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PSCI 561.50: Ethics in Public Administration

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COURSE SYLLABUS

PROFESSOR

Professor: Dr. Adam Brewer

Office: LAW #145

Email: adam.brewer@mso.umt.edu

Office Phone: (406) 243-4155

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 9:30am-10:30am, Tuesday/Thursday 12:30pm-1:30pm, or by appointment

(The Course Calendar is at the top for your convenience. Please refer to it and Moodle frequently throughout the semester for all due dates, assignments, and class objectives)

COURSE CALENDAR

Part I: The Role of Ethics in Public Administration

Week #1: Introduction

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 1 Svara, Week 1 Lecture

Tuesday, Jan 23rd

Post on Week 1 Class Discussion by 11:59pm

Saturday, Jan 25th

Due Short Case Wk 1 11:00pm

Finish Posting on Week 1 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #2: Administrative Ethics

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 2 Svara, Week 2 Lecture

Tuesday, Jan 30th

Due Reading Outline Wk 2 11:00pm

Post on Week 2 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Feb 2nd

Due Short Case Wk 2 11:00pm

Finish Posting on Week 2 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #3: Responsibilities of Public Administrators

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 3 Svara, Week 3 Lecture

Tuesday, Feb 6th

Due Reading Outline Wk 3 11:00pm

Post on Week 3 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Feb 10th

Due Short Case Wk 3 11:00pm

Finish Posting on Week 3 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #4: Large Case #1 The Nevada Wetlands

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 1-2 O'Leary, No lecture

Tuesday, Feb 13th

Post on Week 4 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)
(Hold Large Case Group Discussion sometime this week)

Saturday, Feb 17th

Due Large Case #1 11:00pm
Finish posting on Week 4 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Part II: Ethical Behavior in Public Administration

Week #5: Ethical Behavior and the Ethics Triangle

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 4 Svara, Week 5 Lecture

Tuesday, Feb 20th

Due Reading Outline Wk 5 11:00pm
Post on Week 5 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Feb 24th

Due Short Case Wk 5 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 5 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #6: Professional Codes of Ethics

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 5 Svara, Week 6 Lecture

Tuesday, Feb 27th

Due Reading Outline Wk 6 11:00pm
Post on Week 6 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Mar 3rd

Due Short Case Wk 6 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 6 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #7: Large Case #2 Seattle EPA Regional Office

Preliminary Preparation: First Interlude-Ch. 3 O'Leary, No Lecture

Tuesday, Mar 6th

Post on Week 7 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)
(Hold Large Case Group Discussion sometime this week)

Saturday, Mar 10th

Due Large Case #2 11:00pm
Finish posting on Week 7 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #8: Challenges to Ethical Behavior

Preliminary Preparation: Ch. 6 Svara, Week 8 Lecture

Tuesday, Mar 13th

Due Reading Outline Wk 8 11:00pm
Post on Week 8 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Mar 17th

Due Short Case Wk 8 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 8 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #9: Ethical Analysis and Problem Solving

Preliminary Preparation- Ch.7 Svara, Week 9 Lecture

Tuesday, Mar 20th

Due Reading Outline Wk 9 11:00pm
Post on Week 9 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Mar 24th

Due Short Case Wk 9 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 9 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #10: Spring Break

Preliminary Preparation- None

Tuesday, Mar 27th

Nothing Due! Enjoy your break!

Saturday, Mar 31st

Nothing Due! Enjoy your break!

Week #11: Large Case #3 Hoosier Nat. Forest

Preliminary Preparation- Second Interlude-Ch. 4 O'Leary, No Lecture

Tuesday, Apr 3rd

Post on Week 11 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)
(Hold Large Case Group Discussion sometime this week)

Saturday, Apr 7th

Due Large Case #3 11:00pm
Finish posting on Week 11 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Part III. Whistleblowing and Ethical Decision Making in Organizations

Week #12: Responsible Whistleblowing

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 8 Svara, Week 12 Lecture

Tuesday, Apr 10th

Due Reading Outline Wk 12 11:00pm
Post on Week 12 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Apr 14th

Due Short Case Wk 12 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 12 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #13: Elevating Ethical Behavior in the Org.

