

Department: Political Science

Course number: 3850 W

Course title: Politics and Ethics

Credits: 3

Contact Person: Carol W. Lewis

Q/W: W

Catalog Copy: POLS 3850W. Politics and Ethics. First semester. Three credits. Analysis of relationship between power and ethics in political life. Examination of ethical perspectives on political decisions and issues.

Justification: a-c) Reasons for adding this course: The Political Science Department offers no course devoted to this topic. The topic is important for understanding contemporary political phenomena. A narrower version of this proposed course was taught in Fall 2006 as an experimental course (POLS 296W) devoted largely to ethics in bureaucratic politics. The department is trying to offer more W courses in order to meet the GEOC requirement of a 200-level W in the major. This course is designed to meet "W" requirement and is being developed under a Provost's course development grant. Learning assessment and feedback tools specific to the proposed course have been developed with the assistance of the Institute for Teaching and Learning.

This course is designed to develop students' understanding of and critical thinking about ethical aspects of contemporary political issues, processes, and institutions through written assignments and their engagement in class discussions and exercises. The role, meaning, and political and ethical implications of the concepts of public interest and individual and institutional accountability in a democracy are highlighted. Sample concepts specifically relating ethics and politics include: appearance of impropriety; public interest; delegate vs. trustee representation; accountability; conflict of interest; codes of conduct; public stewardship; and civil disobedience. Students learn how to access and read data about ethics and politics (e.g., public opinion polls, Transparency International). Qualitative, quantitative, subjective, and

objective data are used. Course material includes (1) decision making and incidence data in political institutions such as legislatures, (2) electoral politics such as survey research on individual and institutional ethics, and (3) a challenging case study on a political dilemma that is critical to the synthesis/evaluation learning objective and appropriate for an upper-division, undergraduate “W” course. The case is being written by Professor Carol W. Lewis under a Provost’s course development grant.

A minimum of 17 pages of written and revised material is required to pass the course. Each assignment is graded 50% upon writing skills and written assignments constitute at least 50% of the course grade.

d) none

e) Although some courses in philosophy address ethics and some courses in psychology address decision making, no course uses concepts from the discipline of political science to address both ethics and decision making in the political domain.

f) Departments of Philosophy, Psychology, and Sociology.

CA Justification: a) This course is designed to develop students’ understanding of and critical thinking about ethical aspects of contemporary political issues, processes, and institutions through written assignments and their engagement in class discussions and exercises. b-c) Please see sample syllabus.

W Criteria:

1. Writing assignments will enable and enhance learning the content of the course because students are asked to compare, critique, and analyze course materials. These assignments help students master the concepts, access and work with data, and apply concepts and data to political phenomena. Please see (1) learning objectives and assessment techniques and (2) formative and summary surveys in the syllabus. A minimum of 17 pages of written and revised material is required to pass the course. Writing assignments include 3 essays (5-7 pages plus formal bibliography) and a memorandum (2 pages). Each assignment is graded 50% upon writing skills and written assignments constitute at least 50% of the course grade.

2. Primary modes of writing instruction include written commentary on drafts and revised papers, individual conferences as needed or requested, and formal instruction to the class. Please see materials

incorporated into the syllabus. 3. Each writing assignment is required first in draft form and then in the revised version. Written commentary is provided on drafts and revisions. 4. From syllabus: COURSE REQUIREMENTS A minimum of 17 pages of written and revised material is required to pass the course. Writing assignments include 3 essays (5-7 pages plus formal bibliography) and a memorandum (2 pages). Each assignment is graded 50% upon writing skills and written assignments constitute at least 50% of the course grade.

Supplementary Information:

Politics and Ethics—Sample Abbreviated Syllabus

POLS 3850W Spring 2008

Professor Lewis Office: HRM 220 Tel. 486-3468 CAROL.LEWIS@UCONN.EDU

Office hours:

COURSE DESCRIPTION. Analysis of relationship between power and ethics in political life. Examination of ethical perspectives on political decisions and issues.

Accommodation. Students with disabilities and special needs are encouraged to discuss appropriate accommodation immediately. (It is too late to leave the matter until the exams or due dates.)

