Course Overview

Ethics in government is related to how public administrators use their administrative discretion to pursue the public interest. Although many contemporary approaches to the study of ethics in government focus on avoiding impropriety, such as conflict of interests, misuse of public funds, and resignation in protest, this course focuses on ethical dilemmas and concerns arising from the daily exercise of legitimate discretionary power. Toward that goal, the course will specifically focus on the administrative role of public servants.

There are two primary philosophical approaches to the understanding of ethics. The deontological school of thought recognizes the existence of a real, physical external world with objective laws or principles that the human mind or reason can discover. A second school of thought, the teleological approach to ethics, does not acknowledge the existence of a world external to human consciousness; therefore, our consciousness creates the world as we know it. This school of thought does not recognize the existence of objective laws or rules governing morality. Thus, the person's judgment or conscience is the sole guide for determining right versus wrong. This course will examine the merits of both schools of thought and their relevance for public administrators in American Society.
This course will provide maps and tools to make moral experiences more explicit and consistent. However, ultimately, one must chart her own ethical way. The study of public service ethics is marked by diversity, and this course reflects that fact. Thus, the course is designed as a graduate seminar requiring participants to demonstrate initiative and perform independent study. Discussions of readings and assignments will be based on the experiences, knowledge, skills and abilities of participants, in addition to those of the professor. This will require that all assignments (readings, case analyses, and assigned papers) be completed in a timely manner.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

• understand why ethics are essential to public service management
• develop abilities to use moral imagination and ethical reasoning
• differentiate between ethical problems and dilemmas
• learn how to cultivate organizational integrity
• understand the ethical dilemmas of current public sector management issues
• cultivate an attitude of moral obligation and personal responsibility in pursuing a career in the public service

Required Readings


Suggested Supplemental Reading Resources


Course Requirements and Grading
Midterm Examination - 40%

Applied Research Paper - 40%

Online Threaded Discussion Participation - 10%

Case Analyses/Other Written Assignments - 10%

Expectations for Academic Conduct

As members of the University of West Florida academic community, we commit ourselves to honesty. As we strive for excellence in performance, integrity (both personal and institutional) is our most precious asset. Honesty in our academic work is vital, and we will not knowingly act in ways that erode that integrity. Accordingly, we pledge not to cheat, nor to tolerate cheating, nor to plagiarize the work of others. We pledge to share community resources in ways that are responsible and that comply with established policies of fairness. Cooperation and competition are means to high achievement and are encouraged. Indeed, cooperation is expected unless our directive is to individual performance. We will compete constructively and professionally for the purpose of stimulating high performance and standards. Finally, we accept adherence to this set of expectations for academic conduct as a condition of membership in the UWF academic community. Please read the university Academic Misconduct Policy in the NEWS link of the course.

Standards for Written Assignments

Students are expected to read, understand, and comply with the requirements of the Sixth Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) for all assignments and manuscripts. This includes the "Ethical Standards for the Reporting and Publishing of Scientific Information" included therein. All work submitted for this course must be the student's own and may not have been used whole and/or in part for any other purpose without the
professor's prior written permission (if in doubt you must ask the professor). Submitted written assignments are subject to verification using turnitin or other academic software to ensure the work is the student's.

Assistance

Students with special needs who require specific examination-related or other course-related accommodations should contact the Director of Disabled Student Services (DSS), dss@uwf.edu (850) 474-2387. DSS will provide the student with a letter for the instructor that will specify any recommended accommodations.

Schedule of Assignments (All Written Assignments Submitted MUST be in the Current APA format/style)

Week 1, Part 1: Building an Online Community (Online Learner Orientation)

• Review and complete the Online Orientation, student D2L training, and complete your student biography in the D2L "Classlist" link.
• Participate in the group threaded discussion under the "Discussion" link.
• Review the HRM Syllabus, Research Paper Guidelines and Requirements, Motivation Humor, instructor's vita, and the several HRM articles in the "Important Course Information" link.

Week 1, Part II: Normative Foundations of Public Service Ethics: The Public Administration Ethical Challenge

GEG, Chapter 1: The Real World
GEG, Chapter 2: Ethics in the Public Sector/Ethics in the Private Sector

TC, Chapter 1: Introduction

Threaded Discussion

Dropbox Assignment

Suggested Readings:

Menzel, Donald C. "Public Administration as a Profession, Where Do Body and Soul Reside" Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 3 (2003) 239-250.

Pfiffner, James P. "Elliot L. Richardson, Exemplar of Integrity and Public Service," Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 3 (2003) 251-269.


Lawler, Peter Augustine. "Alexis de Tocqueville and the Public/Private Dichotomy: Implications for Public Service Today," Public Integrity vol. III no. II (Spring 2001) 131-144.
Thompson, Dennis F. "Private Life and Public Office," Public Integrity vol III. no. II (Spring 2001) 163-180.

Jean-Paul Sartre, Dirty Hands in No Exit and Other Plays (NY: Random House, 1989)

GEG, Chapter 3: What is Ethics Anyway?

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Readings:


Week 3: Organizational Considerations, Structure, Culture, Training, and Codes of Ethics

GEG, Chapter 5: The Real World Revisited

GEG, Chapter 6: Who Am I? Who Do I Want to Be? What Do I Want?

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Readings:

Dobel, Patrick J. "Can Public Leaders Have Friends?" Public Integrity vol. III no. II (Spring 2001) 145-162.


