
Instructor: Dr. Jamie Smith
Class Time: 5:30-8:20
Class Location: 224 Learning Center

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Office Hours: Wednesday from 11-2 and by appointment

Course Description

An exploration of the role of ethics in American government, especially in public administration. Topics to be studied include codes of professional ethics for administrators, ethics and constitutionalism, law and ethics, and the ethical implications of differing approaches to administrative work and to democracy.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course students who have fully participated and read all course material should be able to:

1. Define, clearly and concisely, what is meant by ethics in public administration
2. Explain why ethics are important in public administration in democratic states
3. Identify the responsibilities of public administrators and the basis of administrative ethics
4. Analyze the tenants of the codes of ethics of a variety of professional organizations and explore how they are applied in practice situations
5. Recognize the pressures and forces that may contribute to unethical behavior in public administration
6. Apply the ethics triangle in case studies to judge and rank actors their courses of action
7. Suggest ways that public managers might reduce the risk of ethics violations

In addition to course material, we will concentrate on three other essential skills for those working (or, planning to work) in public and nonprofit organizations: teamwork, oral presentation skills, and written presentation skills.

Required Texts and Course Materials

There are two required texts for the course:

1. Cooper, Terry L. 2006. The Responsible Administrator: An Approach to Ethics for the Administrative Role. 5th Edition. Jossey-Bass Publishers. ISBN: 0-7879-7651-2
2. Thompson, William N. and Leidlein, James E. 2009. Ethics in City Hall: Discussion and Analysis for Public Administration. Jones and Bartlett Learning. ISBN: 9780763755324

Additional required reading material(s) may be indicated in the Course Schedule (below). All required reading material (with the exception of textbook material) is available on the course Canvas site.

Assignments

Individual Participation

Active participation is one of the best and most reliable ways to demonstrate your understanding of ideas and concepts discussed in the readings and presented in class. My role (as the instructor for this course) is to provide you with a conceptual framework and to facilitate your learning. My role is not merely to deliver factual material to passive learners. The exercises and discussions in this course are intended to provide you with an opportunity to test your knowledge, formulate ideas and strategies, respond to strategic management dilemmas, and get feedback from peers. Therefore, weekly class attendance is necessary, but not sufficient for an excellent class participation grade.

Critiques of Reading Assignments and Discussion Leader

Students, in pairs, will be responsible for preparing and presenting one oral critique of particular reading assignments, or combinations of reading assignments. These oral presentations should be approximately 5-10 minutes in length and should be designed to stimulate discussion of the issues. They are not intended to be summaries or reports of the readings. It may be helpful to prepare a written list of questions, issue handouts, or use PowerPoint to help focus the discussion.

The emphasis in these critiques should on raising questions, identifying points that need clarification, presenting alternative viewpoints, drawing out implications of the articles for practice. Students should attempt to identify similarities and differences, underlying themes and common assumptions among the readings. Real examples/applications of the principles are both welcomed and encouraged.

Discussion leaders are responsible for covering one hour of class (5-10 minutes of oral report and the remaining time driving discussion).

The sign-up sheet for these assignments will be circulated on the first day of class. Students will be evaluated and graded on the quality of the discussion generated and how well the class is engaged with key concepts and perspectives. Applying those items is also important in the discussion.

The instructor will lead discussion the first week to (hopefully) provide a pattern or model of how the process shall work.

Discussion Questions

Students, who are not leading discussion, will submit two discussion questions by noon on the day of class. These questions should be well developed and related explicitly to the readings. The instructor will choose from and order these questions to direct the discussion around the readings in class. When a given question is discussed, the student who submitted the question will be asked to read and explain/expand on the question. The class will then discuss the questions. These questions will be submitted via Canvas.

Writing Assignments

There are two options to fulfill the writing assignment component of this course: (1) a combination of short papers due throughout the semester or (2) a short paper and one longer paper.

Options:

Short Paper Option

There will be short paper topics assigned for many of the sessions. To complete this option a student must respond to three of the prompts. These papers must be between 1200 and 1500 words each. Each of paper must be well-written and researched. These are not reflection papers, they are spaces for students to apply the concepts from the readings and discussions. Students are free to pick the three prompts they respond to but the responses cannot come from the same week the student is serving as discussion leader AND at least ones must be turned in before spring break. The short papers are due the Friday after we have discussed the relevant material in class.