STUDENT CODE, at http://www.dosa.uconn.edu/student_code_appendixa.html

“A fundamental tenet of all educational institutions is academic honesty; academic work depends upon respect for and acknowledgement of the research and ideas of others. Misrepresenting someone else’s work as one’s own is a serious offense in any academic setting and it will not be condoned.

“Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for academic evaluation (e.g., papers, projects, and examinations); any attempt to influence improperly (e.g., bribery, threats) any member of the faculty, staff, or administration of the University in any matter pertaining to academics or research; presenting, as one’s own, the ideas or words of another for academic evaluation; doing unauthorized academic work for which another person will receive credit or be evaluated; and presenting the same or substantially the same papers or projects in two or more courses without the explicit permission of the instructors involved.

“A student who knowingly assists another student in committing an act of academic misconduct shall be equally accountable for the violation, and shall be subject to the sanctions and other remedies described in The Student Code.”

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 17 pages of written and revised material is required to pass the course. Writing assignments include 3 essays (5-7 pages plus formal bibliography) and a memorandum (2 pages). Each assignment is graded 50% upon writing skills and written assignments constitute at least 50% of the course grade.

I. Quality participation and case presentation (20%)

Informed, prepared (readings, videos, exercises, cases, and other required assignments), substantively valuable (thoughtful, relevant), and constructive contributions. All class members will prepare each case and topic scheduled for discussion. Discussion per se is ungraded.

II. Drafts and revisions of two critical analyses written individually (40%)

ÿ Compare/critique/analyze by using as many course tools and materials as possible. Briefly lay out your observations, concerns, and reasoning; probe, dig, analyze, use logic, ask why; assertion of belief or preference is not analysis.

ÿ Draw specifically upon the readings via citation, but do not repeat or extensively quote readings.

ÿ Submit 5-7 pages of text, plus cover page, exhibits, bibliography, footnotes, and other material as needed.

III. Draft and revision of case study written individually (20%)

ÿ Submit 5-7 pages of text, plus cover page, exhibits, bibliography, footnotes, and other material as needed.

IV. Draft and revision of memorandum (10%)—2 pages of text

V. Final Exam (10%) including assessment of writing skills

VI. Formative and Summary Assessments on Husky CT

SAMPLE REQUIRED READINGS

1. Antigone by Sophocles
2. Oscar Wilde's Picture of Dorian Grey or Kurt Vonnegut's Welcome to the Monkey House
3. Case study written by Professor Lewis
4. Lewis and Gilman, The Ethics Challenge
5. S. Bok, Lying (excerpts)
6. U. S. Constitution
8. Reserve readings available on Husky CT, including encyclopedia entries and journal articles on ethics and politics.
9. Internet resources such as Transparency International and Gallup Poll.

Sample Class Topics

1. Introduction to course and syllabus. Overview of concepts and issues. What is ethics? Why is it important to politics? Public service values and principles; in-class exercise, moral character and personal integrity; ethical choice, ethical judgment

Readings: US Constitution (Why is the Constitution the first reading assignment and

which values does it incorporate?)

2. Is public life special, and why? Power and dependency, stewardship, obligation of legal compliance, “dirty hands” problem, difference between law and morality

Is there any instance in which an elected or appointed official is justified in pursuing illegal activity? May an elected or appointed official ethically engage in civil disobedience outside his or her office? What do you think, and why?

Assigned reading: Antigone

Assignment: Prepare to discuss Antigone and submit discussion questions (graded pass/fail)

3. Public interest, conflict of interest; corruption; public vs. private domains; impartiality, and appearance of impropriety. Should there be there be limits to public accountability and/or disclosure? Does public service mean sacrificing privacy?

Readings: D. Thompson, Private Lives (electronic reserve)

Assignment: Prepare to discuss assigned case in The Ethics Challenge

4. Individual responsibility, obedience, authority, dissent, and obligation. According to Lord Acton, "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Do you agree or disagree and what does your answer imply for political power and institutions?

Video on organizational obedience and dissent

Readings: S. Milgram, The Dilemma of Obedience (electronic reserve)

Assignment: Prepare to discuss the difference between loyalty and obedience.

