

# **CRITICAL ISSUES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

PADM 60470 / POL 70470

Master of Public Administration Program

Kent State University

Fall 2003

## **Course Overview**

### **To Students With Disabilities:**

**In accordance with University Policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) in the Michael Schwarz Student Services Center (672-3391).**

**Additionally, this is a web-based course which is Section 508 accessible for persons with physical disabilities. If you are a disabled student residing in Northeast Ohio who is blind, vision-impaired, has limited use of their hands, or is deaf and or hard-of-hearing, please contact the Professor in this course for training and use of assistive technologies in your home.**

### Introduction

Welcome to Critical Issues in Public Administration: Ethics !

Arguably the preclusion of ethics from decision-making is one of the most problematic issues confronting public managers. The failure to incorporate systematic ethical reasoning to the problems with which public managers are confronted on a daily basis violates the basic reason for our existence: we have been given a public trust—that of stewardship of the distribution of the resources of the state. This stewardship requires not only the selection of effective instrumental solutions (means) to problems, but requires those decisions to conform to standards of social justice. Only in this way can our decisions be legitimate and justified in the eyes of the citizenry to whom we are accountable.

For this reason alone, I would like to spend this semester having each of you develop a firm understanding and incorporation of ethical reasoning into your analysis and decision-making. Toward that end, I have divided up this course into four parts. Part I is foundational. Here we will learn to make distinctions between morality and ethics and the dominant paradigms in ethical reasoning. Part II is normative ethics section and involves the translation of theoretical paradigms into guides for ethical reasoning in public management. Towards the end of this part of the course you will be expected to develop an ethical scheme you will employ in subsequent analysis. Part III addresses the fact that ethical decision-making is not solely a question of

personal conviction, but resides in an internal and external organizational context. For the individual public manager, organizational context(s) can exert tremendous pressure to violate rules of ethical conduct which one holds. What you will get from Part III is the most difficult part of this course-- ethical decision ultimately involves courage on your part. Part IV is an applied ethics section. Here you will be able to test what you have learned relative to real world dilemmas and then refine your approach if necessary.

Unfortunately for you this course requires a lot of reading and listening. Since this course is web based and to help you along--this syllabus is electronic. That means, weekly readings are available to you online in one of three formats available to you from your home computer: (1) the entire article or piece is online on the Internet; (2) the article is on electronic reserve at the KSU library (you will need a separate password to access the electronic reserves which I will provide to you); or (3) there is a video/audio lecture you will need to watch and or listen to, the latter of which is available as a streaming video. To access the latter you will need to download some software programs that are included in the Week 1 lecture for this course. They are free to you.

We will be having both asynchronous and synchronous interaction in this course. Asynchronous communication means students communicate openly at different times in a given multi-day period via the Discussion Forum. The Discussion Forum is located on the Communications Page in the course website.

With synchronous communications, students are all online at the same time. And are audio based live discussions. The synchronous discussions will require you to all be online at a specific time via LearnLinc, an interactive audio program which provides direct audio discussions from your home to every other student's home, a shared online blackboard, and some other features enabling the sharing information simultaneously across space. Learnlinc is free to you as a download. Information on downloading Learnlinc is a part of the materials included in Week 1's lecture. There may be some glitches with LearnLinc; these are usually connection problems. I am asking you to be patient as we try to work these out. It does help if you have a high speed Internet connection, either a DSL connection or cable connection such as RoadRunner. However, these are not essential.

For the LearnLinc (synchronous) sessions we will have to negotiate a time to meet. However, we will have no more than four of these live class sessions throughout the semester. Moreover, you are not required to attend these sessions. However, in the past students who attended the LearnLinc sessions have indicated overwhelmingly that they make the course more enjoyable and they feel more connected (for some folks, there is something important about hearing a voice at the other end). In any case, if you miss one of these sessions, I record them all so you can re-visit a discussion whether you were able to attend or not.

Indeed, if there is a major benefit to the way I've constructed the Kent web- based MPA it is that you can always go back and reread a lecture, listen to an audio/video lecture, read or listen to the discussions that took place in class for any week, all at your leisure.