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 9 Svara, Week 13 Lecture

Tuesday, Apr 17th

Due Reading Outline Wk 13 11:00pm
Post on Week 13 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, Apr 21st

Due Short Case Wk 13 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 13 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #14: Large Case #4 The World's Largest Security Breach

Preliminary Preparation- Third Interlude- Ch. 5 O'Leary, No Lecture

Tuesday, Apr 24th

Post on Week 14 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)
(Hold Large Case Group Discussion sometime this week)

Saturday, Apr 28th

Due Large Case #4 11:00pm
Finish posting on Week 14 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #15: External Measures to Promote Ethics

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 10 Svava, Week 15 Lecture

Tuesday, May 1st

Due Reading Outline Wk 15 11:00pm
Post on Week 15 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, May 5th

Due Short Case Wk 15 11:00pm
Finish Posting on Week 15 Class Discussion 11:00pm

Week #16: Conclusion

Preliminary Preparation- Ch. 11 Svava (it is very brief), Ch. 6 O'Leary, No Lecture

Tuesday, May 8th

Due Reading Outline Wk 15 11:00pm
Post on Week 15 Class Discussion by 11:00pm

(You should be posting during the week)

Saturday, May 12th

Due Final Project: Code of Ethics 11:00pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES, AND EXPECTATIONS

DESCRIPTION

As a public servant, you will face difficult ethical choices that may have to do with: relationships between elected officials and appointed officials; relationships to citizens and community groups; matters of conscience; matters of regulation; and the ethical ramifications of public policy recommendations. Understanding the moral implications of your actions and resolving the dilemmas they pose are among the more difficult problems that you will face working in the public sector.

In this class, we will examine a variety of ethical issues faced by those who work in public service. Some involve concerns that might arise in any organization - cases of lying, cheating, or stealing, or questions about what to do when you feel compelled to refuse an order from your boss. Others are more directly connected to the special values that underlie public service, involving the relationship between political leaders, career civil servants, and workers in non-profit agencies, or between competing demands for efficiency and responsiveness. In all cases, the issues will be bound to the moral context of public service.

OBJECTIVE

- To enhance understanding of the moral foundations of public service;
- To examine the relationship between democratic values and the practice of public administration, including issues of accountability and responsiveness;
- To develop an awareness of specific ethical issues and problems within non-profit agencies and the field of public administration;
- To build the capacity for ethical decision-making;
- To understand the values at play in the relationship between administrators and citizens;
- To develop a practical understanding of the constraints on and expectations of public servants;
- To develop skills in managing ethics within public organizations;
- To learn to apply ethical reasoning to the consideration of public policy issues.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT LEARNING IN THIS COURSE AND UM'S MPA PROGRAM:

- Apply theory to practice (knowledge to inform your current or future career)

- Demonstrate graduate level writing, public speaking, critical thinking, research, and analytical skills
- Understand the major concepts or schools of thought driving organization theory
- Understand differences between public and private organizations
- Understand the meaning behind agency mission statements

USING MOODLE:

Since this is an online course, each student is required to check our course site once per day and participate in discussions often. Keep in mind that our online course site is organized by week – for example, each week contains links to a brief lectures, discussions, assignment dropboxes, and any other course materials.

COURSE READINGS

1. Svara. 2015. *The Ethics Primer for Public Administrators in Government and Nonprofit Organizations*
2. O'Leary. 2017. *The Ethics of Dissent: Managing Guerilla Government* by O'Leary
3. Some readings may be supplied as links or files on Moodle

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

ASSIGNMENTS

Preliminary Preparation:

Course Readings: I have provided you with course reading material that I believe will enhance your understanding of ethics and provide you with *real* experience coping with challenging ethical dilemmas in public administration. Honestly, the amount of reading I will assign you is not extensive and as such I expect you to complete ALL of the reading each week. It will be impossible to adequately complete the assignments without completing the reading and it will be easy to tell who has completed the reading and who has not given the nature of the assignments. You will complete the readings before Tuesday night with enough time to submit your Reading Outlines and make your first discussion post. I suggest starting early to give yourself enough time.