5. Discussion of deception and accountability in public service and politics. In a democracy, is there any instance in which lying to the public is ethically justified? Distinguishing and aligning means and ends in decision making; stakeholder analysis, moral imagination, video on lying

Readings: Bok, Lying

Assignment: Prepare to discuss assigned case

Critical Analysis on accountability in democratic politics

What is a critical analysis?

You probe, dig, analyze, use logic, and ask why. Assertion of belief or preference is not analysis. You lay out your observations, concerns, and reasoning.

ÿ Case studies or practical examples may not be used, even for illustrative purposes.

ÿ Compare/critique/analyze by using as many course materials specific to this course.

Draw specifically upon the readings via citation, but do not repeat or extensively quote readings. Extensive quotes means someone else is doing the writing. Repetition of the source's argument means someone else is doing the critique.

ÿ For example, perhaps you analyze Wilde's *Picture of Dorian Grey* by examining the idea of individual responsibility and second-party pressure (hero, peer pressure, role model, etc.) You define your terms, select your concept, question, or theme for analysis, reference the text, and apply the relevant tools. You do not retell the story, use a case from the reading or text, or include long quotes.

I. Title page

name

date

course

title of paper

contact information (email)

signature per student code

II. Text (minimum = 5 pages, 1" margins, double space)

Begin

1. Choose significant theme

2. Check directions (see syllabus)

3. Outline paper = outline main thread of argument

B. Organization

1. Opening paragraph states main theme/issue
2. Each succeeding paragraph builds argument
3. Each paragraph starts with topic sentence (= entry from outline)
4. Each paragraph includes only materials (such as evidence) related to topic sentence
5. Closing paragraph states conclusion and why (findings, main thread, major evidence)
6. Number your pages in upper right-hand corner
 - (a) not title page, not first text page
 - (b) start with second page of text as page 2

III. Proofing Steps

A. Check spelling

B. Check sentence structure

1. avoid complex structure
2. use simple declarative sentences
3. use grammar manual if you are unsure

C. Check for dangling participles (phrases that are out of place)

D. Check for agreement of noun and pronoun (number, gender, animate/inanimate)

E. Check for excessive/missing capitalization

F. Mentally underline each topic sentence—should duplicate your outline

G. Check for excessive quotation

H. Check that quotes have citations

I. Check citations

J. Check for compliance with directions (see syllabus)

IV. Footnotes, Bibliography, Attachments

1. Place all footnotes after text (not on bottom of page), starting on new page (Notes)

2. Next comes bibliography (References)

a. formal and complete

b. consistently use any single standard style

c. for on-line sources

(1) include title of source

(2) include name of author, title of article/book, and page number if available

(3) include date published or updated if available

(4) include date accessed URL

3. now come charts, tables, tools or other attachments

a. use titles or numbers for attachments and refer to them by title or number in text

b. show source for each one on page, with formal and complete citation

V. Staple all pages together and sign title page to indicate that you did not give or get

assistance on this assignment and used only materials cited in your references.

Sample Resources

citations in political science, http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocAPSA_PC.html

writing in political science, <http://dept.lamar.edu/polisci/DRURY/drury.html>

Learning Objectives

Assessment

Techniques

Knowledge

Students identify/label concepts in moral reasoning and behavior in assigned readings, exercises, case studies, and videos.

Sample concepts specifically relating ethics and politics: appearance of impropriety; public interest; delegate vs. trustee representation; accountability; conflict of interest; codes of conduct; public stewardship; civil disobedience.

Sample social science concepts: qualitative, quantitative, normative, and objective data.

Sample ethics concepts: deontology, teleology, fiduciary responsibility, obligation, duty, virtue.

Students identify/label writing problems (syntax, grammar, organization).

Students learn how to write an essay and memorandum.

Ungraded discussion

Graded writing and editing essays and other assignments, and final examination

A minimum of 17 pages of written and revised material is required from each student in order to pass the course.

Comprehension

Students use knowledge to explain and illustrate political ethics and practice in discussion and description of case studies, news stories, exercises, and videos.

Students learn how to access and read data about ethics and politics (e.g., public opinion polls, Transparency International).

Students are required to submit questions on selected assigned readings (graded pass/fail) and ungraded discussion.

Graded written and revised assignments and final examination

Application

Students construct ethical arguments and apply their knowledge and comprehension to case studies, literary and video excerpts, and political statements and behaviors.

