



Ecampus SYLLABUS

Course Name: Ethics in Public Policy

Course Number: PPOL 413

Term Offered: TBD

Credits: 4

Instructor name: TBD

Instructor email: TBD

Instructor phone: TBD

Link to instructor bio or website: TBD

Teaching Assistant name and contact info: TBD

Catalog Course Description

Examines ethical dilemmas in public policy, and provides the opportunity to study the ethical theories of Hobbes, Kant, Mill, and Rawls.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of approaches, theories, and frameworks to ethical dilemmas in public policy. The goal of this course is to develop and polish students' abilities to recognize and confront ethical dilemmas in a thoughtful manner. Students will demonstrate mastery of these skills through writing assignments, class discussion board assignments, and case studies. By the conclusion of this course, students should be able to communicate key ideas in a well-organized, concise, and persuasive manner.

Communication

Please post all course-related questions in the General Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please email your instructor for matters of a personal nature. I will reply to course-related questions and email within 24-48 hours. I will strive to return your assignments and grades for course activities to you within five days of the due date.

Course Credits

This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

Technical Assistance

If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the [OSU Computer Helpdesk](#) online.

Learning Resources

Rachels, S., & Rachels, J. (2015). *The elements of moral philosophy*. Dubuque: McGraw-Hill Education.

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information, contact:
Web: ecampus.oregonstate.edu Email: ecampus@oregonstate.edu Tel: 800-667-1465

Note to prospective students: Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll ([OSU Bookstore Website](#) or 800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

Canvas

This course will be delivered via Canvas where you will interact with your classmates and with your instructor. Within the course Canvas site, you will access the learning materials, such as the syllabus, class discussions, assignments, projects, and quizzes. To preview how an online course works, visit the [Ecampus Course Demo](#). For technical assistance, please visit [Ecampus Technical Help](#).

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this class, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the key moral and ethical issues that arise with respect to the processes, means, and ends of public policy
2. Identify, clarify, and evaluate a public policy or proposal from a moral point of view
3. Engage in ethical argumentation and democratic deliberation about public policies
4. Define different world views, adopt a reasonably viable one and justify it in a philosophically informed way that emphasizes critical reasoning and argument
5. Demonstrate a critical awareness of both the relevance of ethics to political life and the difficulties in applying moral principles to political action
6. Analyze the way in which institutional arrangements and reforms promote or inhibit moral choices, in particular some of the practical measures employed in public institutions for managing organizational integrity
7. Demonstrate knowledge of common dilemmas of decision makers in public policy who exercise discretionary authority
8. Explain the tenets of codes of ethics for various professional groups in the public sector and demonstrate knowledge of how these codes are applied
9. Evaluate the skills needed to deal with ethical problems that arise in public service, such as conflict of interest, use of office for private gain, following orders, and whistleblowing
10. Arrive at defensible conclusions of whether decision makers are applying ethics in the design of public policies and programs
11. Analyze selected public policy issues within an appropriate ethical framework and offer alternative resolutions to the problem

Evaluation of Student Performance

Your performance will be assessed through a variety of activities including discussion board posts and responses, essay assignments, reading briefs, ethical vignettes, and a final paper case study analysis. The following table shows the activities that will be used to assess your performance and the associated points for each. A brief description of each activity is provided below.

Activity	# of Occurrences	Points Per Occurrence	Total Points	% of Final Grade	Learning Outcomes
Discussion Board Posts and Responses	4	20	80	20	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
Reading Briefs	3	20	60	10	1,4
Essays	2	30	60	15	1,3,4,5
Case Study	5	20	100	15	1,2,3,4,5,6,

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Assignments					7,8,9,10,11
Ethical Vignette	1	100	100	15	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Final Paper	1	100	100	25	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11
Total	n/a	n/a	500	100	

- A. Discussion Board Assignments:** There are 4 graded discussion board assignments. The goal of this assignment is to think critically about each week's readings and to stimulate class discussion among students. Discussion board entries are due on Fridays by 5pm of each assigned week and should be at least 1 to 2 paragraphs long. Discussion board posts should answer all proposed questions, reference the class readings, and show careful thought. See the modules link in Canvas for the prompt. You are required to respond to at least two other students' posts. The responses are due by 5pm on Sunday.
- B. Reading Briefs:** There are 3 graded reading briefs. The goal of this assignment is to demonstrate comprehension of class readings and ethical frameworks. You are required to submit a 1-2 page double spaced summary of the weekly readings for the weeks assigned.
- C. Essays:** You will be required to complete two essays during the term of this course. See the directions below.

Essay 1: This is a self-reflection exercise designed to get you thinking about your ethical positions and ethical experiences prior to delving into the course content. You will be able to use this assignment to see how much your positions and ideas about ethics evolve at the end of the 10 week course. In this assignment you will write a two page, double spaced, 12pt, Times New Roman essay addressing the questions 1) "What are ethics?," and 2) "Should ethics be considered in public policy decisions?" If so, how, when, and why should ethics be applied in public policy decisions? If not, why not?