Long-Paper Option

Students who choose this option will respond to one short answer prompt (900 to 1200 words) and complete a final paper (3,000 to 3,500 words).

The long paper will focus on a case study analysis. In this paper, students will analyze a real ethical dilemma of their choice. This can be something a student has personally experienced, something a friend or colleague has experienced (with permission), or a contemporary or historical example. Names and incidental facts may be changed to protect identities or organizations.

The paper should do the following:

1. Provide a brief description of the dilemma, including pertinent factual background information.
2. The political or organizational characteristics that helped produce this dilemma.
3. Identification of all of the conveyable alternatives for resolving the dilemma.
4. Probable positive and negative consequences of each alternative.
5. Selection of one alternative on the basis of an explicit ethical principle, or set of principles, and the probable consequences.
6. Justification for adopting that particular principle

7. Describe the political and organizational characteristics that would have encourage or impede the implementation of your choice.
8. Discuss the changes that would be necessary to make the organization more support of this alternative.

The writing assignments are worth, in total, 75% of the final grade in this course. Below is a breakdown of how that will be allowed based on the options.

		% of Final Grade
Option I	Three short papers of 1200 to 1500 words on any of the paper topics assigned for each session.	25% Each
Option II	1. One short paper of 900 to 1200 words on any of the short topic prompts 2. Final paper of 3,000 to 3,500 words.	1. 25% of Final Grade 2. 50% of Final Grade

Summary of Graded Assignments*

Outcome/Deliverable	Type	Description	Value
Participation	Individual	Quality contribution to in-class discussion	10%
Discussion Leader	Group/Pairs	Lead Discussion for One Hour on the assigned/chosen day	10%
Papers	Individual	Completion of EITHER Writing Assignment Option I or II	75%
Discussion Questions	Individual	Questions Submitted Each Week	5%

*The instructor reserves the right to add, remove, or reorder these assignments at her discretion and in accordance with university policy

Information and Reminders

Accommodation Policy

The University of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations in this course are requested to speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course.

Religious Observance Policy

It is the policy of the University of Oklahoma to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. If class conflicts with a religious observance, please notify me at least 24 hours before the class in question so we may schedule appropriate make-up assignments.

Internet Information

This course will make use of Canvas. Internet access and access to this platform are required for success in the course. Slides, revisions to the syllabus, readings, announcements, changes to this syllabus, etc. can all be found in the appropriate folder on the Canvas page for this course.

The primary means of communication for this course will be email. Be sure to check your OU-issued email regularly.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

All assignments are due in the Canvas dropbox before the start of class. Late assignments will be accepted for four days after the due date with a late penalty assessed for each day, class or otherwise, that it is late. Illness, schedule conflicts, family problems, computer issues are not valid reasons for late assignments—plan and work ahead.

Make-up exams will be given only in extraordinary circumstances. Students are permitted to take a make-up exam only in the case of documented illness, death in the family, and approved university activity. Notification of missed exams must be received prior to the exam day.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Professors have to obey rules of honest scholarship, and so do students. For more information about academic integrity, including a statement of what constitutes academic misconduct and plagiarism, see OU's "A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity" at integrity.ou.edu. When writing about, paraphrasing, or quoting the work of others, you must give proper attribution in the form of parenthetical or footnote citations and quotation marks around directly quoted phrases or sentences. Using work in this class that you have completed for another class is plagiarism. Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse for plagiarism. Any work not resulting from the student's own efforts will result in a grade of 0 and be turned in to the property authorities. This includes plagiarized papers, copied assignments, cheating on exams, or any other dishonest activity.

