Ethics in the Public Sector
POLS 567

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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 10:00-11:00 A.M.
Weds 11:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M. & 1:00-2:00 P.M. and by appointment

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will examine the ethical dimensions of the public sector through an administrative responsibility lens. Administrative responsibility will be explored through examination of the principles of responsiveness, fairness, flexibility, honesty, accountability, and competence. Through readings and discussion, we will:

- Acquire a basic understanding of ethical theories.
- Acquire knowledge of the many writings and resources in the area of ethics in government.
- Develop a perspective on the role and responsibilities of government and public officials and employees.
- Recognize that development of personal and professional ethics is an ongoing learning process that never stops.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Student effort: A university course is collaboration between student and professor. You are expected to do all the readings for the course and to read them on time. Lecture material supplements, it does not repeat text material, the reading assignments are yours, not mine to do for you. As a rule, you should be prepared to spend at least 2 hours of your time working on this course outside of class for every hour you spend in class. It is your responsibility to do the reading, studying and outside assignments for the course. If you are having difficulties understanding the material and/or the assignments, I will be glad to work with you outside class; however you have the primary responsibility to give the course the attention it demands. You are expected to do the following:

- Read all the assigned course readings, prepare thoroughly;
- Participate in class discussions;
- Display appropriate courtesy, leave personal conversations in the hall;
- Adhere to course deadlines and timetables;
Provide constructive feedback; challenge each other intellectually, be respectful of others and different opinions. We all have different views, let’s agree to disagree accordingly.

**Attendance:** For the class to be successful, all students must regularly and meaningfully participate. Of course, for this to occur, students must have completed all of the assigned readings prior to each class. Students should be prepared to discuss the readings and add relevant observations based upon their own experiences in organizations. Should participation not be present to the satisfaction of the instructor, I will assign topics to individual students to present in class. **You are expected to attend all of the classes.**

**Information Technology:** The 21st Century has provided us with many ways to communicate to one another. Instead of using paper and pen, many of you are using laptops to take notes in class. While this has become a more efficient way to organize your notes it is useless if you are searching the web and connecting with others on facebook, twitter, or my-space. **Use of laptops in class will be for note taking ONLY. Leave all face booking, twittering and instant messaging at the door…otherwise, I will ask you to leave.**

**Smokeless Tobacco Use:** If you are one who indulges in the use of smokeless tobacco, leave this outside the class. The discharge of unwanted tobacco juice in class is a distraction to others and has public health issues. So before coming to class, **UNPACK THE LIP!**

**Participation:** Ask questions concerning the readings, instructor discussion, and comments of your classmates. Participation challenges intellect! Don’t be afraid to ask questions or pose interesting comments. Provide constructive feedback and respect the exchange of information from your classmates.

**Basic Policies**

**Accommodations:** In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies faculty of a specific need for accommodation. It is imperative that students bring such needs to the faculty member’s attention, as faculty are not legally permitted to inquire about such particular student needs. Students who require special assistance in emergency evacuations should contact their faculty to discuss emergency procedures. Contact Disability Support Services (298-2512) for additional services.

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct is a serious offense and constitutes grounds for failing the course regardless of your grade on other assignments. Academic misconduct includes:

1. **Cheating on exams** either through crib sheets or copying another student’s answers.
2. **Plagiarism** including:
   a. Turning in a paper someone else has written.
   b. Copying directly from the book you read
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c. Using material obtained via electronic sources without proper documentation.
d. Failure to properly document quotations used in your paper. Any and all of these activities will result in an F for the course. The penalties for plagiarism apply whether you plagiarize inadvertently or deliberately. If you have any questions about how to cite sources, ask before you turn in your assignment.

Incomplete Policy: In accordance with University policy, incompletes will only be given in rare instances where a student cannot complete the course requirements during the semester due to circumstances beyond their control. You must keep me informed regarding such circumstances in a timely manner. However, the decision to allow an incomplete is at the discretion of the instructor.

For more information regarding academic misconduct and incomplete refer to your student handbook at http://www.sdo.wiu.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS


Additional case studies and readings will be available on Western Online.

