

Course Number: PA 588.01

Course Title: Ethics in Government

Credit Hours: 3

Semester, Year: Fall 2009

Location of Class Meetings: *The University Center*

Class Meeting Times: *Mondays, 6:00 p.m. - 08:50 p.m.*

Professor: R. M. Bittick, M.P.A., Ph.D. Office: SHSU CHSS Bldg Room 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-W-F, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm (walk-in; no appointment necessary).

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, public policy and administration;
2. **Issues:** recognize and explain 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.
 - Evaluate an ethical issue using the schools of thought covered in class, and make a recommendation to resolve the 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 Exercises, Paper and memo, and 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). Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0521357306 (paperback).
- . 1983. *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, James Tully (editor). Hackett Publishing Company. ISBN: 091514560X (paperback).
- ❑ Kant, Immanuel. 1964. *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*. Translated by H. J. Paton. Harper Torchbooks. ISBN: 0061311596 (paperback).
- ❑ Menzel, Donald C. *Ethics Management for Public Administrators: Building Organizations of Integrity*. M E Sharpe publishers. ISBN: 9780765618146 (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*. Modern Library College editions, 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.
- ❑ Bentham, Jeremy. 1996. "Principles of Morals and Legislation." *The Works of Jeremy Bentham (1838-1843)*, ed. by John Bowring, chapters 1-4.
- ❑ Bittick, R. M. 2002. "Disposable Public Servants," *PATimes*, June, vol. 25, no. 6.
- ❑ ----- . 2004. "Social Equity and Property Rights: Bringing Locke Back Into The Debate." *International Business Trends: Contemporary Readings*, Academy of Business Administration, 2004 edition, eds. Dr Sam Fullerton and Dr. David Moore. Fall.
- ❑ Heichelbech, "Equality and Hierarchy: Struggling with Plato's Legacy," *PATimes*, March 2002, page 3.
- ❑ Nietzsche, Friedrich. "Prologue." *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, translated by Thomas Common. - selections only.
- ❑ Plato. 1987. *The Laws* - selections only.
- ❑ Wilson, Woodrow. 1887. "The Study of Administration." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 2, June, pp. 197-222.

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 Exercises).* If you cannot attend class on a regular basis, you must drop the course and take it again in a future semester. One (1) unexcused absence is allowed without penalty.
- **Assigned Readings.** These are listed on the schedule. Since this course covers a lot of material, you must plan ahead to schedule your reading time appropriately.
- **Assignments:**
 - **Complaint Project.** This requires one (1) memo and one (1) class paper.
 - **One Paper (1).** One paper dealing with Plato and Locke.
 - **One (1) Exam.** This is a take-home exam formatted much like the MPA exams (i.e. essay). The exam is due in class at the beginning of the next class meeting.
 - **Seven (7) In-Class Exercises.** Eight In-Class Exercises are scheduled, however, only seven of these will count. See the course *Schedule* for the dates. You must attend class for the entire class period and participate to receive credit.

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 may be rescheduled.

Grading Plan:

<u>Required Assignments</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Complaint Memo	10
Complaint Paper	50
Plato-Locke Paper	100
Take Home Exam	100
<u>Seven (7) In-Class Exercises @ 20 points each</u>	<u>140</u>
Total Possible Points:	400

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.

Students must download and read the document, *Student Guidelines*, found at: http://www.shsu.edu/students/StudentGuidelines2007_2008.pdf.

Academic Honesty: Students are required to read *Academic Policy Statement 810213, "Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty."* found at http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/810213.pdf. 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/documents/811006.pdf. It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with

disabilities. If a student has a disability that may affect adversely his/her work in this class, then the student is encouraged to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how best to deal with the situation. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days: See *Academic Policy Statement 861001* at http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/861001.pdf. Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

"Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

Visitors in the Classroom: Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted into the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

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

Classroom Rules of Conduct: The *Code of Student Conduct and Discipline* is found at the following link: <https://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>. Students shall turn off or silence their cell phones once class begins. Students shall not engage in phone conversations or text messaging during class. Students shall not engage in side conversations 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>Class Session</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
1	24 Aug	Course Introduction.	- Syllabus.	In-Class Exercise #1.
2	31 Aug	Introduction to Ethics in Government.	- Geuras & Garofalo (G&G), chs 1-2; and, - Menzel ch. 1.	Complaint Memo & Paper Assigned. In-Class Exercise #2.
3	07 Sep	Holiday - Labor Day.	- No Class!	
4	14 Sep	Decision-Making - Elites.	- Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Part One thru Part Four [327a-427c], pgs. 3-129.	Complaint Memo due. In-Class Exercise #3.

5	21 Sep	Decision-Making: Elites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plato, <i>The Republic</i>, Part Five thru Part Nine & Part Eleven [sections 427d - 592b & 608c - 621d], pp. 130-334 & 354-368. 	In-Class Exercise #4.
6	28 Sep	Decision-Making: Elites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plato, <i>The Laws</i> (selections - download); - Heichelbech, "Equality and Hierarchy: Struggling with Plato's Legacy" (download); and, - G&G ch. 3. 	None.
7	05 Oct	Decision-Making: Civil Societies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> (chs. 1-7, 9-12, 14, & 19); and, - Locke, <i>A Letter Concerning Toleration</i>. 	Plato-Locke Paper assigned.
8	12 Oct	Decision-Making: Constitutions, Social Equity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Menzel, ch. 2; and, - Bittick "Social Equity and Property Rights: Bringing Locke Back Into The Debate" (download). 	None.
9	19 Oct	Character Based Ethics: Aristotle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aristotle, <i>The Nicomachean Ethics</i> (selections); and, - Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> (selections) (download both). 	Plato-Locke Paper due.
10	26 Oct	Character Based Ethics: Machiavelli.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>. - Recommended Reading: Machiavelli's <i>The Discourses</i>. 	None.
11	02 Nov	Character Based Ethics: Aristotle & Machiavelli.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - None. 	In-Class Exercise #5.
12	09 Nov	Principle Based Ethics (Deontology): Kant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kant, <i>The Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals</i>. 	None.
13	16 Nov	Consequence Based Ethics (Utilitarianism): Bentham & Mill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bentham, "Principles of Morals and Legislation"; and, - Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i>. 	None.
14	23 Nov	Unified System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - G&G chs. 4-5 & 7-8. 	In-Class Exercise #6. Take Home Exam assigned.
15	2-Dec	Challenge to Modernism; and, The Future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nietzsche, "Prologue," <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> (download); and, - Lewis, <i>The Abolition of Man</i>; and, - Bittick paper (download). 	Take Home Exam is due.

16	9-Dec	Ethics Management	- Menzel, chs. 3-4.	In-Class Exercise #7. Complaint Paper is due.
17 Finals Week	16-Dec	Ethics Management	- None.	In-Class Exercise #8. Attendance Required.