Course Schedule*

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
1/16	MLK Day		
1/23	What is Ethics?	• NYT “The Moral Instinct” Pinker 2008 [C]** • Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>. Books I and II[C] • “The Debate Between the ‘Old’ and the ‘New’” Section to of entry on “Liberalism” in the <i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> [C] • Recommended: <i>Skim Ethics</i>. second edition by William K. Frankena [C]	• Discussion Questions
1/30	Public vs. Private Ethics	• Responsible Administrator Chapter 2 • Meyer, W. J. (1975). Political ethics and political authority. <i>Ethics</i>, 86(1), 61-69. [C] • “Realms of Obligation and Virtue” in <i>Public Duties</i> p. 3-31[C] • “The Dynamics of Administrative Evil” Chapter 1 in <i>Unmasking Administrative Evil</i> [C]	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader
2/6	The Social Context of Administrative Ethics	• Responsible Administrator Chapter 3 • “Hard Choices: Justifying Bureaucratic Decisions” in <i>Public Duties</i> p. 32-51 [C] • Goodin, R. E., & Wilenski, P. (1984). Beyond efficiency: the logical underpinnings of administrative principles. <i>Public Administration Review</i>, 512-517. [C]	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader • Selection of Option I or II. • If option II, paper topic due.
2/13	Administrative Responsibility	• Responsible Administrator Chapters 4 and 5 • Jos, P. H. (1990). Administrative Responsibility Revisited Moral Consensus and Moral Autonomy. <i>Administration & Society</i>, 22(2), 228-248.[C]	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader
2/20	Conduct in Organizations	• Responsible Administrator Chapter 6 • “Administrative Evil Unmasked” Chapter 3 in <i>Administrative Evil Unmasked</i> [C]	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader
2/27	Organizational Norms and Structures	• Responsible Administrator Chapter 7 and 8 • “Administrative Evil Masked” Chapter 4 in <i>Administrative Evil Unmasked</i> [C]	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader
3/6	Equity	• Schaar, J. H. (1964). Some ways of thinking about equality. <i>The journal of Politics</i>, 26(04), 867-895.[C] • Riggs, F. W. (1994). Bureaucracy and the Constitution. <i>Public Administration Review</i>, 54(1), 65-72.[C] • President Obama Speech: A More Perfect Union (can be found here) • Recommended: Declaration of Independence	• Discussion Questions • Discussion Leader

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
3/13	Spring Break		
3/20	Individualism	- Putnam, R. D. (1993). What makes democracy work?. National Civic Review, 82(2), 101-107. [C] "...Radical Individualism" Chapter 3 in Hudson, W. E. (2013). <i>American democracy in peril: eight challenges to America's future</i>. Los Angeles: CQ Press. [C] - NYT: "Some Republicans Acknowledge Leveraging Voter ID Laws for Political Gain" by Wines [C] "You Didn't Build That" speech at the 2012 Democratic National Convention.	- Discussion Questions - Discussion Leader
3/27	Market Ethics	- Chandler, G. (2010). "Toward a Public-Spirited Public Management Economics" <i>Administrative Theory & Praxis</i> 32(3), 328-48 [C] - Chapter 5 in <i>Development as Freedom</i> [C]	Discussion Questions
4/3	Global Ethics	- UN Declaration of Human Rights "Rights and Republicanism" Chapter 6 in <i>Ennobling Democracy</i> by Thomas Pangle [C] "A Tale of Two Ethnicities" Chapter 5 in <i>Ethnicity, Inc.</i> by John L. and Jean Comaroff [C] - Evans, G. (2009). The responsibility to protect. In <i>Responsibility to Protect</i> (pp. 15-29). Palgrave Macmillan US. [C]	- Discussion Questions - Discussion Leader
4/10	Interest Groups: Triumph and Challenge	Guest Speaker: Michael Whelan, JD - McGregor, E. B., & Sundeen, R. (1984). The great paradox of democratic citizenship and public personnel administration. <i>Public Administration Review</i>, 44, 126-135. [C] - Morrow, W. L. (1987). The pluralist legacy in American public administration. A centennial history of the American administrative state, 161-188. [C] - Cases: SpeakNow.org v. <i>FEC</i> and <i>Citizens United v. the FEC</i> Recommended: "Bias and Diversity in the Interest Group System" and "The Dynamics of Bias" Chapters 5 and 6 in Baumgartner, F. R., & Leech, B. L. (1998). <i>Basic Interests</i>. [C]	Discussion Questions