Assignments and Grade Determination

Assignments and grade determination will consist of the following:

1. Four Reaction Papers—75 points (3@25 points each).
2. Take Home Mid-Term Exam—100 points.
5. Participation—25 points.

Total Points—425 points

Book Review (The Prince) and Reaction Papers:
The three reaction papers you write will come from the case studies we discuss in class. Select one of the case studies discussed in class and respond to the outcome. Reaction papers should be approximately 3-4 pages, double spaced, one-inch margins, and 12 point.
The book review assignment will also focus on the principles of Machiavelli and Sir Thomas More and should be approximately 3-4 pages, double spaced, one-inch margins, and 12 point. In both assignments include the following:

- Identify, analyze, and critique the major themes of the case study/book.
- Describe the author's findings.
- Explore the implications for public administrators.

The idea of these assignments is to integrate theory and practice. Grades will be based on the quality of the content, the ability to integrate theory and practices, and writing quality.

**Take Home Mid-Term Exam**

Take home mid-term will be distributed the last week of October. You will have a week to complete the exam (it is open-book) and will be due at the beginning of the next class meeting.

**Research Paper**

There are many current events related to ethics and public service that should offer you ideas on a research paper. For the research paper you should test or critically evaluate a theory or theories of ethical public administration from this course. You are expected to develop a literature review over and above the literature required in this course. While identifying an ethical dilemma, your paper should provide an argument necessary to resolve the dilemma. The research paper should be 20-25 pages, double spaced, one-inch margins, and 12-point font.

*Your topic must be approved before beginning your research. Please submit your topic of research by September 23, 2015.*

**Class Schedule**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| August 26  | Introductions  
Overview of Course and Assignments  
No Readings |
| September 2| What is Ethics?  
Ethics in Public Service  
What is Important in Public Service?  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, pp. 1-43  
Case Study: *Right to Ground Zero* pp.43-51 |
September 9  Obeying and Implementing the Law  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch. 2  
Case Study: A Matter of One Man’s Faith pp. 68-72; Should the Drinking Age Be Eighteen? (Western Online)

September 16  Serving the Public Interest  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch. 3  
Case Study: In the Black with the Red Cross pp. 93-97; The Booming Twenties (Western Online)  
1st Reaction Paper Due

September 23  Taking Individual Responsibility  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch. 4  
Case Study: The Contract pp. 116-117; Pay Now, Pay Later: Student Credit Card Debt (Western Online)  
Topic Selection for Research Paper Due

September 30  Ethical Theories  
Readings: Aristotle—On the Good Life  
Plato—Ring of Gyges  
Hobbes—Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning Their Felicity and Misery  
Case Study: The Prisoner’s Dilemma  
All articles and case study available on Western Online

October 7  Roundtable Discussion—The Prince by Machiavelli and Utopia by Sir Thomas More

October 14  Ethical Standards and Reasoning/Strategies and Tactics  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch: 5-6  
Case Studies: A Matter of Convenience pp.139-140; A Late Night Surprise pp. 158-160.  
Book Review on The Prince and Utopia Due

October 21  Understanding Who and What Matters—The Stakeholders  
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch. 7  
Case Study: Valor. Compliance, and Compassion pp. 178-181

October 28  The Whistleblowers—Part 1  
Readings: Sissela Bok—Whistle blowing and Professional Responsibility
Michael Davis—*Some Paradoxes of Whistle blowing*
Ronald Duska—*Whistle blowing and Employee Loyalty*
Case Study: *Blowing the Whistle in Iraq*
Articles and Case Study available on Western Online
2nd Reaction Paper Due
Distribution of Take Home Midterm Exam

November 4
The Whistleblowers—Part 2
Film: *All the President’s Men*
Take-Home Mid-Term Exam Due

November 11
Designing and Implementing Codes
Readings: Lewis and Gilman, Ch. 8
Case Study: *Private Gain or Public Victim?* pp. 216-219

November 18
The Foul Smell of Mendacity: Truth, Lies and Deception-Part 1
Readings: Robert Solomon—*Is it ever Right to Lie?*
Joseph Ellin—*Special Professional Morality and the Duty of Veracity?*
Sissela Bok—*Lying and Lies to the Sick and Dying*
Case Study: *Lying for Journalists*

November 25
Thanksgiving Holiday Week
No Classes
No Readings

December 2
The Foul Smell of Mendacity: Truth, Lies, and Deception-Part 2
Movie: *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*

December 9
Course Wrap Up
3rd Reaction Paper Due

December 16
Final Meeting
Research Paper
We will take 10 minutes each to discuss the work
Class begins at 6:00 P.M.