Prerequisite: Completion of at least six graduate courses in the GMU MPA program—or consent of the instructor—is required for enrollment. The six MPA classes typically include PUAD 502, 511, 520 and 540.

Purpose: PUAD 700 serves as a capstone course for the MPA program. In this course, we will use a variety of ethical lenses, including public service values, to examine politics, policy, and management in the American context. Thus, we will build on and extend the breadth and depth of material you covered in your required and elective courses in the MPA program. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to examine politics, policy, and administration—the core knowledge areas in the GMU MPA program—in new ways.

Course Organization and Pedagogy: We will try to follow the calendar outlined in the syllabus as closely as possible, but, like any administrative plan, adjustments may be required by unanticipated events or circumstances. Required readings and recommended readings are listed on the syllabus for each class session, and weekly “problem sets” are provided on Blackboard. I will provide an introduction to, or offer concluding thoughts on, each topic. The majority of class time during each class session will be used to discuss the topics and required readings listed on the syllabus.

Class Participation and Class Ethic: Participation in the discussion of required readings is an important part of your contribution to the class, and it is a key component of your class discussion grade. If you are not in class, you cannot contribute. Being on time to class, listening carefully to what your classmates have to say, and responding to your classmates in a courteous and professional manner are also part of the class discussion grade. Finally, I respectfully request that you do not use electronic devices during class, unless you are doing so exclusively for class purposes such as accessing an electronic version of a required text. We will have two short breaks during each class session so you can check and respond to texts, emails, and voice mail.

Attendance Policy: If you miss more than one class session during the semester due to illness, work assignments, family circumstances, etc., you can avoid losing class discussion points by submitting a four to five page summary of the required readings for the class session you missed. A maximum of two summaries can be submitted. Summaries are due on the day of the
class period during which you are absent. A delay in submission may be requested in the case of an illness or other unanticipated problem. Reasons for the absence must be provided in writing.

**Course Requirements and Grades:** The work for this class consists of reading the required articles and texts for each week, being prepared to discuss those readings in class, and, for most members of the class, writing two papers and making presentations on those papers. Some of you may decide you want to write an independent research paper, and I encourage you to consider doing so. (Please see options #2 and #3 in the table below.) In order to pursue an independent paper under option #2 or #3 listed below, you must submit a research paper proposal by the due dates listed, and you must have my written approval to proceed.

Class members will make a 10–15 minute presentation on Paper 1 and a 15–20 minute Power Point presentation on Paper 2. Additional information about paper requirements and presentation requirements is provided in documents posted on Blackboard.

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<tr>
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<th>Paper 1</th>
<th>Paper 2</th>
<th>Class Discussion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option #1</strong></td>
<td>30%: 7-12 page paper for any week <strong>class #3 thru Class #7</strong>.</td>
<td>45%: 12-20 page paper for any week class <strong>#8 thru #13</strong>.</td>
<td>25%: Class Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option #2</strong></td>
<td>30%: 7-12 page paper for any week <strong>between Class #3 and class #7</strong>.</td>
<td>45%: 12-20 page research paper. Proposal due class <strong>6</strong>. Approval is required before writing.</td>
<td>25%: Class Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Option #3</strong></td>
<td>20%: Research Paper Proposal is due by class #4. Approval is required before writing.</td>
<td>55%: 20-25 page research paper due class #14.</td>
<td>25%: Class Discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Grading Scale:** A+ = 100-98; A= 97-92; A-=91-90; B+=89-88; B=87-82; B-=81-80; C+=79-78; C=77-72; C-=71-70; F=< 70.

**Due Date for Papers:** Papers are due at the beginning of the class session for which they are written. For example, a paper written on the topics listed under class #5 on the syllabus is due at the beginning of class #5. All written assignments must be submitted to me in paper form and electronically into the Blackboard system. *Once a paper is submitted, it cannot be withdrawn.*

**Late Papers:** A one-grade penalty will be applied for a paper that is one to three days late; a two-grade penalty will be applied for four to seven days.

**Incompletes:** Requests for incompletes will only be granted in accordance with university policy. A request for an incomplete must be submitted in writing at the earliest possible date.
Class Outcomes: The outcomes of the class should include enhanced knowledge of public service values, ethical values and ethical values frameworks that you can use in your personal life, professional life, and use to examine politics, policymaking, and administration in the American governmental system. Along with these knowledge outcomes, your writing skills, analytic skills, group skills and presentation skills should be stronger at the end of the course than they were at the beginning. Finally, your network among MPA students should be larger than it was when you entered the class.