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments**
4/17	Bureaucratic Responsiveness (Populism)	- Kearney, R. C., & Sinha, C. (1988). Professionalism and Bureaucratic Responsiveness: Conflict or Compatibility?. <i>Public Administration Review</i>, 571-579.[C] - Rourke, F. E. (1992). Responsiveness and neutral competence in American bureaucracy. <i>Public Administration Review</i>, 539-546.[C]	- Discussion Questions - Discussion Leader
4/24	Policy Ethics	"Ethics of Discretion" in <i>Public Duties [C]</i> - Amy, D. J. (1984). Why policy analysis and ethics are incompatible. <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i>, 3(4), 573-591.[C] "Ethics and Policy Analysis" in <i>Public Duties [C]</i>	- Discussion Questions - Discussion Leader
5/1	Property	- John Rhor Chapter 5 [C] - Rohr, J. A. (1981). Financial disclosure: Power in search of policy. <i>Public Personnel Management</i>, 10(1), 29-40.[C] - Cases: <i>Dolan v. Tigard</i>; <i>Goldberg V. Kelly</i>	Discussion Questions
5/5			Final Paper Due (if Option II is selected)
*The Instructor reserves the right to add to, remove, or reorder these readings and assignments as she sees fit and in accordance with university policy. **[C] Indicates the reading may be found on Canvas.			

Short Paper Discussion Topics*

Date	Topic	Prompt	Due
1/16	MLK Day		
1/23	What is Ethics?	None	
1/30	Public vs. Private Ethics	Using at least one real example, evaluate to whom (and how does one know) do public officials have a moral obligation? Be sure to discuss the distinction between political and administrative officials.	2/3
2/6	The Social Context of Administrative Ethics	Use at least one real world example to illustrate how the shift from modern to a post-modern world shifts how administrators can and do evaluate the moral or ethical obligation of their positions.	2/10
2/13	Administrative Responsibility	Use at least two real world examples to show that when an administrator's responsibilities conflict, different responsibilities may take precedence. How can administrators ethically decide which responsibility should take precedence? Can such a framework be consistently used across cases?	2/17
2/20	Conduct in Organizations	How does the reading from <i>Administrative Evil Unmasked</i> illustrate the pitfalls of relying on internal controls. Be sure to make explicit connections. Identify and apply one more contemporary example that highlights these same pitfalls.	2/24
2/27	Organizational Norms and Structures	How should organizations deal with the need for whistle blower protection? Who's responsibility is it provide protection for whistle blowers? What about in instances of national security?	3/3
3/6	Equity	Pick a policy or program that has adopted a principle of preferential treatments or a scheme of gender-based classification. Write a critique or defense of the program or policy identified.	3/10
3/13	Spring Break		
3/20	Individualism	How should an administrator or policy maker take into account the problem of "excessive individualism" and thinned to develop social capital and civic capacity? What is the difference between the two (use concrete examples) and what are the implications for public leadership for this distinction?	3/24

Date	Topic	Prompt	Due
3/27	Market Ethics	Use at least one real world example to address the ethical dilemmas presented by the global marketing economy. What responsibility does the Global North writ-large and US officials in particular owe to the Global South?	3/31
4/3	Global Ethics	What level of responsibility or obligation to elected officials and public administrators owe to other groups within the global community? Is there a difference between the obligations of elected officials vs administrators? Using an example of you choice, illustrate how ethical decisions can be made that serve both local an global communities or the implications a failure to do so.	4/7
4/10	Interest Groups: Triumph and Challenge	Use at least one real world example to address whether Super PACs can ever be ethical. Be sure to address what makes these groups ethical or unethical.	4/14
4/17	Bureaucratic Responsiveness (Populism)	Use at least two examples to illustrate the pitfalls of too much and too little bureaucratic responsiveness. Where do bureaucrats ethical and moral obligations lie when political movements (suddenly) arise.	4/21
4/24	Policy Ethics	Use at least one real world example to illustrate the ethical choices policy evaluator make in the process of doing their jobs. How should policy analysts address such ethical concerns?	4/28
5/1	Property	Drawing on a case study, discuss how one might use his/her discretion to aid and abet or frustrate Rhor's view of the role that property should play in the American scheme of values. Be sure to use a concrete case.	5/5
5/5			• Final Paper Due (if Option II is selected)
*If there is a topic related to reading that you'd rather cover, that may be allowable but must be discussed with the instructor prior to completion.			