## **Student Evaluation**

5 Analytical Papers 50 %  
Homework Assignments 25%  
Class Participation 25%  
Exams (none)

Your grade in this course is predicated on a combination of 5 analytic papers, weekly homework, which will be group based and individual, plus class participation

Analytical Papers: (5)

You are required to submit five papers during this semester. Each paper is to be no more than five pages long double-spaced, 12 pt. font, and focus on one government program or policy area.

Paper # 1: An overarching question in ethics is the identification of first principles. What principles do you believe are first principles. Why?

Paper #2: For public managers, stewardship is the dominant second principle. Write a paper on the concept of stewardship. Include a discussion and critique of the factors involved in stewardship. What does each of these factors mean to you personally?

Paper #3: Develop a Personal Ethical Checklist. What systematic steps would you go through as you begin to make a decision? Specifically, I would like each of you to divide this checklist into major sections and then within each section, the specific steps you would take to assure your decision is ethical.

Paper #4: Select one of the applied areas in Part 4 of this syllabus. Listen to the various discussions, identify a case and apply your checklist. Describe how and where the checklist worked and where it did not. Where it did not, please refine the checklist.

Paper #5: Repeat the assignment in Paper #4, but using a different problem/case.

### **Weekly Homework Assignments**

On most weeks throughout the semester, there will be weekly homework assignments. On several weeks you will be required to work on assignments together, either as a class, or in small groups. On those weeks, you will submit one collective paper. Other weeks, you will be on your own and submit individual homework assignments. The purpose of the group assignments are to involve you more with each other, learn from each other and make you feel more a part of the class. All homework assignments are to be posted to me via email using the internal course email (which you will find on the Communications Page in the course website).

## Class Participation

You are required to participate in online discussions using the Discussion Forum (also called discussion boards or bulletin boards) each week. You will find the Discussion Forum on the Communication in the course website. I will be participating in the Discussion Forum by posing weekly discussion questions and will be most interested in your responses.

Questions will be posted to the Discussion Forum on the weekends for the following week. I would expect you to all have contributed by Wednesday of that week.

One of the benefits of a Discussion Forum is that you can mull over your answer as well as the responses of others.

Your responses will be evaluated by me according to the following criteria: (1) quality, not frequency of the response to your colleagues postings; and (2) demonstration of your familiarity with the weekly readings. It is advised therefore, when you make a point or an argument in the Discussion Forum, you support it with a reference to the readings when you can or feel it is appropriate.

What I am going to do is periodically assign different students management of the Discussion Forum for a given week. This means that on those weeks, the student selected will develop and post the question(s) to the Discussion Forum and then be responsible for eliciting responses and carrying on the discussion (“...so Joe, what do you think of the viability of Sara’s position or her definition given Rawl’s third second requirement?”)

In addition to the postings on the Discussion Forum, participation in LearnLinc sessions is strongly encouraged. I hope you can make these sessions as they add to the experience greatly. However, as noted there are no sanctions for non-attendance.

## **Required Reading**

### **Books:**

Required Texts: (2)

Hannah Arendt. (1994). *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Penguin Classics. 321 p.

ISBN # 0-1401-8765-0

Price: \$12

Library Location: DD 247.E5A7 1964

Carol Lewis. (1991). *The Ethics Challenge in the Public Service: A Problem-Solving Guide*. Jossey-Bass Publishers. San Francisco, CA. 228 p.

ISBN # 1-55542-383-3

Price: \$50

Library Location: JK 468.E7L49

### **Additional Online Resources Available on the Internet**

Glossary of Philosophical Terms

<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/Glossary.html>

Internet Encyclopedia(s) of Philosophy:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html>

<http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/>

Find out about Any Philosopher's Life and Ideas

<http://www.epistemelinks.com/Main/MainVide.aspx>

Video Lectures: Theories of Ethics; Ethics Applied to Policy Areas:

<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/index.html>

Web Links to Ethics by Policy Area

<http://www.ethicsweb.ca/resources/>

Video Conferences: Examples: Morality; Abortion, Genetic Rights, End-of-Life, Basic Health Care, Capital Punishment, etc.