Honor Code: George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. See honorcode.gmu for more detailed information. The core presumption of the Code is that all written work is your own work. Proper citation of material taken from other published work is required.

Disability: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Enrollment Status: All students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. In order to withdraw from this class after the date specified in the Schedule of Classes, you will need the approval of the dean, and such approval is only given for nonacademic reasons.

Required Readings:
Reader I is available in Blackboard under “Course Content.”
The following books are available for purchase at the GMU Arlington Book Store
2. Bok, Sissela, Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life
3. Bok, Sissela, Common Values
4. Bruce, Willa, Classics of Administrative Ethics*
5. Conant and Balint, The Life Cycles of the Council on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency*
6. Goodwin, Doris Kearns, Team of Rivals**
7. Lakoff, George, don’t think of an elephant
9. Sophocles, The Three Theban Plays

* Available on 2-hour reserve at the GMU Arlington Campus Library.
**Available on 2-hour reserve at the GMU Arlington Campus Library in Founders (Van Metre) Hall and in both print and audio form at some of the Fairfax County Public Libraries.

Recommended Books: Strunk and White, Elements of Style
Ron Chernow, Grant
Course Overview: The study of ethics deals with the fundamental issues of right and wrong, good and bad, and moral duty or obligation. In this course, we will examine the ethical values of individuals, groups (including professionals), organizations, and societies. We will begin the semester with an “ethical values inventory.” Specifically, you will be asked to think through and define your own core ethical values, the sources of those values, situations in which two or more of those values might (or have) come into conflict, and how you would decide (or did decide) which of those values is the most important.

Additionally, we will briefly examine the ancient roots of the study of ethics in Western civilization, including philosophical and religious texts. In both sources, we can find very clear statements about what constitutes ethical behavior for individuals and groups, as well as statements about what constitutes “justice” in society. We will look at the extent to which these ancient works and religious “commandments” are still followed by individuals and groups, as well as the extent to which they serve as useful guideposts for contemporary American society.

Our study of ethics will also include an examination the ways in which ethical values were central to the development of Western political theory. Then we will examine the ways in which western political theory served as a basis for the founding of the American Republic. In addition, we will look carefully at the ethical values contained in the founding documents of the American Republic, including competing conceptions of justice. We will also look the ways in which those competing conceptions of justice reflected fundamental cleavages in American society that ultimately led to the Civil War.

A number of “classics” in the relatively new literature focused on administrative ethics will also be included in the materials covered in this course. Specifically, we will examine some of the ethical dilemmas or challenges that senior level public administrators face, and we will look at frameworks that might serve as useful tools for resolving the types of dilemmas these managers may have to confront.

The social, economic, and political context in which public administrators work will also be included in our study. For example, the ethical values that elected officials espouse, the way in which they behave, and the decisions they make set the value structure for our governmental system and establish priorities and constraints for public administrators. Likewise, the values, decisions, and behavior of private sector executives and organizations, the media, and nonprofit executives and organizations, shape the broader societal context in which public administrators work.

In addition to the developing knowledge of the topics mentioned above, enhancement of your analytic skills, writing skills, verbal skills, group skills, and presentation skills is a key objective of this course. Employers of our graduates often identify these skills as key workplace skills. Since most of you are taking this class near the end of your MPA program, our objective is provide ample opportunities for you to demonstrate the strengths you have developed in each of these skill areas.
“the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak suffer what they must.”
Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue,” The History of the Peloponnesian War, 401 B.C.

“Religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, school and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.”
Northwest Ordinance; July 13, 1787, Sec. 14, Art. 3

I. REVIEW AND COURSE OVERVIEW

1. The Study of Public Administration in the American Context
(August 29)

Required Reading:
Course Syllabus (Blackboard)
Conant and Critchfield, Executive Branch Independent Establishments and Government Corporations, (Reader I, p. 2)
Conant, Table 20: Key Skills Needed by Managers at Each Level, (Reader, p. 3)
Reader I, “Definitions for PUAD 700,” Ethics, Ethical, and Moral, ”p. (4) (Blackboard)
Reader I, Definitions of Academic Activities (p. 5)
Reader I, Definitions of Key Terms: Model, Theory, Dogma, and Ideology (p. 6)
Conant and Balint, The Life Cycles of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Council on Environmental Quality, Chapt. 1, Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
Instructions and Rubrics for Writing Assignments (Blackboard)

Recommended Reading:
Daniel Elazar, “Characteristics of the Three Political Cultures,” Reader I (p. 7)
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, (Reader I, pp. 8 – 11.)

