

## PHIL 102: PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SERVICE ETHICS SUMMER 2014

Class Meetings:	Online in SacCT, June 2 – July 13, 2013.
Instructor:	Dr. Christina Bellon, Philosophy
Office Hours:	via SacCT Chat on Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm; final office hours Wednesday July 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10:00-12:00pm.
Contact:	via SacCT messaging (not email, please keep all course communications within SacCT, thanks!).
Availability:	Every effort is made to communicate with you quickly, effectively, and accurately. I take this as an important element of my responsibility to you. However, after 5pm M-F or on the weekend, please do not expect a response until the next business day (though, you will likely get one far sooner). If the concern regards a due date problem or quiz problem, please check frequently for a response from me with a solution, as often the best solution is one which can be implemented quickly.
Special Note:	This faculty member is considered a 'mandated reporter' for suspected child abuse or neglect under the <i>California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act</i> and is bound by the requirements set forth in <i>CSU Executive Order 1083</i> (available here <a href="http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html">http://www.calstate.edu/eo/EO-1083.html</a> ).

### 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. 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.

During the semester, students will learn about:

A/ Professional and Public Service Practices – the norms and standards of good practice implicit in professional and public service practices, as well as examine the motivations for entering professional or public service.

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. Students will examine the

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

C/ The Philosophical Roots of Professional Ethics -- students examine the basic ethical theories with a focus on those features of the theories most pertinent to practical ethics.

D/ Moral Reasoning and Ethical Judgment – 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:

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

E/ Applications – the 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, 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.

#### 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.	1. Content in each of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. weekly quizzes</li> <li>b. weekly Sharing Practical Knowledge reports</li> <li>c. weekly peer evaluation and reflection on (b) above.</li> </ol>
Develop written and discursive communication skills, especially as those are associated with argumentative writing and critical peer assessment, and to develop skills in moral reasoning, argumentation, and evaluation of ethical judgments.	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 problem or case; 3. Presentation of an ethical argument in a coherent manner to an audience of peers.	1. Quality of the form (essay structure, logic) and mechanics (syntax, grammar) of each of each written assignment. 2. Substance, structure, and delivery of on-line discussions 3. Presentation of an argument in defense of an ethical position. 4. Preparation of response to others' sharing practical knowledge reports.
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	1. Accurately describe and distinguish the central elements of each ethical tradition, against its historical and cultural context.	Evaluation of discussions of similarities and divergences between points of view expressed in different theories and moral judgments, in student

contexts and by a diversity of individuals.	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. weekly sharing practical knowledge reports</li> <li>b. peer evaluation of others' reports</li> </ul>
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 &amp; community, regulatory &amp; governance structures, and determining private and public resource allocations;</li> <li>2. Apply concepts and theories to critically assess professional codes and regulations which govern professions and public services;</li> <li>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 &amp; public services.</li> </ul>	Evaluation of these practical skills through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sharing Practical Knowledge Reports</li> <li>b. Ethical Practice Plan</li> </ul>

## TEXT

Richard Rowson, *Working Ethics: How to Be Fair in a Culturally Complex World* (Jessica Kingsley Publ.: 2006). <http://www.jkp.com/catalogue/book/9781853027505>

Also available as e-book from Amazon. [http://www.amazon.com/Working-Ethics-Culturally-Complex-World-ebook/dp/B0033PRIPE/ref=tmm\\_kin\\_title\\_0/189-6890445-2716316](http://www.amazon.com/Working-Ethics-Culturally-Complex-World-ebook/dp/B0033PRIPE/ref=tmm_kin_title_0/189-6890445-2716316)

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 (80-89pts)

D Range Poor (60-69pts)

A- Very Good (90-95pts)

C Range Minimally Satisfactory (70-79pts)

F Unacceptable (below 60pts)

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

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## TECHNOLOGY COMPONENT

Please note this course is offered entirely online administered through SacCT. It is your responsibility to ensure you have regular and reliable access to computing facilities sufficient to the needs of this course. Technical problems must be reported to me at your earliest encounter of the problem. If the problem is more complex than instructor skills allow, you must address your problem to the SacLink Help Line @ 916-278-7337.

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## "GETTING TO KNOW YOU" BLOG POSTING

This is a fun assignment – you just have to tell us a bit about yourself, why you're here, what your hopes and dreams are, what you do for fun or relaxation – anything really, to give us all a sense of who you are and where you're coming from. We'll be doing some collaborative work in this course, and it will be so much more enjoyable if we knew a bit about who we are. That's also the biggest obstacle to building a sense of community in an online course – so go ahead, tell us about yourself!

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## ACADEMIC HONESTY ASSIGNMENT

This is the first assignment for the course and must be completed before any written assignments are submitted – typically by the end of the first week of semester. This assignment has no specific point value, but failure to complete it means I will not accept any of your required coursework. This would be a very costly omission!