Weekly Lectures: I will provide brief weekly lectures that will provide additional insight into some of the issues and content introduced in your readings. I will do my best to make these presentations informational and engaging. You should watch these lectures after you complete the reading but before you begin your Class Discussion post. I expect you to incorporate insights from the lectures into your Reading Outlines, Class Discussion posts, and Short Case write-ups. On Moodle, it will require to watch the Lecture before you can post on the discussion board for that week.

10 Reading Outlines: (10 points each) These almost weekly assignments are intended to encourage reflective reading and informed discussion. These 1-2 page (double-spaced) outlines demonstrate your command of the weekly readings and to engender classroom discussion. In other words, the goal of these outlines is not only to summarize what you have read, but rather to analyze ideas you found compelling in the reading. These assignments are also applicable to public service – we are often asked to read a large amount of information and convey it concisely to a larger audience in 1-2 pages. Thus, these assignments are intended to help you in your current or future public service careers. I have provided an example on Moodle for you to see what a good outline looks like.

15 Class Discussions: (15 points each) Students are expected to follow the weekly reading schedule (listed above). These readings should be used for weekly discussions and assignments. In order that we maximize mutual learning experience, you must complete the assigned readings according to the weekly schedule. Online learning generally provides considerable freedom, allowing students to often choose when and where they will participate in class activities. But at the same time, students have the same kinds of deadlines and structured responsibilities of a face-to-face class. In other words, flexibility must be balanced by responsibility. Although online learning is flexible, the expectation is that each student spends 3 hours per week in our discussions. Why 3 hours? This is the amount of time we would spend discussing materials in an in-person seminar. The goal is that you would spread these 3 hours across the week and as one former MPA

student succinctly stated, “I love online discussions because I can participate for a ½ hour each evening after work while eating dinner.”

Details for Discussion Leader: For Week 1, I will serve as the discussion leader. For each week of the semester, one student will be assigned to be the discussion leader– please sign up for your week using the google doc provided on Moodle. Each student will serve as the discussion leader once. As the discussion leader, you “add a new topic” and pose your question to the class based upon the readings by 11p.m. on **Monday** night. This means that for the week you are discussion leader, you will need to begin the reading material for that week earlier than normal. It is the student’s responsibility to post on time and failure to post your question(s) by 11p.m. on Monday will result in zero points and forfeit your obligation to serve as a discussion leader for the semester. Please plan accordingly. Additionally, as the discussion leader, you will be expected to take a much more active role in facilitating the discussion among your classmates.

Details for Discussion Respondent: If you are not the assigned discussion leader (which is most of the time), you are the respondent and must respond to the question(s) posed by the discussion leader by Tuesday night 11p.m with an initial discussion post. This means that you must be completed with the reading materials and your Reading Outline before this deadline. After Tuesday and until Saturday night, students are expected to make multiple substantive posts to their classmates and carry on a discussion with them. While the class discussion board hours are open 24 hours, I require that students send comments early to provide ample time for the exchange of ideas. Thus, if you wait until 10p.m. to finally post/discuss on Friday or Saturday, your grade will reflect this. It should be noted that I do not have a set number of discussion posts that you must write in order to successfully complete this assignment. Such strident measures often stifle discussion. At the end of each week, I will look at your participation on the discussion board holistically. Your initial post on Tuesday and **multiple** reply posts that you make subsequently during the week should be thoughtful and substantive. This is not to say that you can’t make posts that are less substantive but only that I should be able to see that you were an active participant throughout the week. Importantly, if someone comments on a post you previously made, you should respond as quickly as possible. One of the biggest issues I have seen on discussion boards in the past are students not replying back to comments made to them. This is not how a discussion would work in the “real” world and it should not be how a discussion works in the “digital” world. A lack of participation will result in a loss of points for that week. For more detail on what I am looking for, see the discussion board rubric document posted in Week 1 on Moodle.