II. FOUNDATIONS: POLITICAL SYSTEMS, LAW, MORAL DUTY, AND JUSTICE

2. The Ancient Greeks, Western Religious Traditions, and Political Philosophy
(September 5)

Required Reading:
Conant (Summary), “Legacies of the Greek Philosophers,” original source is Sabine and Thorson, (Reader, pp. 12 - 13)
“Greece and the Theater,” in Fagles ed., Sophocles, The Three Theban Plays
“Map of Ancient Greece,” (Reader, p. 14)
Sophocles, Antigone, in Fagles ed., Sophocles, Three Theban Plays

**Recommended Reading:**
- Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito*
- Sissela Bok, *Common Values*
- Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*
- Machiavelli, *Discourses*
- Gortner, *Ethics for Public Managers*, Chapter 1

3. **Ethical Values in Private Life, Professional Life, Public Life, and Across Societies**  
(September 12)

**Required Reading:**
- Sissela Bok, *Common Values*, Chapter 1.

**Recommended Reading:**
- James Q. Wilson, *The Moral Sense*
- Daniel Elazar, “Characteristics of the Three Political Cultures,” Reader I (p. 7)
- Harold Gortner, *Ethics for Public Managers*

III. **AMERICA’S FOUNDING, FOUNDING DOCUMENTS, AND POLARIZED POLITICS**  
(The American Revolution, Liberty, Equality, Property Rights, Slavery, Political Parties, The American Civil War, Reconstruction, and Competing Conceptions of Justice)

4. **The American Revolution, the Northwest Ordinances, the Civil War and Reconstruction**  
(September 19) Paper writers--Select **one** of the following three options:

**Option #1:** Ethical Values: The Revolutionary War, Northwest Ordinances, and the U.S. Constitution

**Required Reading:**
- The Northwest Ordinances of 1787, July 13, 1787, Reader I, pp. 17-19
Option #2: Ethical Values: The Civil War

Required Reading:
“Supreme Court Decisions That Have Shaped America’s Constitutional History,” in Beeman ed., see especially Dred Scot v. Sanford 1857
Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address, (Reader, p. 20)
Doris Kearns Goodwin, Team of Rivals (especially Part I)
“Amendments to the Constitution,” in Beeman, ed., see especially amendment 13.

Option #3: Ethical Values: Reconstruction

Required Reading:
Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address, (Reader, p. 20)
“Amendments to the Constitution,” in Beeman, ed., see amendments 14, 15.

Recommended Reading: (may be used, as appropriate, for Options 1, 2, or 3 above)
The Articles of Confederation, The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossiter
The Northwest Ordinances of 1787, (Reader, pp. 17 - 19)
“Selections From the Federalist Papers, in Beeman ed.
The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossiter, esp. 1, 15, 18, 21, 23, 38, 39, 45, 51
The Anti-Federalist Papers and the Constitutional Convention Debates, ed. Ketcham
David McCullough, Pioneers
Lincoln (Spielberg- Movie)
Shelby Foote, The Civil War: A Narrative, Volume I, From Sumter to Perryville
Ken Burns, The Civil War, PBS video
Bruce Catton, The Coming Fury
James M. McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom: Volume I

5. Democracy, American Political Culture, and the Ongoing Struggle over Political Equality (Citizenship, Voting Rights and Legal Protections)
(September 26)

Required Reading:
Dahl, Polyarchy, Chapter 1: Democratization and Public Opinion, (Blackboard, e-Reserve)
Elazar, “American Federalism: A View From the States, Chapter 4 (Blackboard, e-Reserve)
U.S. Constitution, Article 1 Section 4. And amendments 13, 14, 15, 19, 24, 26, Federalist Papers, Rossiter, ed.

Recommended Reading:
Amendments to the Constitution, in Beeman, ed.
Mitch Landrieu, In the Shadow of Statutes: A White Southerner Confronts History, 2018
Shelby County v. Holder, 2013
Madison, Federalist Papers #10 & 51, Rossiter ed.
Dahl, Polyarchy (entire)
Moyers, “Barbara Tuchman, Historian,” A World of Ideas
The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossiter
Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory
Moyers, Interviews with Robert Bellah & Henry S. Commager, A World of Ideas

IV. DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES, SENIOR MANAGERS, POLITICAL APPOINTEES AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

6. Ethics and Ethics Codes
(October 3)

Required Readings:
(Reader, p. 28)
U.S. Office of Government Ethics, Organizational Chart and Mission and Responsibilities Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 C.F.R. Part 2635 As Amended at 76 FR 38547 (July 1, 2011)

**If you are writing about your own state government, local government, nonprofit or private organization’s ethics code, use that government or organization’s code, rather than the U.S. Government’s, as the focal point for your paper.