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## QUIZ SERIES (50PTS)

Each learning module of the course has a set of assigned readings and lecture videos. Each learning module will assess student comprehension of the content of the readings and lecture videos through a series of quizzes, one practice quiz and one graded quiz (10pts each). Quizzes are multiple choice in structure with about 20 questions per quiz. You will have 45 minutes to complete each quiz and each will be available at least three days during the week in which it has been assigned. The practice quiz will end at least one day prior to the graded quiz being made available. ***I recommend that you pass the practice quiz with at least a C- (70%) before you attempt the graded quiz.*** You have unlimited attempts on the practice quiz. You may take a graded quiz only once, no make-ups are permitted. **Note: quizzes are due at the date and time indicated. No make-ups permitted.**

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### SHARING PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE (25PTS)

For each learning module, you will be required to complete and submit a report (5pts each) of your knowledge base and knowledge expansion after studying the assigned material. These reports will be submitted to a public forum, and other members of the class will participate in sharing their reflections on your report. The purpose s at least three fold:

- i. To provide an opportunity for you to reflect on your existing knowledge to build connections between what you already know and what you are learning in the course at each step along the way.
- ii. To provide an opportunity for each of us to learn from each other, whether we are at the same level of knowledge and experience or not, and whether we are functioning from within the same profession or discipline or not. The benefit of working with others from diverse professional, academic and cultural backgrounds is that we can learn from each other as much as we can from the course material alone.
- iii. To allow each of us the opportunity to critically assess our own and others' contributions in a way in which we can refine our ethics-related knowledge as well as our ability to communicate, deliberate publically, and come to some general insights and conclusions together. Take this as an opportunity to practice public deliberation about complex ethical problems, and thereby to develop skills of effective critical communication.

**Note, no late submission opportunity for Sharing Practical Knowledge postings. These are due at the date and time indicated. Missed or late submissions will not be accepted for this assignment, no make-ups permitted.**

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### ETHICAL PRACTICE PLAN (25PTS)

To afford students the opportunity to apply what they have been learning in this course to their current or anticipated careers in public or professional service, students will prepare a plan for fostering their own ethical practice. This Ethical Practice Plan will require you to develop a plan in which you:

- i. identify a problem which arises in your profession and explain what makes it an ethical problem (by reference to the values and principles learned)
- ii. craft a strategy for addressing it consistent with the ethical requirements learned (if it involves whistleblowing, for example, include all steps taken to ensure your actions are ethical)
- iii. identify the resources (intellectual, professional, institutional, economic) needed to address the problem in this way
- iv. account for the benefit (to self, colleagues, profession, client/public) of addressing the problem in this way

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### BONUS POINTS (UP TO 5PTS)

Bonus points can be earned by listening to the series of “visiting speakers” and writing a two page reflection on the interview. Up to 5 bonus points may be earned in this way. 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 **20% per calendar day** (not merely class period) beginning with the due date. After two 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 correctly. 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!

### 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/AcademicHonestyPolicyandProcedures.htm>.

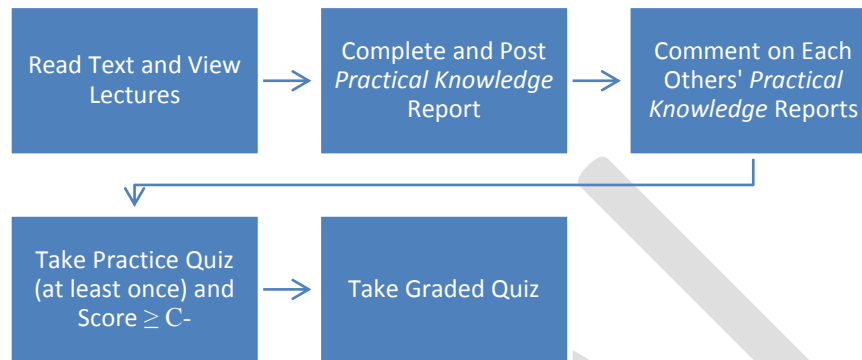
### UNIVERSAL ACCOMMODATION

This course and all material have been designed for universal access. If you have difficulty accessing any of the material, please let me know at your earliest experience of difficulty. Also, this course has been designed to facilitate accommodation for specific disability needs. If you have a documented disability (visible or invisible) and require accommodation for assignments, tests, course material, etc., please let me know the **end of the FIRST week of semester** so that arrangements can be made. Failure to notify and consult with me 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.

**Note that all video lectures are available through YouTube, which includes a captioning option. While not perfect, it is functional. Also note, for each video lecture a PDF of the powerpoint notes is included in the learning modules in SacCT.**

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE (8 WEEK SCHEDULE)

For each Learning Module, each week, you will be required to do the following in this recommended sequence:



Learning Modules can be accessed anytime during the course. Quizzes will be available sequentially, with the practice quiz open first for three days, then the graded quiz open for three days. There will be one day between them when no quiz is open. Similarly, postings for Sharing Practical Knowledge will be sequential and weekly, with a hard cut-off due date. You cannot post earlier than the week for which it has been assigned, nor can you post late to make up missed submissions. See the course calendar in SacCT for due date and time details.

### **June 2-8      Week 1: Introduction: Practical Ethics, Professions and Public Service**

Read: Rowson, Chapter 1 and 2; Zimmerman, "Public Service Ethics"; Lynch, "Secularization of Public Administration."

### **June 9-15      Week 2: Role Morality, Ethics Codes and the Public Trust**

Read: Andre, "Role Morality as a Complex Instance of Ordinary Morality"; Frankel, "Professional Codes"; Higgs-Kleyn, "Role of Professional Codes in Regulating Conduct"; Barber, "Regulation and the Professions".

### **June 16-22      Week 3: Professional Values: Seeking the Best Results**

Read: Rowson, Chapter 3 and 4; Brien, "Professional Ethics and the Culture of Trust."

### **June 23-29      Week 4: Professional Values: Treating People Fairly**

Read: Rowson, Chapter 5 and 6; Boxill, "The Morality of Preferential Hiring."

### **June 30-July 6      Week 5: Professional Values: Respecting Autonomy & Integrity**

Read: Rowson, Chapter 7 and 8.

### **July 7-13      Week 6: In Practice: Ethical Thinking and Practical Problems.**

Read: Rowson, Chapter 9, 10, 11 and 12.

***Ethical Practice Plan DUE 11:59pm on Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup>. No extensions, no lates, no make-ups.***