While there is no right or wrong answer, it is important for you to think critically about these questions and show that you have thoroughly considered your position in your writing. You may choose to include additional topics in your essay such as:

- *how your personal code of ethics compares to your peers
- *examples from personal experiences, such as a time when you were faced with an ethical dilemma, how you felt about it, how you ultimately addressed the dilemma, and what you learned
- *examples from personal experience when you have been faced with an ethical dilemma and based on your experience would now address the situation differently
- *what you think are the ethical obligations and responsibilities of policy makers

This assignment is worth 30 points and will be graded based on completion. Please be sure to proof read your assignment to minimize grammatical errors before submitting. Please submit this assignment in a word document or pdf via the assignments link in Canvas by 11:00pm on the due date.

Essay 2: This is an exercise designed to help you reflect on the ethical theories we have covered so far. In this assignment you will write a two page, double spaced, 12pt, Times New Roman essay describing which ethical framework you think is best for addressing ethical dilemmas and why.

You may want to include answers to the following questions in your essay:

- *What are the advantages of the framework?
- *What are the short-comings of the framework?
- *Has your definition or view of ethics changed since your first essay?

This assignment is worth 30 points and will be graded based on completion. There is no right or wrong answer. Please be sure to proof read your assignment to minimize grammatical errors before submitting. Please submit this assignment in a word document or pdf via the assignments link in Canvas by 11:00pm on the due date.

- D. Case Study Assignments:** The second part of this class covers ethical applications and involves case studies. Each case study will include a series of questions. Submit your responses to the questions in a word or pdf file in the assignments link in Canvas.
- E. Ethical Vignettes:** Ethical dilemmas are a part of every profession, hobby, and relationship. Everyone faces an ethical judgement in some facet of their life. Ethical vignettes are short written descriptions of ethical dilemmas that are often acted out as skits or analyzed in group settings as a tool to practice how to recognize ethical issues and possible responses. The goal of this assignment is to encourage thought and discussion about ethical questions relevant to relationships or interest areas in public policy. This assignment requires you to create an ethical vignette on any topic and submit a written transcript. Vignettes for this assignment must include at least three characters. In addition to the transcript, you must include a brief explanation of the ethical dilemma and explain whether your characters responded to the dilemma ethically. You may use ethical codes of conduct or tenants of specific theories to justify your explanation. Students who act out their ethical vignette and submit a video in addition to the written transcript will receive up to 10 points extra credit. More detailed instructions and an example of an "A" vignette assignment will be available in Canvas.

Each student will be assigned a classmate's ethical vignette to evaluate. Students will have one week to provide comments and constructive feedback.

- F. Final Paper- Case Study Analysis:** This assignment is designed for you to apply the knowledge of ethical theories and frameworks that you have learned in this course. You will write a case study analysis on the topic of your choosing. Your case study analysis is much like a research paper, but focuses on ethical dimensions of the research topic. You may choose a topic that we have discussed in class, or something different. You will be asked to submit your topic early in the term for instructor approval.

There should be four major sections in your case study analysis:

- *The Problem/Primary Ethical Dilemma
- *The Solutions Implemented
- *The Results
- *The Analysis of the Results and Recommendations for Achieving Better Results in A Similar Situation

Identifying the problem of your case will be the most crucial part as it will determine the focus of the rest of your paper. Once you identify the problem, you should clearly describe the stakeholders involved and the steps that were taken to address the problem. For example, the United States was at war with Japan during World War II in 1945.

- Problem: The United States was at risk of losing World War II; stakeholders- government officials, military personnel, civilians
- Solution Implemented: U.S. troops bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic bombs
- Results: 120,000 Japanese were killed, tens of thousands suffered radiation poisoning and later died, Japanese cities were devastated, and Japan surrendered

Your analysis should focus on the following questions:

- *Was the action appropriate?
- *How was the decision to take action made?
- *Was the decision ethical?
- *Were there ethical deficiencies in the decision making process? For example, did the use of an atomic bomb violate the rules of engagement?
- *What would you recommend be done differently if a similar situation occurred in the future?

There is no minimum page or word requirement for this assignment. Please use official, academic, and secondary sources in your paper.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade [Percent of points] A [95-100%] A- [90-94%] B+ [87-89%] B [83-86%]
 B- [80-82%] C+ [77-79%] C [73-76%] C- [70-72%] D+ [67-69%] D [63-66%]
 D- [60-62%] F [0-59%]

Course Content

Week	Topic	Reading Assignments	Learning Activities	Due Dates
1	Introduction	<p>Rachels: Chapter 1 “What is Morality?”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 2: “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism”</p>	<p>Introduction Post: Introduce yourself to your classmates and discuss your expectations for this class</p> <p>Essay 1</p>	<p>Introduction Post: 1st posts due Friday 11pm, second and third posts due by Sunday 11pm</p> <p>Essay 1: TBD</p>
2	Part I: Ethical Perspectives	<p>Rachels: Chapter 5 “Ethical Egoism”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 6 “The Social Contract Theory”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 7</p>	<p>Discussion Post 2</p> <p>Reading Brief 1</p>	<p>Discussion Post 2: 1st posts due Friday 11pm, second and third posts due by</p>

