Prerequisite for this Course: The prerequisite for PUAD 700 is completion of at least six graduate courses in the GMU MPA program or consent of the instructor.

Purpose and Overview of the Course: In this course, we will use a variety of ethical lenses to look at politics, policy, and management—the principal knowledge areas of the MPA program. Thus, you will have an opportunity to review material you have covered in required and elective courses in the MPA program, and you an opportunity to examine politics, policy, and administration in a new way.

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 (professionals), organizations, and societies. For example, 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 have decided) 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 way in which ethical values were central to the development of Western political theory, and the ways in which 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 in the American Republic and the ways in which competing conceptions of justice in society created a fundamental cleavage in American the American Republic that ultimately lead to the American Civil War.
“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 middle level and 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 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.

Course Organization, Pedagogy, and Outcomes: This course is divided into 14 class sessions of two hours and forty minutes. 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. I will provide an introduction to and an overview of each topic, either at the beginning of each class or at the end of the preceding class period. The majority of class time, however, will be used to discuss the topics and required readings listed on the syllabus.

Class discussion will be focused on the answers that class members have developed to the key questions for each week. Class discussion will include paper presentations. Class members will make one 15 minute presentation on a paper developed during the semester. (Authors of independent research papers will make a 20 minute presentation.) The paper presentation will be part of the class discussion grade.

At the end of this course, you should be familiar with what some ancient and modern writers have considered core ethical values, and you will have had an opportunity to think through which of those core values you believe are most important. You will also be familiar with frameworks you can use to make decisions when you face an ethical dilemma in the work place. Additionally, you will be more skillful at determining the extent to which ethical considerations, or value trade-offs, seem to guide or be a part of
individual, group, organizational, societal, and governmental decision making, and you will be more aware of both the benefits and costs that can be associated with ethical decision-making and ethical behavior. Along with these knowledge outcomes, your writing, verbal, group, and presentation skills should be stronger at the end of the course than they were at the beginning, and your network among other MPA students should be larger.

Course Requirements and Grades: The work for this class consists of doing the required readings for each week, being prepared to discuss those readings in class, and, for most members of the class, writing two papers. Some of you may decide you want to write an independent research paper, and I encourage you to consider this option. In order to pursue option #2, #3, or #4, you must submit a research paper proposal by the due dates listed below and have my approval to proceed.

Additional information about paper requirements and formatting requirements is provided in a separate document.

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<th>Option #1</th>
<th>Paper #1</th>
<th>Paper #2</th>
<th>Class Disc.</th>
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<td><strong>30%:</strong> 7-10 page paper for any week.</td>
<td><strong>45%:</strong> 12-15 page paper for any week.</td>
<td><strong>25%:</strong> Class Discussion</td>
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<th>Option #2</th>
<th>Paper #1</th>
<th>Paper #2</th>
<th>Class Disc.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>30%:</strong> 7-10 page paper for any week between class #2 and class #7.</td>
<td><strong>45%:</strong> 12-15 page research paper. Proposal is due class #8 and must be approved by the instructor. Paper and presentation are due class #14.</td>
<td><strong>25%:</strong> Class Discussion</td>
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<th>Option #3</th>
<th>Paper #1</th>
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<td><strong>20%:</strong> Research Paper Proposal** is due by class #4, and must be approved by the instructor.</td>
<td><strong>55%:</strong> 20-25 page research paper due class #14. A summary of the paper will be presented during that class.</td>
<td><strong>25%:</strong> Class Discussion</td>
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<td><strong>20%:</strong> Research Proposal due by class #4, and must be approved by the instructor.</td>
<td><strong>55%:</strong> 25-30 page research paper due class #14. A summary of the paper will be presented during that class.</td>
<td><strong>25%:</strong> Class Discussion</td>
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**Additional directions for research paper proposals are provided in a separate document.**
Course Grading Scale:
Course grades will be based on the following 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 as an attachment to an email. 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 three to seven days.

Incompletes: Requests for incompletes will only be granted in accordance with university policy, and a request for an incomplete must be submitted in writing.

