

PHIL 102: Professional and Public Service Ethics

Class Meetings: On-line in SacCT, May 29 – July 24, 2012.
Instructor: Dr. Christina Bellon, Philosophy
Office Hours: via SacCT Chat on Wednesdays 9:00am-11:00am; final office hours Tuesday July 24th, 9:00-11:00am.
Contact: via SacCT email.
Availability: Other than during scheduled office hours, communication will be answered generally within one working day. After 5pm M-F or on the weekend, do not expect a response until the next business day.

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Prepares students who are planning careers in either professional practice or public service to identify, understand, and resolve ethical problems. Includes examinations of (i) ethical theory, including rights and duties, virtue ethics, utilitarian ethics, social contract theory, and role morality; (ii) the philosophical underpinnings of professional codes of conduct, regulations, and norms of various professional and public service practices; (iii) moral reasoning and argumentation; (iv) the relation between ethical judgment and action; (v) the relation between professional practice, public service, and democratic principles. 3u, no prerequisites.

This course is required for the Fire Service Management Major, is an approved elective for Criminal Justice, and satisfies 3u of the Philosophy major applied ethics requirement.

GE AREA C3 REQUIREMENTS:

This course satisfies General Education Requirements of Area C3: Introduction to the Humanities, and Upper Division GE, in the following ways:

1. By (i) exposing students to a variety of ethical theories, and their connections to religious, cultural, and political values, and by (ii) offering students an opportunity to discuss ethical issues as they arise in their chosen professions, this course *fosters in students the development of an understanding of and an appreciation for the diversity of the human community and condition.*
2. As a course in Practical Ethics, the principal concern of which is to examine and reflect on diverse human practices and activities in order to discern the underlying ethical norms, principles and reasoning, the course material will examine the ethical implications of social and economic diversity, diversity of religious belief, and diversity of cultural and community practices. This course emphasizes the important connection between professional training and commitment to clients, community, and the public values, by reflecting on the ethical lessons that can be gleaned from analyses of real professional, policy, employment/workplace cases. In this and other ways, this course

also presents the contributions and perspectives of women, persons from various ethnic, socio-economic, and religious groups, gays and lesbians, and persons with disabilities.

COURSE CONTENT

This course is intended as an introduction to philosophical and practical ethics for students whose educational interests are motivated by current or future careers in the professions in both the private and public sectors. While the focus of the course is on ethics comprehension and competence for professionals and future public service employees, it does not focus on any one specific profession or area of public service. The starting point for the course is the assumption that all professionals, as professionals engaged in particular practices in public and private sector employment, have similar ethical needs. This assumption is reaffirmed in the near universal requirement that professional training, regardless of the field or discipline, include some ethics training. This course contributes to that training.

A/ Professional and Public Service Practices

Drawing on the norms of existing professions in both the private and public sectors, and drawing on theoretical considerations offered by Role Morality, this section will engage student to identify the norms and standards of good practice implicit in them, as well as examine the motivations for entering professional or public service. Students will explore some of the major regulatory systems applicable to the various recognized professions and to various public service agencies and functions. Students will also examine, discuss and analyze selected professional ethics codes for their role as statements of a profession's values, goals, and ideals, as well as for their role in professional self-regulation.

B/ The Moral Community

Public Service employment is directly connected to the community, in a way not typical of other professions and vocations. Nonetheless, all self-regulating professions, whether in the private or public sector, have a trust with the community to exercise their privileged positions responsibly. As such, it is imperative for public service employees and professionals to understand their responsibility to the broader community served. Central to this responsibility are the values of trust and integrity. This section of the course takes as a starting point Social Contract Theory to highlight the way in which society is a voluntary arrangement for individual and mutual benefit. This section of the course will examine the

- ethical bases of community trust and professional integrity
- proper uses of public authority
- role of professional organizations in the broader public community
- role of democratic political processes in shaping the community
- responsibilities to the community of public service and professional employees.