10 Short Case Write-ups: (20 points each) These shorter assignments will be your opportunity to apply your understanding of course material to a real life case study. It is one thing to learn theory, it is another to take that theory and apply it to the real world. From Tuesdays- Saturdays, you will take what you have learned and apply it to a case that I will give you. Ideally, the skills you learn in completing this assignment will enable you to similarly deal with ethical dilemmas that you will certainly face as a public administrator. These assignments will always be due Saturday nights at 11pm. I have provided an example on Moodle of what a good Short Case write-up might look like. Normally, these should be about 2 pages long.

4 Large Case Discussions: (10 points each) This semester, you will have the opportunity to meet synchronously (live) four times with a team of your classmates. This assignment is a wonderful opportunity for you to get to know your classmates, collaborate with them, explain to them your approach to ethics, and see how their approach differs from yours. If there is one thing that makes working in the public sector distinct, it is that you work with many different people from diverse backgrounds that will likely see matters much differently than you. As such, the reason I require such meetings is for you to collaborate with others and have them give you feedback on your work. For four weeks during the semester (see the course calendar) you will be given a large ethics case (from the O’Leary test) to study and write about. You will bring your ideas and draft work to meet (over the internet) with your classmates.

4 Large Case Write-ups: (50 points each) As noted above, there will be four weeks during the semester where you will not be expected to watch a new lecture or complete a Short Case write-up. Instead, you will be reading about a real ethical dilemma case faced by public administrators in the past and then complete a Large Case write-up analyzing this case, discussing how you would address it, and applying approaches. These will be more comprehensive than your Short Case write-ups and will require a greater level of analysis and depth of critical thinking. You will take what we have study previously for the past couple of weeks and apply it to these cases. Normally, your write-ups will be about 4-5 pages and will be due Saturday nights. I will provide further details the closer we get to your first Large Case write-up (Week 4).

Final Project: Code of Ethics: (100 points) Your final project will be to review a Code of Ethics from a government agency of your choosing. This assignment has two parts. First, you must evaluate the Code of Ethics you choose and make suggestions for improvements and/or things you would revise or replace in the current Code of Ethics based on the frameworks and understanding of ethical dilemmas that we will establish this semester. Second, it is common that a Code of Ethics will not include any consequences for failing to meet the Ethics Code. You will assign consequences for violations of the Ethics Code that you are reviewing for this assignment. You must include the original Code of Ethics and details about the government agency you have selected. Near the end of the semester, I will provide more complete directions for this project.

GRADES AND WEIGHTS

A	93%-100%	10 Reading Outlines	100 points	11%
A-	90%-92%	15 Weekly Class Discussions	225 points	25%
B+	87%-89%	<i>Discussion Leader</i>	35 points	4%
B	83%-86%	10 Short Case Write-ups	200 points	22%
B-	80%-82%	4 Large Case Discussions	40 points	5%
C+	77%-79%	4 Large Case Write-ups	200 points	22%
C	73%-76%	Final Project: Code of Ethics	100 points	11%
C-	70%-72%			
D+	67%-69%	Total	900 points	100%
D	63%-66%			
D-	60%-62%			
F	59%-below			

CLASS POLICIES

NOTE ON THE LEARNING MODEL FOR THIS COURSE

Following these process steps, the class will appear as such:

Preliminary Preparation- I will provide you with readings/other prep materials and assignments that give you a base knowledge for our lectures, discussions and class activities each day. Ideally, these materials will enable you to carry on an informed conversation.