Class Participation, Attendance and 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.

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.
The following required readings are available for purchase at the GMU Bookstore (Fairfax Campus):

2. Bruce, Willa, *Classics of Administrative Ethics*
4. Lakoff, George, *don’t think of an elephant*
5. Plato, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito*
7. Sophocles, *The Three Theban Plays*
8. Goodwin, Doris Kearns, *Team of Rivals*

This book is available for purchase from the GMU bookstore and other sources. In addition, the book is available in print form and audio form at the Fairfax County Public Library. A copy of the book is also available on 2-hour reserve at the Johnson Center Library, GMU Fairfax Campus.

**Additional Required Reading:**
Reader (This packet is available in Blackboard under the “Course Content” heading.)
“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. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1. Ethics and the study of American Politics, Policy, and Administration
(August 30)

Why is ethics an essential part of the study of American politics, policy, and administration?

Required Reading:
U.S. Government Table of Organization, [Reader]
Conant and Critchfield, Executive Branch Independent Establishments and Government Corporations, (Reader)
Conant, Table 20: Key Skills Needed by Managers at Each Level, (Reader)
Definitions for PUAD 700, assembled by James K. Conant, (Reader)
Definitions of Academic Activities, assembled by James K. Conant, (Reader)
Definitions of Key Terms: Model, Theory, Dogma, and Ideology, assembled by James K. Conant, (Reader)
Elazar, Table 14: Characteristics of the Three Political Cultures, (Reader)
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, (Reader)

Recommended Reading:
Elazar, Daniel, “The States and the Political Setting,” American Federalism: A View From the States, Chapter 4. (Blackboard)
James Q. Wilson, The Moral Sense
Bok, Common Values

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

2. The Ancient Greeks, Western Religious Traditions, and Political Philosophy
(September 6)

a. What is justice? What is the relationship between law and justice? Do citizens and rulers have a moral duty to obey the law? Are there times or circumstances when citizens (and rulers) have an obligation to disobey the law?
b. What constitutes justice for individuals, groups, and societies in the Jewish and Christian religious traditions? Are these concepts of justice incorporated into public law in the U.S.? Should they be incorporated in the public law?

Required Reading:
Conant (Summary), “Legacies of the Greek Philosophers," original source is Sabine and Thorson, (Reader)
"Greece and the Theater," in Fagles ed., Sophocles, The Three Theban Plays
“Map of Ancient Greece,” (Reader)
Sophocles, Antigone, in Fagles ed., Sophocles, Three Theban Plays
Plato, Euthyphro, Apology, Crito

Recommended Reading:
Hobbes, Leviathan 1 and 2, esp. Chapters XI, XIII, XIV (Library 2-hour Reserve)
Locke, Second Treatise of Government (Library 2-hour Reserve)
Sabine and Thorson, A History of Political Theory, 4th ed., Chapters 1-8
Magna Carta http://www.bl.uk/magna-carta/articles/magna-carta-english-translation
Machiavelli, The Prince
Machiavelli, Discourses
Gortner, Ethics for Public Managers, Chapter 1

III. POLARIZED POLITICS

3. The American Revolution, the Articles of Confederation, the Northwest Ordinances and the U.S. Constitution
(September 13)

What core ethical values and what (competing) conceptions of justice can be found in the Declaration of Independence and the three foundational documents of the American governmental system: the Articles of Confederation, the Northwest Ordinances, and the U.S. Constitution?

Required Reading:
The Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossitor
The Articles of Confederation, The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossitor
The Northwest Ordinances of 1787, (Reader)
The U.S. Constitution (esp. Preamble), The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossitor

Recommended Reading:
The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossiter, esp. 1, 15, 18, 21, 23, 38, 39, 45, 51
4. The American Civil War
(September 20)

After 1789, how many times did the southern states try to expand the territorial reach of slavery and threaten to secede if they did not get what they wanted? What “compromises” kept the southern states in the union before 1860? Why was the 1860 election so pivotal? What state seceded after that election, and what actions did it take after other southern states approved session declarations in 1861? Did the emancipation proclamation free the slaves? Did the Union victory in 1865 and the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1865 end slavery and end systematic violence in the Southern states against former slaves?