<http://ethics.acusd.edu/video/>

<http://ls.wustl.edu/whatsnew/videoindex.html>

Nuremberg Trials:

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/nuremberg/Alstoetter.htm>

### **Office Hours and Contact Information**

#### **Contact:**

Email: [jdrew@kent.edu](mailto:jdrew@kent.edu)

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Political Science

302 Bowman Hall

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Kent, OH 44242-0001

### **Office Hours**

- Monday: Call Anytime for Appointment
- Tuesday: 3-4
- Thursday: 3-4
- Friday: 1-4 Room 304 Moulton Hall

### **Course Outline: Weekly Topics**

Weekly Outline: Week/Topic/Required Readings

Week 1: Orientation to the Course (Web Site)

Theme(s):  
Goals for this Course  
Overview of Syllabus  
Class Discussion of Requirements and Evaluation  
Downloading Programs for Interactive Viewing  
Getting to Know Each Other  
Practice Using the Interactive Features of this Web Course  
Answering Student's Questions

### **PART I: FUNDAMENTALS**

Week 2: Mapping Out the Basics: Understanding Ethics

Themes:  
Ethics as a Sub-discipline of Philosophy  
What are Morals/Principles  
What are Ethics in contrast to Morals

Online: Morality- Definition  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/morality-definition>  
Watch: Hinman Lecture Moral Orientations: Overview  
<http://ethics.sandiego.edu/video/Hinman/Theory/index.html>

### **NOTE:**

TO READ ARTICLES ON ELECTRONIC RESERVE, CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW, UNDER THE FACULTY DROP DOWN BOX, FIND MY NAME, CLICK ON IT, THEN CLICK ON THE LINK TO THIS COURSE, YOU WILL BE ASKED FOR A PASSWORD. TYPE IN lower case: ethics25 (again, lower case and no spaces in ethics25)

Article(s) to Read on Electronic Reserves  
Solomon, Chapter 9, Normative Ethical Theories  
Kidder,

Read Online: United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/udhr.html>

Week 3: The Significance of Morality and Ethics for Public Managers

Themes:  
Beyond Corruption  
Legitimacy  
Ethical Understanding by Public Managers

Read Online: Chapter 7, Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

Elect. Reserve: Solomon, Chapter 9, Normative Ethical Theories  
Jurkiewicz and Nichols, Ethics Education in the MPA Curriculum: What Difference Does It Make  
Gortner, Chapter 2, How Public Managers View Their Environment;  
Chapter 11, Strengthening Ethical Judgment in Public Administration

## PART II: ETHICAL DECISION MAKING AND THE PUBLIC MANAGER

Week 4: The Dominant Moral Value for Public Managers: STEWARDSHIP: (Honor, Dignity of the Citizen, Justice)

Themes:  
Understanding Stewardship  
Personal Honor  
Dignity of the Citizen  
Justice

Electronic Reserves: Denhardt, Chapter 4, Unearthing the Moral Foundations of Public Administration: Honor, Benevolence and Justice;  
Morgan and Kass, Chapter 13, Legitimizing Administrative Discretion Through Constitutional Stewardship  
Lewis, Chapter 1, What is Important in Public Service?  
Online: The Belmont Report

Justice and Government  
<http://www.bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Poli/PoliHill.htm>

Nuremberg Laws of 1935  
<http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~jobrien/reference/ob14.html>

The Nazi Judges: Nuremberg Trials

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/nuremberg/Alstoetter.htm>

Jim Crow Laws

<http://www.jimcrowshistory.org/history/overview.htm>

Week 5: Stewardship: Personal Honor and Administrative Ethics

Themes:

Principle before self-interest

Integrity: Honesty; Truthfulness; Keeping Promises

Responsibility: Acknowledging actions in which one was a partner

Pursing Duty to Others as one's end

Read: Lewis, Chapter 4, To Take Individual Responsibility

Online: Aristotle and Virtue

<http://www.philosophypages.com/hy/2s.htm>

<http://pirate.shu.edu/~carterch/CMV/Aristotle/> (p. pt.)