Recommended Reading:
American Society for Public Administration: Code of Ethics
Bowman,” Whistle Blowing in The Public Service,” Classics., Bruce, ed.

Richard Leiby, “John Sopko is fighting corruption in Afghanistan, and making noise while he is at it,” Washington Post, May 26, 2014


U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, Blowing the Whistle: Barriers to Federal Employees Making Disclosures, Nov. 2011


Rufus Miles, “Miles Law,” Public Administration Review

Mosher, Democracy and the Public Service

Roberta Ann Johnson, Whistleblowing: When it Works- and Why

C. Fred Alford, Whistleblowers: Broken Lives and Organizational Power


7. Senior Managers, Political Appointees and Competing Obligations
   (Oct. 10)

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:

Harold Gortner, Ethics for Public Managers

Elliot Richardson, Reflections of a Radical Moderate


Frederickson and Hart, “The Public Service and the Patriotism of Benevolence,” Classics..., Bruce, ed.

8. Senior Managers, Political Appointees and Systemic Corruption
   (Oct. 17)

Required Reading:


Definitions of Key Terms (Lie, Deceive, Fraud, Predator, and Predatory), assembled by James K. Conant, (Reader)

Recommended Reading:
Wilburn, “Types and Levels of Public Morality,” Classics of Administrative Ethics, Bruce, ed.
Bailey, “Ethics and the Public Service,” in Classics....Bruce, ed.
William K. Black, The Best Way to Rob a Bank is to Own One: How Corporate Executives and Politicians Looted the S & L Industry
Wachs, “Ethical Dilemmas in Forecasting Public Policy,” in Classics, Bruce ed.

Readings on the collapse of the banking system and the 2008-2009 Recession:
“Breaking the Bank,” PBS Frontline Video
“Inside the Meltdown,” PBS Frontline Video
The Madoff Affair, PBS Frontline Video
Steven Pearlstein:
John Cassidy, How Markets Fail: The Logic of Economic Calamities
Satajit Das, Extreme Money: Masters of the Universe and the Cult of Risk
Simon Johnson, 13 Bankers
Paul Krugman, The Return of Depression Economics and the Crisis of 2008
Yves Smith, ECONned: How Unenlightened Self Interest Undermined Democracy and Corrupted Capitalism

9. Elected Officials: Presidential Lies and the Consequences of Those Lies
(Oct. 24)

Required Reading:
Bok, Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life, Chapters 8 – 14 and 16.

Recommended Reading:
New York Times Compilations of Lies by President Trump
Washington Post Compilation of Lies by President Trump
Pfiffner, “Did President Bush Mislead the Country in His Arguments for War with Iraq?” Presidential Studies Quarterly, (March) 2004
The Pentagon Papers
Machiavelli, *The Prince*
Neustadt, *Presidential Power*
James David Barber, *Presidential Character*

V. POLARIZED POLITICS

10. Language, Ethical Values, Political Parties, and Public Opinion  
(October 31)

**Required Reading:**
Lakoff, *don’t think of an elephant: know your values and frame the debate*

**Recommended Reading:**
Conant, Introduction and Chapter 1, *Wisconsin Politics and Government*
Bok, *Common Values*
Kohut and Stokes, *America Against the World*
Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*
Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action*
   Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*

11. The Laziness Dogma: Inequality, Tax Policy, and Tax Expenditure Policy  
(November 7)

**Required Reading:**
[https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income-inequality/data/data-tables.html](https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income-inequality/data/data-tables.html)
12. Expenditure Policy: Inequality, Medicaid, and Medicare  
(Nov. 14)  
(Paper writers: Focus on either Medicare or Medicaid)

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading:

Mann and Ornstein, *It’s Even Worse Than It Looks: How The American Constitutional System Collides with the New Politics of Extremism*

Steven Pearlstein, “The Politics of Polarization: A Modern Tragedy of the Commons”

Garrett Hardin, “Tragedy of the Commons”


13. The Fate of Public Laws Designed to Protect Human Health and the Environment— and the Fate of the Executive Branch Agencies Created to Implement Those Laws  
(Nov. 28)  

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Tom Pelton, *The Chesapeake in focus: transforming the natural world* (2018)

(December 5)

a. Research Paper Presentations
b. Case Studies of Individual Executive Branch Organizations,
c. Democracy at Risk

Mann and Ornstein, _It’s Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided with the New Politics of Extremism_ (2012)
Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, _How Democracies Die_ (2018).
Robert Dahl, _Polyarchy_ (1971)