Teach Each Other- In this course, you will have the opportunity to discuss your learning with classmates on a regular basis. I will give you opportunities to critically think about the course material and discuss it with a group of students who will act as your team for the semester. Additionally, we will have full class discussions where we will explore a variety of topics.

Postliminary Reflection- Upon learning about a topic, you will be given the opportunity to reflect upon your learning by completing several reflection case activities. These activities will assess your learning and allow you to demonstrate to me your newfound understanding.

NOTE ON GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

All written assignments should meet the following criteria unless otherwise noted in the assignment instructions or the professor:

1. All work must be typed, double-spaced, utilize 12 point font, and have one inch margins.
2. Citations should follow a proper style guidelines such as, but not limited to, MLA, Chicago, or APA (in-text citations and a reference page are necessary).
3. Assignments are due on the date/time listed in the course schedule; late assignments will not be accepted.
4. All assignments must be turned in electronically via Microsoft Word. If the instructor cannot open the document, the student will not receive a grade. Submission of assignments via e-mail will not be accepted unless specific arrangements have been made.
5. Written work will be evaluated both in terms of content, following instructions, organization, and writing/grammar.
6. Student collusion is not allowed for individual assignments and will be treated as an act of plagiarism.

NOTE ON TECHNOLOGY

No “technology problem” excuses will be accepted in this class. That is, you cannot blame your failure to complete an assignment on time on “computer/internet/Moodle issues” (unless it was one that affected the whole class, in which case we will address the issue on a class-wide basis). This means that you must not wait until the last minute to complete your work such that if you do have computer issues, you have time to find a solution. Three hints: try a different web browser, try a different computer, try a different Internet connection. The exception is you get one “retry” if your computer kicks you off while you submitting a document. I highly suggest that you save your work in multiple places. It is so imperative that you make this a habit now that you are in graduate school. Many of you already have Microsoft OneDrive on your computers (a cloud service to save your work). If you do not have it, I would suggest downloading the program Dropbox from www.dropbox.com (another cloud service) to back up your work. Among others, it is easy and free. If you happen to lose all your work because you made the choice to not back it up, you will have to start over and begin again. Furthermore, you cannot use the excuse that an assignment didn’t show up on your Moodle calendar. It is your responsibility to utilize the course calendar in this syllabus for all due dates.

NOTE ON LATE WORK

Do not ask to submit an assignment late because the answer is already “No”. Never just plan on writing a paper or completing a quiz at the last moment. By doing so, you are taking a foolish, calculated risk of getting a zero.

NOTE ON DEBATE ETHICS

Some of the issues we discuss in this class are controversial with multiple divisive points of view. Although you may already have an established opinion on a particular topic, you are encouraged to consider other points of view and the strengths/weaknesses of your own. You may be surprised how much you learn by adopting this tactic in your analyses. Additionally, as we discuss controversial topics, you are expected to respect the points of view of your fellow students. Respect is shown in the manner you address other students and the words you use to carry your point across. In an increasingly uncivil political environment in the U.S., civility will be maintained in class so as to elevate the educational experience of all present.

NOTE ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students must follow the University’s policies for academic dishonesty. For detailed information, [please view](#). As such, all work submitted must be your own; no duplicate work (work completed for another class) will not be accepted. Acts of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero (0) for the assignment. Moreover, acts of plagiarism will also be reported to the Academic Court. To avoid acts of plagiarism, cite each reference or source you use and give proper credit for the ideas, opinions, and findings of others. When you are using the exact words of others, you must use quotation marks and include the page number where you found the quote in your citation.

NOTE ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

UM prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. Prohibited sex discrimination includes incidents of sexual harassment (including sexual violence), dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking (collectively “sexual misconduct”). As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. University policy requires that I report all incidents of sexual misconduct that come to my attention. If you encounter sexual misconduct, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at (406)243-5710. Additional information about sexual misconduct and available resources can be found at <http://www.umt.edu/eo/titleix/>.

NOTE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY RELATED NEEDS

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors. The link for this is information: [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.