Required Reading:
Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address*, (Reader)
Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals* (especially Part I)

Recommended Reading:
Lincoln (Spielberg- Movie)
*The Federalist Papers*, ed. Rossoir
Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative, Volume I, For Sumter to Perryville
Ken Burns, *The Civil War*, PBS video
Bruce Catton, *The Coming Fury
James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: Volume I*

IV. DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL CULTURE, AND THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

5. American Political Culture and the Key Characteristics and Institutional Requirements of Democracy
(September 27)

What are the key characteristics of a democracy? What are the key institutional requirements of a democracy? Did America move toward a more democratic form between 1865 and 1980? Has America been moving toward a more or less democratic form since 1980? What do you think the future trajectory of American government is likely to be over the next 25 years?

Required Reading:
Dahl, *Polyarchy*, Chapter 1: Democratization and Public Opinion, (Blackboard)
Elazar, “American Federalism: A View From the States, Chapter 4.
U.S. Constitution, Article 1 Section 4. And amendments 13, 14, 15, 19, 24, 26
Rutenburg, A dream Undone: Inside the 50 year campaign to roll back the writing votes act. The New York Times Magazine July 29, 2015  

Recommended Reading:
Shelby Country v. Holder, 2013
Madison, Federalist Papers #10 & 51
Dahl, Polyarchy (entire)
Moyers, “Barbara Tuchman, Historian,” A World of Ideas
The Federalist Papers, ed. Rossiter
Sabine and Thorson, A History of Political Theory, 4th ed., Chapters 22, 24, 32, 33
Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory
Moyers, Interviews with Robert Bellah & Henry S. Commager, A World of Ideas

(October 4)

How are income and wealth distributed in American society? What are the underlying causes of the distribution of income and wealth? What role do tax and expenditure policy play in the distribution of income and wealth?

Required Reading:
Dolbeare and Edelman, American Politics: Policies, Power, and Change, 4th ed., Chapters 2 and 4, (Blackboard)
U.S. Census Bureau, “Share of Aggregate Income (1947-2010),” (Reader)
New York Times, Federal Reserve and Other Sources, “Income and Wealth Distribution in the United States” (assembled by J. Conant and M. Critchfield), (Reader)
U.S. Income Tax Table, (Reader)

Recommended Reading:
Pope Francis’ Encyclical on the Environment:
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica- Laudato-si.html
Schattschneider, The Semi-Sovereign People
Sumner, Social Darwinism
Moyers, “James MacGregor Burns, Historian,” A World of Ideas
Rawls, A Theory of Justice
Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community
Sunstein, The Second Bill of Rights: FDR’s Unfinished Revolution
V. DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS

7. Ethics and Ethics Codes
(October 18)

What ethical values can be found in the US code of ethics? How are those values to be implemented? What connection do those values have to behavior?

**Do nonprofit and for-profit/private sector organizations have ethics codes? What ethical values are contained in those codes? How are those values to be implemented? What connection exists between those values and behavior?

Required Readings:
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) file:///Users/jamesconant/Downloads/SOC%20as%20of%2076%20FR%2038547.pdf

**If you are writing about your own organization’s ethics code, use that 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


8. Middle Managers and Competing Obligations
(October 25)

What kinds of ethical dilemmas do middle managers encounter? How do middle managers resolve those ethical dilemmas? What are the consequences?

Required Readings:
Gortner, Ethics for Public Managers

Recommended Reading:
Bruce, “Solving Ethical Dilemmas, p. 93-96, in Bruce, ed., Classics of Administrative Ethics


VI. DUTIES OF SENIOR MANAGERS, POLITICAL APPOINTEES, AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

9. Senior Managers, Political Appointees and Competing Obligations
(November 1)

What ethical values serve as the basis for laws designed to provide healthcare for women, infants, and children? What happens to those laws over time, and what happens to the senior executives who try to implement them?