Week 4: Perspectives and Approaches to Ethical Decision Making

TC, Chapter 2: Understanding Ethical Decision Making

TC, Chapter 3: Public Administration in Modern and Postmodern Society: The Context of Administrative Ethics

Threaded Discussion
Dropbox Assignment: (Instructor Approval Request for Research Project opens - check drop box close date)

Suggested Readings:

Feldheim, Mary Ann and Xiaohu Wang. "Ethics and Public Trust, Results from a National Survey," Public Integrity vol. 6 no. 1 (Winter 2003-4) 63-76.


Week 5: Ethical Decision Making - Making Ethical Choices - Ethical Leadership and Administrative Discretion

GEG, Chapter 7: Making Choices

TC, Chapter 4: Administrative Responsibility: The Ethical Dilemma
Threaded Discussion

Suggested Readings:


Stover, Carl P. "The Old Public Administration is the New Jurisprudence," Administration & Society vol. 27 (May, 1995) 82-106.


Week 6: Developing Ethical Style: Raising the Right Questions

GEG, Chapter 4: Raising the Right Questions: Ethical Approaches to Five Important Cases

GEG, Chapter 8: Problems That Might Arise and How to Analyze Them

GEG, Chapter 9: Developing Ethical Style: How Would You Analyze Problems That Might Arise?

Threaded Discussion
Suggested Readings:


Goss, Robert P. "What Ethical Conduct Expectations Do Legislators Have for the Career Bureaucracy?" Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 2 (Spring 2003) 93-112.

Balogun, M.J. "Causative and Enabling Factors in Public Integrity, A Focus on Leadership, Institutions, and Character Formation" Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 2 (Spring 2003) 127-148.

Week 7: Midterm Examination

Complete and electronically submit your midterm examination in the appropriate drop box by the specified date. Be sure to review the grading protocol for the examination.

Week 8, Part I: Contemporary Perspectives on Governmental Reforms

GEG, Chapter 10: Addressing Public Ethical Conflict by Means of the Unified Ethic
GEG, Chapter 11: Leadership Development and Moral Agency in Contemporary Governance

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Reading:


Week 8, Part II: Contemporary Perspectives - Continued

GEG, Chapter 12: Perspectives on Contemporary Reform: Reinventing Government and the New Public Management

GEG, Chapter 13: Ethics, Quality and Performance

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Reading:


Week 9: The Responsible Public Servant: Ethics in the Organization

TC, Chapter 5: Conflicts of Responsibility: The Ethical Dilemma

TC, Chapter 6: Maintaining Responsible Conduct in Public Organizations: Two Approaches

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Reading:


Week 10: Praxis: Applying Ethical Theory to Public Administration Practice

Part I: Ethical Conduct in Public Sector Organizations

TC, Chapter 7: Integrating Ethics with Organizational Norms and Structures

TC, Chapter 8: Safeguarding Ethical Autonomy in Organizations: Dealing with Unethical Superiors and Organizations

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Reading:


Kurtz, Rick S. "Organizational Culture, Decision-Making, and Integrity, The National Park Service and the Exxon Valdez," Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 4 (Fall 2003) 305-318.
Week 11: The Ethical Design Approach

TC, Chapter 9: Applying the Design Approach to Public Administration Ethics

Threaded Discussion

Suggested Reading:


Van Wart, Montgomery. "Codes of Ethics as Living Documents, The Case of the American Society for Public Administration," Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 4 (Fall 2003) 331-346.

Rivlin, Alice M. "Greed, Ethics, and Public Policy," Public Integrity vol. 5 no. 4 (Fall 2003) 347-354.

Week 12: Responsible Administration in the Public Service

TC, Chapter 10: Conclusion: Responsible Administration

Threaded Discussion
Applied Research Papers due by end of the academic week in the appropriate drop box

Week 13: Course Summary and Conclusions

GEG, Chapter 15: The Competent Moral Agent

GEG, Chapter 16: Wrap-Up and Key Points

Threaded Discussion

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RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

The major intellectual project of the course that students are expected to complete is the formal research paper. The paper must be written in APA format/style. To that end, students are expected to read, understand, and comply with the requirements of the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) for all assignments and manuscripts. This includes the "Ethical Standards for the Reporting and Publishing of Scientific Information" included therein. All work submitted for this course must be the student's own and may not have been used whole and/or in part for any other purpose without the professor's prior
written permission (if in doubt you must ask the instructor). The student should select a paper topic consistent with her/his personal interests and intellectual curiosity that can be well managed within semester time parameters, based upon academic and other workloads. Thus, it is important to keep the focus of the research paper narrow by defining an angle on or "dimension" of administrative law. The instructor is available to assist you in this effort. Please note that your paper topic must be approved in advance by the instructor during the dates specified for the drop box for that purpose.

It is expected that the formal paper will be carefully researched and well-written. To that goal, the paper must use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The completed paper shall be a minimum of 15 pages in length and not exceed 20 pages (excluding cover, endnotes, appendices, and references/bibliography). Students are encouraged to complete and submit papers early if practicable. Late papers, if accepted, will be substantially discounted in grade, unless the delay is caused by a documented illness and/or personal emergency. All research papers are subject to being submitted to turnitin and other academic software to ensure that the written work is the student's.

Research papers will receive a letter grade based upon the following criteria:

1. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation (proofread and spell check).
2. Knowledge and understanding of the assigned readings and classroom discussions (integration of course materials with research).

3. The ability to integrate knowledge from different sources (texts, library research, class discussions, and real life situations).

4. Analysis of materials to reach conclusions and support them in an organized and coherent manner (critical thinking skills).

5. Compliance with minimum/maximum length and submission requirements.
6. Compliance with required format and style requirements (APA, 6th ed.)

7. Demonstrated improvement, if required, based upon written feedback received from the instructor throughout the semester.