate change.', *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, 2(1), 7-31.

Further reading:

Cripps, E. (2011), 'Climate change, collective harm and legitimate coercion', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 14(2): 171–93.

Feinberg, J. (1984), *Harm to others: The moral limits of the criminal law*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

Nolt, J. (2011), 'How harmful are the average American's greenhouse gas emissions?', *Ethics, Policy and Environment*, 14, 1, 3–10.

Shue, H. (1993), 'Subsistence Emissions and Luxury Emissions', *Law and Policy* 15(1): 39–60.



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|  |                | <p>Stapleton, J. (2001), 'Legal cause: Cause-in-fact and the scope of liability for consequences' <i>Vanderbilt Law Review</i> 54: 941–1009.</p>   |
| <p>Week 5: 14 October - 18 October</p> | <p>Lecture</p> | <p><b>Week 5:</b></p> <p><b>Can I Make a Difference? (Part 1):</b> It is relatively uncontroversial that <i>states</i> (at least, wealthy, developed states) have duties to reduce their emissions in order to mitigate the threat posed by climate change. Many people believe that <i>individual human agents</i> also have such duties. In this lecture, we shall consider whether a satisfactory normative basis for such duties can be found.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> <p>Sinnott-Armstrong, W., (2005), 'It's Not My Fault: Global Warming and Individual Moral Obligations', <i>Perspectives on Climate Change: Science, Economics, Politics, Ethics</i> 5 : 285-307.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Barry, C. &amp; Øverland, G. (2015), 'Individual responsibility for carbon emissions: is there anything wrong with overdetermining harm?' In Moss, J. (ed.) <i>Climate Change and Justice</i>. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press).</p> <p>Cullity, G. (2015), 'Acts, omissions, emissions', In Moss, J. (ed.) <i>Climate Change and Justice</i>. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press).</p> <p>Kingston, E. &amp; Sinnott-Armstrong, W. (2018), 'What's Wrong with Joyguzzling?' <i>Ethical Theory and Moral Practice</i>, 21, 169-86.</p> <p>Lawford-Smith, H. (2016), 'Difference-Making and Individuals' Climate-Related</p> |

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|  |                | <p>Obligations'. In Hayward, C. &amp; Roser, D. (eds.) <i>Climate Justice in a Non-Ideal World</i>. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Vanderheiden, S. (2016), 'Climate Change and Free Riding'. <i>Journal of Moral Philosophy</i>, 13, 1-27.</p>   |
| <p>Week 6: 21 October - 25 October</p> | <p>Lecture</p> | <p><b>Week 6:</b></p> <p><b>Can I Make a Difference? (Part 2):</b> Continuing on from the previous lecture's discussion, we will ask ourselves what duties we—as individual human agents—might have to respond to another kind of global crisis: widespread human poverty.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> <p>Singer, P (2016), 'The Life You Can Save'. In Timmons, M. (ed.) <i>Disputed Moral Issues</i>. (New York: Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Arthur, J. (2009), 'World Hunger and moral obligation: The case against Singer'. In Cahn, S. M. (ed.) <i>Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology</i>. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Hardin, G. (1974), 'Lifeboat ethics: The case against helping the poor'. <i>Psychology Today</i>, 800-812.</p> <p>Sen, A. (1988), 'Property and Hunger'. <i>Economics and Philosophy</i>, 4, 57-68.</p> |

Week 7: 28 October - 1  
November

Lecture

**Week 7:**

**The Interests of Non-Human Animals:** So far, all of our considerations of harm and justice have been directed towards the interests of humans. In this lecture, we will consider what—if any—interests non-human animals might have, and what this adds to the climate-related duties discussed in the course so far. We will also consider what role the interests of non-human animals might play in the analysis of other moral issues, including—but not limited to—the animal testing of life-saving drugs and the defensibility of zoos.

Required reading:

Thornes, T. (2016). 'Animals and Climate Change'. *Journal of Animal Ethics*, 6, 1, 81-88.