		<p>“The Utilitarian Approach”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 8 “The Debate Over Utilitarianism”</p>		<p>Sunday 11pm</p> <p>Reading Brief 1: due Sunday 11pm</p>
3	Ethical Perspectives	<p>Rachels: Chapter 9 “Are There Absolute Moral Rules”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 10 “Kant and Respect for Persons”</p>	<p>Discussion Post 3</p> <p>Reading Brief 2</p>	<p>Discussion Post 3: 1st posts due Friday 11pm, second and third posts due by Sunday 11pm</p> <p>Reading Brief 2: due Sunday 11pm</p>
4	Ethical Perspectives	<p>Rachels: Chapter 11 “Feminism and the Ethics of Care”</p> <p>Rachels: Chapter 12 “Virtue Ethics”</p>	<p>Discussion Post 4</p> <p>Reading Brief 3</p>	<p>Discussion Post 4: 1st posts due Friday 11pm, second and third posts due by Sunday 11pm</p> <p>Reading Brief 3: due Sunday 11pm</p>
5	Ethical Perspectives	<p>Rachels: Chapter 13 “What Would A Satisfactory Moral Theory Be Like?”</p>	Essay 2	Essay 2: TBD

		Framework Summaries Handout		
		Making An Ethical Decision Handout		
6	Part II: Ethical Applications and Case Studies Professional Ethics, Discretion and Accountability	Learning by The Case Method: http://case.hks.harvard.edu/content/1136_0.pdf ASPA Code of Ethics ASPA Practices to Promote the ASPA Code of Ethics ICMA Code of Ethics with Guidelines Graham Allison and Lance Liebman, "Ethical Problems in Public Careers: Lying," (HKS Case draft, 1980), p. 1-10	Ethical Vignette: Begin working on ethical vignette assignment Case Study Questions	Case Study Assignment : due Sunday 11pm
7	Organizational Culture, Conflicting Loyalties, and Conflicts of Interest	Kenneth Winston, "Loyalty First," (HKS case draft, 1998), p. 1-6 Mark Lilla and Mark Moore, "The Two Oaths of Richard Helms," (HKS Case draft, 1983), p. 1-8	Case Study Questions	Case Study Assignment : due Sunday 11pm
8	Whistleblowing Case: Edward Snowden	Laura Winig, "Hero or Traitor? Edward Snowden and The NSA Spying Program," (HKS Case draft, 2014), p.1-35 Laura Winig, "Hero or Traitor? Edward Snowden and The NSA Spying Program," (HKS Case sequel, 2016), p.1-2	Case Study Questions	Case Study Assignment : due Sunday 11pm Ethical Vignette: TBA
9	Distributive Justice Case: ObamaCare	Pamela Varley, "Man on A Wire: Bart Stupak Walks A Tight Line between ObamaCare and Abortion," (HKS Case draft, 2015), p. 1-23	Case Study Questions	Ethical Vignette Critique: TBA Case Study Assignment

				: due Sunday 11pm
10	Morality and Law Case: Official Disobedience	Laura Winig, "Role Responsibility, Official Disobedience, and The Supreme Court's Ruling on The Defense of Marriage Act," (HKS Case draft, 2014), p. 1-17	Case Study Questions	Case Study Assignment : due Sunday 11pm
Finals			Final Paper	Final Paper: TBA

Course Policies

Discussion Participation

Students are expected to participate in all graded discussions. While there is great flexibility in online courses, this is not a self-paced course. You will need to participate in our discussions on at least two different days each week, with your first post due no later than Friday evening, and your second and third posts due by Sunday of each week.

Late Assignments

Advanced notice is required for late assignments. There will be a 5-point penalty for each late submission. Excuses will generally not be given after the assignment is due, except under unusual circumstances.

Incompletes

Incomplete (I) grades will be granted only in emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has turned in 80% of the points possible (in other words, usually everything but the final paper). If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don't wait until the end of the term; let me know right away.

Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Unless indicated otherwise, please complete the readings and view other instructional materials for each week before participating in the discussion board.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.

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- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

Accessibility of Course Materials

All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#).

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a [vendor statement](#) certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

- a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.
- b) It includes:
 - i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
 - ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.
 - iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
 - iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.
 - v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished

material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

- c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Conduct in this Online Classroom

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the [university's regulations regarding civility](#).

Turnitin Plagiarism Prevention

Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited. Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information, visit [Academic Integrity for Students: Turnitin – What is it?](#)

Tutoring

[NetTutor](#) is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the NetTutor button in your course menu.

OSU Student Evaluation of Teaching

Course evaluation results are extremely important and are used to help me improve this course and the learning experience of future students. Results from the 19 multiple choice questions are tabulated anonymously and go directly to instructors and department heads. Student comments on the open-ended questions are compiled and confidentially forwarded to each instructor, per OSU procedures. The online Student Evaluation of Teaching form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions via ONID by the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation. You will log in to "Student Online Services" to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.