Required Reading:

**Recommended Reading:**
Elliot Richardson, *Reflections of a Radical Moderate*
Frederickson and Hart, “The Public Service and the Patriotism of Benevolence,” *Classics...,* Bruce, ed.

**10. Senior Managers, Political Appointees and Competing Obligations**
(November 8)

What ethical values are contained in, or provide a basis for, the laws that protect the bank deposits and saving accounts of U.S. citizens? What kinds of ethical dilemmas do senior managers and political appointees encounter as they attempt to ensure that these protections are sustained? How do senior managers and political appointees resolve those dilemmas? What are some of the consequences?

**Required Reading:**
Riccucci, “William Black Tackles the Savings and Loan Debacle”, *Unsung Heroes: Federal Execurats Making a Difference*

**Recommended Reading:**
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
Wilburn, “Types and Levels of Public Morality,” *Classics of Administrative Ethics*, Bruce, ed.
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*

11. **Elected Officials: The Consequences of Lies and Lying**
   (November 15)

Do elected officials have a duty to tell the public the truth about the actions they are taking and the policies they advocate? What are some of the consequences that have occurred as a result of lying by elected officials over the past 50 years?

**Required Reading:**
Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*
Definitions of Key Terms (Lie, Deceive, Fraud, Predator, and Predatory), assembled by James K. Conant, (Reader)

**Recommended Reading:**
Pfiffner, “Did President Bush Mislead the Country in His Arguments for War with Iraq?” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, (March) 2004
Machiavelli, *The Prince*
Neustadt, *Presidential Power*

**VII. POLARIZED POLITICS, COMPETING CONCEPTIONS OF JUSTICE, AND THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN POLITICS, POLICY, AND ADMINISTRATION**

12. **Language, Ethical Values, and Political Parties**
   (November 22)

Do the core ethical values of people who vote for Republican candidates differ from the core ethical values of people who vote for Democratic candidates? Do these core competing ethical values serve as the basis for competing policies?

**Required Reading:**
Lakoff, *don’t think of an elephant: know your values and frame the debate*
PEW Research Center- “Political Polarization in the American Public”
**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*

13. **The Laziness Dogma: Inequality, Tax Policy, and Tax Expenditure Policy**  
(November 29)

Is the laziness dogma based on assumptions or facts? How widely is this dogma held and is it part of a broader ideology? What effects does this dogma have on American public policy, public administration, and the lives of American citizens?

**Required Reading:**

Paul Krugman, “The Laziness Dogma,”  

Phillip Rucker, “Romney’s ‘47 percent’ comments aren’t going away,” *The Washington Post*  
[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/decision2012/romneys-47-percent-comments-arent-going-away/2012/10/01/17604654-0be5-11e2-a310-2363842b7057_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/decision2012/romneys-47-percent-comments-arent-going-away/2012/10/01/17604654-0be5-11e2-a310-2363842b7057_story.html)


14. **Expenditure Policy: Inequality, Medicaid, and Medicare**  
(December 6)

What ethical values are incorporated into Medicare and Medicaid? Who supports and who opposes these policies and why? Do you think Medicare and Medicaid will exist in their current form 5 years, 10 years, and 20 years from today (2015)?

**Required Reading:**


Medicaid at 50: [http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-50th-anniversary/overall-medicaid/overview-medicaid-anniversary.html](http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-50th-anniversary/overall-medicaid/overview-medicaid-anniversary.html) and
Concurrent resolution on the budget- Fiscal year 2016, Pages 3-14

Paul Krugman, “Zombies Against Medicare,”


Recommended Reading:
Lee, Johnson and Joyce, Public Budgeting Systems, Chapter 4, "Budgeting for Revenues: Income taxes, payroll taxes, and property taxes.”
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”


Medicaid expansion is right for Virginia, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/medicaid-expansion-is-right-for-virginia/2014/01/18/6ee58680-7ebe-11e3-9556-4a4bf7bcbd84_story.html

DRAFT SYLLABUS: June 21, 2016