Further reading:

Cohen, C. (1997), 'Do Animals Have Rights?'. *Ethics & Behavior*, 7:2, 91-102.

Palmer, C. (2011), 'Does Nature matter? The place of the non-human in the ethics of climate change'. In Arnold, D. (ed.) *The Ethics of Global Climate Change*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press).

Regan, T. (1995), 'Are Zoos Morally Defensible?'. In Norton, B.G., Hutchins, M., Stevens, E. F., and Maple, T. L. (eds.) *Ethics on the Ark: Zoos, Animal Welfare, and Wildlife Conservation* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press).

|  |                |  |
|--|----------------|--|
|  |                | <p>Singer, P. (1989), 'All Animals Are Equal'. In Regan, T. &amp; Singer, P. (eds.) <i>Animal Rights and Human Obligations</i>. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press).</p> <p>Warren, M. A. (2016), 'Human and Animal Rights Compared'. In Timmons, M. (ed.) <i>Disputed Moral Issues</i>. (New York: Oxford University Press).</p>  |
| <p>Week 8: 4 November - 8 November</p> | <p>Lecture</p> | <p><b>Week 8:</b></p> <p><b>Carbon Majors:</b> Many people argue that because major fossil fuel companies ('carbon majors') produce most of the world's fossil fuels that they ought, therefore, be morally responsible for any harmful consequences that are associated with emissions. This lecture will examine whether carbon majors are responsible and to what degree.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> <p>Shue, H. (2017), 'Responsible for what? Carbon Producer CO2 emissions and the energy transition', <i>Climatic Change</i>, 144:591–596.</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>Frumhoff, P., R., Heede, and N., Oreskes. (2015), 'The Climate Responsibilities of Industrial Carbon Producers', <i>Climate Change</i> 132: 157–71.</p> <p>Heede, R., (2014), 'Tracing Anthropogenic Carbon Dioxide and Methane Emissions to Fossil Fuel and Cement Producers, 1854–2010', <i>Climatic Change</i> 122, no. 1-2.</p> |

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|-----------------------------------|---------|---|
|                                   |         | The Guardian, 25 May (2016), 'My Father Warned Exxon About Climate Change in the 1970s. They Didn't Listen'. ( <a href="#">Link</a> )   |
| Week 9: 11 November - 15 November | Lecture | <p><b>Week 9:</b></p> <p><b>Climate Change and Just Transitions:</b> The threat posed by climate change requires us to make drastic modifications to our current way of life. An important component of this will be a transition towards a low- or zero-carbon economy. This transition will bring costs, and a <i>just</i> transition will seek to distribute these costs in the right kinds of ways. In this lecture, we will consider what a just transition might look like.</p> <p>Required reading:</p> <p>Cha, J. M. (2019). 'From the dirty past to the clean future: Addressing historic energy injustices with a just transition to a low-carbon future'. In Jafry, T. (ed.), <i>Routledge Handbook of Climate Justice</i>. (Oxford, UK: Routledge).</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2017). 'Global Forum on Just Transition: Climate change, decent work and sustainable development'. (<a href="#">Link</a>)</p> <p>Green, F. (2018). 'Transition Policy for Climate Change Mitigation: Who, What, Why and How'. (Australia: Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University).</p> |

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|  | Healy, N., & Barry, J. (2017). 'Politicizing energy justice and energy system transitions: Fossil fuel divestment and a "just transition"'. <i>Energy Policy</i> , 108, 451-459. |
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## **Resources**

### **Prescribed Resources**

Not available

### **Recommended Resources**

Not available

## **Course Evaluation and Development**

### **Feedback:**

Students will be provided with a mark for the in-class test. Questions will be short answer and in class feedback will be given. Students will receive individual comments and a grade for the essay components of the course. The grade will be consistent with the essay rubric provided in this document.

## **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

## **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

### **Turnitin Submission**

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au). Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>



## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

**Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

**Inappropriate paraphrasing:** Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

**Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

**Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

**Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

## **Academic Information**

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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