

Sam Houston State University

Summer Session I 2008

Course Number: PA 588.01

Course Title: Ethics in Government

Term: Summer I 2008

Location of Class Meetings: *The University Center*

Class Meeting Times: *Mondays & Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m. - 10:10 p.m.*

Professor: R. M. Bittick, M.P.A., Ph.D. Office: AB1 319G

Contact Information: E-mail: rmb004@shsu.edu Phone: 936-294-4105

Office Hours: I do not have office hours scheduled at The University Center (TUC), but I am willing to meet with students after class, or before class at TUC by appointment. Also, my office hours at the SHSU main campus are: M-F, 02:00 pm - 03:00 pm (walk-in).

Class Website: Go to Blackboard <http://www.shsu.edu/blackboard_login.html>. Students are required to access this website before each class.

Course Description: the following is from the SHSU University Catalog:

PA 588 ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT. This course provides a review of classical and contemporary literature on the role and practice of ethics in public administration. Contemporary empirical research, case studies, and ethical problem solving are also addressed. A primary theme of the course will be fostering and applying "right action" and "good conduct" in public organizations and public policy making.

Prerequisites: Graduate Standing. **Credit Hours:** 3.

Introduction: Welcome to PA 588! This course is designed to explore and evaluate select schools of thought that have contributed to the foundation of ethics in government. In this course we will critically exam ethical approaches to social, political, and administrative problems faced by public administrators and elected officials today. The goal of the course is to equip you with the knowledge, understanding, and ability to make intelligent, ethical decisions on the job.

Class time is divided between a lecture and class discussions, often applying the subject school of thought to a case study or current public issue. My lectures are designed to supplement the reading material. Therefore, you must first read the assigned material prior to class and then attend class.

I want everyone to be successful and pass this course. Therefore, you must be a PROACTIVE student by taking responsibility for researching the subject matter and taking the actions necessary to *master* the material (this is why you are in a "Masters" degree program). This may involve you doing more research beyond the assigned reading material.

Don't panic if you have not previously read the works of the authors we study in class. This is not a philosophy class. Rather, it is a course in political science where we approach philosophical texts from the viewpoint of politics and public

administration. In fact, many of these authors worked as public administrators sometime during their life (e.g. Machiavelli, Locke, etc.).

Course Goals:

With the above in mind, there are three goals for students in this class:

1. **Schools of Thought:** understand the basic fundamentals of the ethical schools of thought as they apply to politics, policy, and administration;
2. **Issues:** recognize ethical issues in social, political, or administrative contexts;
3. **Action:** be able to perform an ethical evaluation of a problem and make an intelligent decision for an appropriate course of action to resolve the issue.

Course Objectives. At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- **Knowledge**
 - Understand the foundational ideas of each author/school of thought concerning human nature.
 - Recognize the fundamental principles of each author/school of thought concerning the relationships between humans, including social/political associations, human organization etc.
 - Identify each author's/school of thought's concept of the relationship of humans to the physical-biological realm.
 - **Competencies & Related Skills.**
 - Recognize and explain an ethical issue under discussion;
 - Identify and weigh the pros and cons of the ideas of each author/school of thought in regards to resolving an ethical issue, including recognizing logical fallacies, distinguishing between facts and inferences, infer the unstated assumption.
 - Judge the adequacy to which each author supports his conclusions in comparison with other authors and schools of thought;
 - Integrate and synthesize viewpoints of different authors/schools of thought in evaluating the ethical issue;
 - Recommend improvements to each author/school of thought concerning an ethical issue.
 - **Values** - at the completion of this course, students will be able to:
 - Appreciate different ethical schools of thought;
 - Understand the benefit of examining multiple authors and ethical schools of thought in order to understand different aspects of an ethical issue;
 - Be committed to a spirit of tolerance concerning differing viewpoints;
 - Appreciate democratic values and norms.
- ⇒ **Assessment:** Class Discussions, In-Class Case Studies, Class Paper, In-Class Presentation, and Final Exam.

Texts Required: the following texts are required for this class:

- ❑ Garofalo, Charles & Dean Geuras. 2005. *Practical Ethics in Public Administration*, 2nd edition. Management Concepts. ISBN: 1-56726-161-2 (paperback).
- ❑ Plato. 1987. *The Republic*, second edition (revised), trans. By Desmond Lee. Penguin Books. ISBN: 0140449140 (paperback).
- ❑ Locke, John. 1988. *Two Treatises of Government*, Peter Laslett (editor). ISBN: 0521357306 (paperback).
- . 1983. *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, James Tully (editor). Hackett Publishing Company. ISBN: 091514560X (paperback).
- ❑ Heinlein, Robert. *Starship Troopers*. Ace publishers. ISBN: 0441783589 (paperback).
- ❑ Kant, Immanuel. 1964. *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*. Translated by H. J. Paton. Harper Torchbooks. ISBN: 0061311596 (paperback).
- ❑ Mill, John Stuart. *Utilitarianism*, 2nd edition, George Sher (Editor). Hackett Publishing Company. ISBN: 087220605X (Paperback).
- ❑ Lewis, C S. *The Abolition of Man*. HarperCollins. ISBN: 0060652942 (paperback).
- ❑ Machiavelli. *The Prince and The Discourses*. McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0075535777 (paperback).