Students use knowledge to edit writing.

Ungraded discussion

Graded written assignments and final examination

Analysis

Using tools of ethical analysis from readings, students compare and contrast alternative resolutions to ethical dilemmas in political contexts.

Ungraded discussion (e.g., opinion poll analysis)

Graded written critical analyses and team presentation of case study

Synthesis

Students design preferred resolutions to ethical dilemmas in political contexts.

Ungraded discussion

Graded written critical analyses and team presentation of case study

Evaluation

Students critique the development of their writing skills.

Using "moral imagination" and moral reasoning, students develop ethical justification of their recommended resolution.

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Graded written assignments and

team presentation of case study

Formative Survey

Designed by Instructional Design and Development, University of Connecticut

1. Information Sheet for GEOC Course Surveys

Principal Investigator: Desmond McCaffrey, Assistant Director, Instructional Design and Development

Title of Study: Summative Course Survey

You are invited to participate in this focus group/survey for General Education Courses. I am interested in gathering information that will help us evaluate the course you enrolled in. Your participation in this study will involve 1 survey that will take approximately 5 minutes of your time. Your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future. You will not be paid for being in this study. This survey does not involve any risk to you. Your participation may improve the quality of this course and later General Education courses. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. We will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Desmond McCaffrey, at 486-

3121. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. An IRB is a group of people that reviews research studies to make sure they are safe for participants. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. If you agree to take this survey, please check TRUE. If you prefer not to take this survey, please check FALSE and exit the survey.

a. True, I will participate

b. False, I will not participate

Answer: _____

2. I am likely to raise ethical concerns about politics in conversation with my peers or in class.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

3. I am comfortable and confident about raising ethical concerns about politics in conversation with my peers or in class.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

4. I feel confident in my ability to analyze the ethical aspects of political behavior and issues.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

5. I believe I am skilled in communicating in writing about the ethical aspects of political behavior and issues.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

Summary Survey

Designed by Instructional Design and Development, University of Connecticut

1. Information Sheet for GEOC Course Surveys

Principal Investigator: Desmond McCaffrey, Assistant Director, Instructional Design and Development

Title of Study: Summative Course Survey

You are invited to participate in this focus group/survey for General Education Courses. I am interested in gathering information that will help us evaluate the course you enrolled in. Your participation in this study will involve 1 survey that will take approximately 5 minutes of your time. Your participation will be anonymous and you will not be contacted again in the future. You will not be paid for being in this study. This survey does not involve any risk to you. Your participation may improve the quality of this course and later General Education courses. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. We will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Desmond McCaffrey, at 486-3121. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. An IRB is a group of people that reviews research studies to make sure they are safe for participants. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. If you agree to take this survey, please check TRUE. If you prefer not to take this survey, please check FALSE and exit the survey.

a. True, I will participate

b. False, I will not participate

Answer: _____

2. As a result of this course, I am more likely to raise ethical concerns about politics with my peers or in class.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

3. As a result of this course, I am more comfortable and confident about raising ethical concerns about politics in conversation with my peers or in class.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

4. I will use the ideas and tools from this course in future classes or at work.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

5. This course increased my skill in analyzing the ethical aspects of political behavior and issues.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

6. This course increased my skill to communicate in writing about ethical issues in political behavior and issues.

a. Strongly agree

b. Agree

c. Neutral

d. Disagree

e. Strongly Disagree

Answer: _____

7. Considering the papers you wrote for this course, what writing problem has most improved?

a. sentence structure

b. use of subordinate phrases

c. punctuation

d. citation

e. agreement of nouns and pronouns

f. organization of paragraphs

g. capitalization

h. spelling

i. organization of argument (whole paper)

Answer: _____

8. Use the space below to mention any OTHER areas of your writing that have improved that were not listed in the prior question.

9. Considering the papers you wrote for this course, what writing problems still need attention?

a. sentence structure

b. use of subordinate phrases

c. punctuation

d. citation

e. agreement of nouns and pronouns

f. organization of paragraphs

g. capitalization

h. spelling

i. organization of argument (whole paper)

Answer: _____

10. Use the space below to mention any OTHER areas of your writing needing improvement that were not listed in the prior question.