C/ The Philosophical Roots of Professional Ethics

In this section of the course, students examine the basic ethical theories with a focus on those features of the theories most pertinent to practical ethics. Theoretical approaches to ethics will include consideration of:

- Character and Virtue

- Rights and Duties
- Utility and Greatest Good
- Role Morality
- Social Contract Theory

D/ Moral Reasoning and Ethical Judgement

In this section of the course, students will learn what counts as moral reasons for or against some action or policy, how to distinguish moral reasons from other kinds of reasons, and how to assess moral arguments. Students will develop skills in moral reasoning, including:

- identification of common fallacies
- formulating and analyzing moral arguments
- the role of facts and values in reasoning about ethics
- assessing moral opinions
- justification of moral judgments
- role of emotion and reason in forming and assessing moral judgements
- impediments to moral reasoning (psychological and social barriers)

Students will practice their ability to construct and evaluate each others’ arguments regarding different matters of public interest and policy.

E/ Applications

Throughout the course (weekly), students will be challenged with practical exercises which raise ethical problems as they arise in the workplace, with clients, within agencies, and between professions and the community. Additionally, in this final section of the course, students will apply their moral reasoning skills and understanding of the ethical theories to resolving dilemmas and conflicts in a selection of cases taken from life situations. Cases will be relevant to the various public service professions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

ASPIRATION/OBJECTIVE	PRACTICAL GOALS	ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Develop understanding of and competence applying ethical theories and modes of practice.	1. Accurately describe and distinguish between a variety of ethical concepts, theories, positions; 2. Formulate and express own ethical judgment; 3. Engage in cogent and respectful discussion of difficult and controversial ethical issues; 4. Analyze ethical arguments for consistency and credibility (including one's own).	1. Pre and post course open-ended question/assessment. 2. Content in each of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. essays, exams, weekly quizzes b. in-class practical exercises c. on-line discussion d. in class discussion
Develop written and oral communication skills, especially as those are associated with argumentative writing and public speaking, and to develop skills in moral reasoning, argumentation,	1. Writing competently in concise, precise and logical style; 2. Expression of a point of view through the formulation of a coherent and consistent argument in response to a practical ethical	1. Quality of the form (essay structure, logic) and mechanics (syntax, grammar) of each of each in-class assignment. 2. Substance, structure, and delivery of in-class and on-line discussions

and evaluation of ethical judgments.	problem or case; 3. Presentation of an ethical argument in a coherent manner to an audience of peers.	3. Presentation of an argument in defense of an ethical position in class. 4. Preparation of case analysis.
Develop an appreciation of the diversity of the human condition, as this is reflected in ethical theories, formulated at different epochs, in diverse historical and social contexts and by a diversity of individuals.	1. Accurately describe and distinguish the central elements of each ethical tradition, against its historical and cultural context. 2. Accurately account for the diversity of plausible positions in ethical problems, dilemmas and cases, while arguing in defence of one's own considered position.	Evaluation of discussions of similarities and divergences between points of view expressed in different theories and moral judgments, in student a. essays, exams b. on-line discussion c. in-class practical exercises d. class participation
Apply these ethical concepts and theories to problems in professional and public service contexts, familiarize students with public service and professional codes, apply ethical theories and concepts toward better professional practice.	1. Develop practical skills to assess relevance of ethical concepts and theories to situations encountered in public service and in professions, especially interactions with clients & community, regulatory & governance structures, and determining private and public resource allocations; 2. Apply concepts and theories to critically assess professional codes and regulations which govern professions and public services; 3. Develop skills to resolve conflicts and problems that arise in the community, including those arising from demographic diversity, limited community resources, emergencies, changes in access to professional & public services.	Evaluation of these practical skills through: a. Case study analysis b. Problem based learning exercises

TEXT

Richard Rowson, *Working Ethics: How to Be Fair in a Culturally Complex World* (Jessica Kingsley Publ.: 2006). All chapter references in the schedule are to this textbook. Supplemental readings are available as PDFs in SacCT.

ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

Evaluation of your progress toward the satisfaction of the course learning objectives, will be conducted by several means. The following assignments comprise the whole of the requirements for this course. This course is based on a total of 100 available points. **Each assignment must be completed and submitted for grading. Failure to do so indicates a failure to complete the course and will result in a course grade of F.**

Grading Scale

A Outstanding (96pts and above)
B Range Satisfactory (75-89pts)
D Range Poor (50-59pts)

A- Very Good (90-95pts)
C Range Minimally Satisfactory (60-74pts)
F Unacceptable (below 50pts)

This is based upon a 100 pt scale with 1pt = 1%

Technology Component

Please note this course is offered entirely on-line administered through SacCT. Instructor availability will be limited to on-line office hours. See office hours for opportunities to chat with the instructor. Technical problems must be addressed to the SacLink Help Line @ 916-278-7337. **ALL lectures, office hours and assignments are administered within SacCT. All assignments must be completed in the appropriate assignment or assessment area in SacCT.**

Weekly Quizzes (30pts)

Each week, for each set of the assigned readings, you will have a multiple choice quiz. At least seven quizzes will be issued, the best six are counted for grades. Each quiz will consist of 5-10 questions. You will have 20 minutes to complete each quiz, you may take each only once, no make-ups are permitted. The quizzes will be available on-line and you will have a range of at least three days during the week in which you can take each quiz.

Weekly Ethical Problems (30pts)

Each Week students will contribute to an on-line discussion of designated ethical problems. These ethical problems will present a scenario to which students must respond, taking into account the course material thus far. Prompts will be issued by the instructor, students will have 7 days to respond to the prompt and follow up on their own and others' contributions.

Initial direct reflection on the prompts will be graded (seven opportunities, best six will be counted for grades). These reflections must be at least 50 words long (approximately one paragraph). Students are expected to read and respond to the reflections of their class-mates. On-line reflections and ensuing discussion must be conducted in the effort to better understand the course material and its practical application and to further our appreciation of the material's strengths and weaknesses. Polemics, ideological shortcuts, and other rather thoughtless and unscholarly contributions will not satisfy this requirement and should be resisted. Proper on-line etiquette is expected; violations will not be tolerated. **Each student must have read at least $\frac{3}{4}$ (three-quarters, 75%) of the total available contributions from their fellows on each prompt to qualify for a satisfactory grade of C- or better (regardless of the quality of their own response).**

Short Essay (20pts)

To afford students the opportunity to examine the course material in an extended fashion, students are required to write one substantial essay on an individually chosen topic, but which must engage the theoretical and ethical components of the course. Topic proposals will be due at least three weeks prior to the essay due date. Topic changes are not permitted except in extreme situations, by instructor discretion. Any change in topic must be approved by instructor. You are encouraged to begin thinking about this essay early on, and to peruse the

course material to facilitate the identification of a topic. Essay length is 2000 words (+/- 10%, portions in excess will not be graded) and should be based on the textual material, lecture notes, and supplemental material, with additional appropriate scholarly research.

Final Exam (20pts)

This course will have a final cumulative exam. This exam is comprised of a sequence of multiple choice and short answer questions. You will take this final exam on-line during the exam period (8th week) with a three day period over which to take it. Once you begin, you will have two hours to complete it.

Bonus Points (up to 4pts)

Bonus points can be earned by listening to the series of “visiting speakers” and writing a two page reflection on the interview. Up to 4 bonus points may be earned. All bonus reports are due by the last day of classes as indicated in SacCT.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due at the date and time specified in the assignment. Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 10% per calendar day (not merely class period) beginning with the due date. After three late days, acceptance of the assignment is at the instructor’s discretion. If you know you will not be able to meet a due date, it is your responsibility to consult with the instructor before the assignment is due. When submitting any assignment in SacCT, ALWAYS check its status to ensure it was submitted. Do not merely hit “submit” and leave. It is your responsibility to ensure your assignment was submitted accurately and timely. Do not wait for the instructor to ask you about it or for a “0” to appear in your grade column!