Other required reading materials will be available to download from the class website on Blackboard, and include:

- ❑ Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics* and *The Politics* - selections only.
- ❑ Bittick, R. M. 2002. "Disposable Public Servants," *PATimes*, June, vol. 25, no. 6.
- ❑ ----- . 2007. "C. S. Lewis & Government Ethics: Unintended Mingling of Opposing Ethical Schools of Thought," paper presented at the Southern Political Science Association's Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- ❑ Heichelbech, "Equality and Hierarchy: Struggling with Plato's Legacy," *PATimes*, March 2002, page 3.
- ❑ Plato. 1987. *The Laws* - selections only.

Recommended Text:

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*, fifth edition. Bedford/St. Martin's.

Other texts will be recommended throughout the term.

NOTE: There may be other material assigned for reading throughout the semester that will be linked to the class website.

Other References: I also encourage students to join [American Society of Public Administration](#) (ASPA) and the [Section on Ethics](#), and read *Ethics Today* and the journal [Public Integrity](#).

Activities of Participants:

- **Attendance Policy.** *Class attendance and participation are mandatory and count towards your final grade (e.g. In-Class Case Studies).* If you cannot attend class on a regular basis, you need to drop the course and take it again in a future semester.
- **Assigned Readings.** These are listed on the schedule (below). Since this course covers a lot of reading material, you must plan ahead to schedule your reading time appropriately.
- **Assignments:**
 - **Four (4) In-Class Case Studies.** See the course *Schedule* for the scheduled dates. You must attend class for the entire class period and participate in the assignment to receive credit.
 - **One (1) Class Paper.** The instructions for this paper will be linked in Blackboard.
 - **One (1) In-Class Presentation.** This is a PowerPoint presentation of your Class Paper. The instructions for this presentation will be linked in Blackboard.
 - **One (1) "Issue" Memo.** The instructions for this memo will be linked on the course website. The memo identifies an ethical issue that the student will analyze throughout the semester.
 - **One (1) Exam.** This is a take-home exam formatted much like the MPA exams (i.e. essay). The question is based on the issue you identify in the Issue Memo. The exam is due in class at the beginning of the next class meeting.

Late Assignments: the due dates for assignments are set at the times specified in order for the student to gain maximum learning benefit. **If you are unable to complete an assignment on time, you must contact me in advance and explain your reason.** With my approval, an assignment's due date can be rescheduled.

Grading Plan:

<u>Required Assignments</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
"Issue" Memo	10
Class Paper	100
In-Class Presentation	30
Exam	100
Four (4) In-Class Case Studies @ 15 points each	60

Total Possible Points:	300
------------------------	-----

Points based on the grade earned for each completed assignment are based on my evaluation of your work. The percentage scale for the final grade follows:

Percentage of Total Points Earned	Final Grade
90% - 100%	A
80% - 89%	B
70% - 79%	C
60% - 69%	D
59% and Below	F

All university rules and procedures apply to this class.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to read *Academic Policy Statement 810213* found at <http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty>.

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

The Instructor reserves the right to require any or all students to submit written work on electronic media (e.g. Word or Word Perfect) so it may be checked using a plagiarism software program.

Americans with Disabilities Act: See *Academic Policy Statement 811006* at http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/811006.pdf. Students must initiate requests for accommodations. Students seeking accommodations must go tot the Counseling Center for certification of the disability in a timely manner.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days: See *Academic Policy Statement 861001* at http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf.

Instructor Evaluations: students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form toward the end of the semester.

Classroom Rules of Conduct: Students must read this policy at <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>. Students must turn off or silence their cell phones once class begins. Students shall not engage in phone conversations or text messaging during class.

Schedule: The instructor reserves the right to change the schedule as needed. Changes will be posted on Blackboard, or announced in class.

<u>Day/Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Wed, 04 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction; Schools of Thought; & • Foundational Ideas: Lewis & Freud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus; • Instructor's Notes; • Geuras & Garofalo, chs. 1-3. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Case Study #1a.
Mon, 09 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation of Organizational Hierarchy - Elites: Plato; & • Foundational Ideas: Lewis & Freud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • The Republic (selections - see Instructor's Notes); • The Laws (selections linked); • Heichelbech article, "Equality and Hierarchy" (linked). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Paper Instructions; & • In-Class Case Study #1b.
Wed, 11 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation of Civil Society: Locke; & • Foundational Ideas: Lewis & Freud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • Locke, Second Treatise on Government (selections - see Instructor's Notes); • Locke, Letter On Toleration (all). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Case Study #1c.
Mon, 16 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Service: Hierarchy and Democracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heinlein, Starship Troopers; • Heinlein, "Who are the Heirs of Patrick Henry?" (handout). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Class Presentations; & • In-Class Case Study #2a.
Wed, 18 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character and Virtue: Aristotle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • Nichomachean Ethics (selections linked); & • The Politics (selections linked). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Paper due; • Memo assigned; & • In-Class Case Study #2b.
Mon, 23 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle Based Ethics - Deontology: Kant; and, • Consequence Based Ethics - Utilitarianism: Mill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals; • Mill, Utilitarianism (linked). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memo due; & • In-Class Case Study #3.
Wed, 25 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified Theory; & • The Future of PA: C S Lewis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • Geuras & Garofalo, chs. 4-8; • Lewis, The Abolition of Man; • Bittick article, "C. S. Lewis & Government Ethics" (linked). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take-Home Exam assigned.
Mon, 30 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character, Power, & Leadership: Machiavelli. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Notes; • Machiavelli's The Prince. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take-Home Exam due; • In-Class Case Study #4.