ASPA Code of Ethics;

<http://www.aspanet.org/ethics/index.html>

Partial Reagan Administration Crook List

<http://www.geocities.com/dude7891/criminal4.htm>

The Clinton Legacy <http://prorev.com/legacy.htm> ;

Providence Rhode Island Mayor and Admin. Assistants

<http://www.abc6.com/plunderarticle.php?ID=1352>

Week 6: Stewardship: Dignity of the Citizen and Administrative Ethics

Themes:

Treating Citizens as Ends, Not Means

Watch: Hinman Lecture(s): Immanuel Kant: The Ethics of Duty; The Ethics of Respect: A Brief Assessment of Kant

<http://ethics.acusd.edu/theories/ndex.html>

SHOAH: Holocaust: <http://www.vhf.org/vhfmain-2.htm>

(please watch all six short videos: Survivors of the Holocaust, Lost Children of the Holocaust, The Last Days, Errinerin (rememberances), Broken Silence

Listen/Read Online: Tuskegee Experiments

<http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/2002/jul/tuskegee/index.html>

<http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/2002/jul/tuskegee/commentary.html>

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
<http://www.hrweb.org/legal/udhr.html>

Week 7: Stewardship: Justice and Administrative Ethics

Themes:

Defining and Understanding Justice

Electronic Reserves: Pops, Chapter 12, Improving Ethical Decision- Making Using the Concept of Justice

Sterba, Chapter 13, Social Justice.

Online: Original Position (Rawls)

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/original-position/>

Comparing Nozick and Rawls

<http://www.humanities.mq.edu.au/Ockham/y64117.html>

Models of Distributive Justice: Distributive Justice,

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-distributive/>

### PART III: THE AGENCY AND ADMINISTRATIVE ETHICS

Week 8: Internal and External Pressures to Violate Morality and Ethics

Themes:

Ideology Purity

Unjust Laws

Read: Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, Chapter 1-8

Online: Nuremberg Laws of 1935

<http://www.skalman.nu/third-reich/nurnberg->

The Nazi Judges: Nuremberg Trials

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/nuremberg/Alstoetter.htm>

Jim Crow Laws

<http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/history/overview.htm>

Week 9: Internal and External Pressures to Violate Morality and Ethics

Themes:

Loyalty to Peers: Not Principles

Following Orders: Rules and Obedience to Authority

Self-interest; Promotion

Sanctions

Read: Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, Chapters 9-15

Online: Milgram, The Perils of Obedience

<http://home.swbell.net/revscat/perilsOfObedience.htm>

Zimbardo, Transforming People into Perpetrators of Evil  
<http://www.dushkin.com/connectext/psy/ch15/zimbard.mhtml>

Week 10: Building A Personal Code of Ethics: Part A

Themes:

Constructing a Personal Code of Ethics for Use in Public Sector Decision Making

Read: Lewis, Chapter 6, Strategies and Tactics for Managerial Decision-Making

Week 11: Building a Personal Code of Ethics: Part B

Themes:

Critique of Your Peers Codes of Ethics

Refining Your Code of Ethics

Week 12: Building Ethics into the Workplace

Themes:

Refining Your Personal Code of Ethics

Assessing Current Ethical Environment

Education: Organizational Inertia

Strategies for Incorporation of Ethics

Codes of Ethics as Models

Read: Lewis, Chapter 8, Designing and Implementing Codes

Lewis, Chapter 9, Ethics and the Boss;

Lewis, Chapter 10, Building an Ethical Agency

electronic Reserves: Truelson, Chapter 10, New Strategies for Institutional Controls

#### PART IV: APPLIED ETHICS

Week 13: Women and Health: Abortion

Watch: Abortion: <http://ethics.acusd.edu/Applied/Abortion/index.html>

Week 14 Bio-ethics Class Selects Topic: Genetics OR End of Life

Re-read: The Belmont Report <http://ohsr.od.nih.gov/mpa/belmont.php3>

Watch: Forum on Issues in Genetics

<http://ls.wustl.edu/whatsnew/videoindex.html>

OR

If End of Life Issues--pick one:: Hospice OR Euthanasia

Watch: Forum on Hospice: Watch Forum on Hospice  
<http://ethics.acusd.edu/video/Hospice/index.html>

OR

Watch: Forum on Euthanasia: <http://ethics.acusd.edu/Applied/Euthanasia/index.html>

Week 15: Class Selects Topic: Death Penalty or Environmental Ethics

Watch: Forum on the Death Penalty <http://ethics.acusd.edu/Applied/DeathPenalty/index.html>

OR

Watch: Forum on Environmental Ethics  
<http://ethics.acusd.edu/Applied/Environment/index.html>