No extensions, no exceptions. It is your responsibility to know the due dates and to plan accordingly. Leaving an assignment until the day or two prior is risky and makes you more vulnerable than you already are to factors and events in the universe beyond your control!

Not, there is not late period for online discussion postings. These are due at the date and time indicated. Missed or late discussion submissions will not be accepted.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses which will not be tolerated in this class. Assignments in which plagiarism or other forms of cheating are found will at the least be graded at 0 (not just an F). ALL incidents of cheating and plagiarism will be reported both to the Department Chair and to the Judicial Officer in the Office of Student Affairs for possible further administrative sanction. *It is your responsibility to know and comply with the University’s Academic Honesty Policy* <http://www.csus.edu/umannual/student/UMA00150.htm>.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

If you have a documented disability (visible or invisible) and require accommodation or assistance with assignments, tests, attendance, note taking, etc., please see the instructor by the **end of the second week of semester** so that arrangements can be made. Failure to notify

and consult with the instructor by this date may impede my ability to offer you the necessary accommodation and assistance in a timely fashion. Also be sure to consult with the Services to Students with Disabilities (Lassen Hall) to see what other campus services and accommodation options are available for you.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE (8 WEEK SCHEDULE)

Week 1: Introduction: Practical Ethics, Professions and Public Service

Read: Sources of Guidance and the Basis of Ethics, Chapter 1; Seeking a Foundation for Ethics in the Professions, Chapter 2; Zimmerman, "Public Service Ethics"; Dwivedi, "Bureaucratic Morality"; Barber, "Regulation and the Professions"; Lynch, "Secularization of Public Administration."

Quiz #1, Discussion #1

Week 2: Role Morality and Ethics Codes

Read: Andre, "Role Morality as a Complex Instance of Ordinary Morality"; Frankel, "Professional Codes"; Higgs-Kleyn, "Role of Professional Codes in Regulating Conduct"; Dobson, "Why Ethics Codes Don't Work".

Quiz #2, Discussion #2

Week 3: Professional Values and Good Results

Read: Values Integral to the Role of Professions, Chapter 3; Seeking the Best Results, Chapter 4; Chandler, "Public Administrator as Representative Citizen"; Ackerly, "Is Liberalism the Only Way Toward Democracy? Confucianism and Democracy."

Quiz #3, Discussion #3

Week 4: Treating People Fairly

Read: Chapter 5; Chapter 6; Boxill, "The Morality of Preferential Hiring," Stahl, "Democracy and Public Employee Morality"; Pratto, et. al., "Who Gets What?: Determinants of Social Allocations"; O'Dwyer, "Democracy and Confucian Values".

Quiz #4, Discussion #4

Week 5: Respecting Autonomy & Integrity

Read: Respecting Autonomy, Chapter 7; Acting with Integrity, Chapter 8; Brien, "Professional Ethics and the Culture of Trust"; Flannigan, "The Fiduciary Duty;" Park, et. al., "Influence of Confucian Ethics on Whistle Blowing Intentions: A Study of South Korean Public Employees."

Quiz #5, Discussion #5

Week 6: Ethical Thinking and Dilemmas

Read: Chapter 9; Chapter 10; Burton & Dunn, "Feminist Ethics as Moral Grounding for Stakeholder Theory"; Kolm, "Moral Public Choice."

Quiz #6, Discussion #6

Week 7: Practical Problems: Moral Blame and Rights

Read: A Guide to Dealing with Blame, Chapter 11; A Guide to Thinking about Rights, Chapter 12.

Quiz #7, Discussion #7

Week 8: *Essay due 11:00pm on Tuesday, July 24th. No extensions, no late submissions.*

Final Exam:

***Opens noon on Wednesday, July 18.
Closes 11:00pm on Saturday, July 21. No extensions, no make-ups.***

FINAL