Instructor: Bokgyo Jeong, Ph.D.
Course Dates and Times: January 25 – May 10
9:00 – 11:40 AM, Saturdays
Office Hours: Saturday 11:45 – 13:00 or by arrangement
E-mail: jeong@rmu.edu (my Rutgers e-mail will be announced soon.)

Course Description

This course aims to facilitate ethical thinking and to cultivate ethical conduct for professionals working in the public or nonprofit sectors. Ethics is more than moral judgment. Solving ethical problems requires public administrators to coordinate conflicting expectations from multiple stakeholders of public organizations.

In the similar vein, The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) clarified that ASPA members have the commitment to serve the “public interests.” However, they do not explain what “public interests” mean in its code of ethics. The meaning of ethics is what public managers have to learn by themselves through practice. For this end, public managers need open discussion about how to address ethical dilemmas about preserving the public trust and responding to demands from surrounding stakeholders, while pursuing professional integrity.

Therefore, this course will take the form of a seminar rather than a lecture. This seminar intends to offer opportunities for public managers to come to their own learning while grappling with ethical dilemmas through group discussions and practices during the course. In this course, all participants, including the instructor, will serve as facilitators for each other’s learning. Through this seminar, public managers and students in public administration will try to transform their own mortar and bricks into a structured architecture of administrative ethics.

This course will utilize multiple sources to maximize the learning experience, including discussions on movies, case studies, comparisons of varied professions’ ethics statements, and open discussion with guest speakers from the field and academia as well as text book readings.
Learning Objectives

This lecture intends to provide students with philosophical foundations for ethics and to enhance the students’ capability to consider ethical points in public administration. At the end of the course, students and colleagues will be able to contemplate the following questions:

1. What is the philosophical ground of ethics?
2. How are ethics addressed in day-to-day practice of public administration?
3. How are ethics in the public sector different from those in the private sector?
4. How are the ethics statements in the private sector different from those in the public sector?
5. How can public administrators embrace ethics in their policy analysis?
6. What is the relationship between professionalism and administrative ethics?
7. What are the main types of administrative responsibility?
8. Are the terms “accountability” and “ethics” interchangeable?
9. How can public managers build high-performance and high-integrity organizations?
10. How can public managers define public interests?
11. How can public managers address conflicts of responsibility?
12. When do public managers face ethical dilemmas?
13. What are the main dimensions of an accountability environment?
14. What are the ethics for individual administrators?
15. What are ethics within an organization?
16. What is an ethical leadership?
17. How do nonprofit managers perceive expectations from varied stakeholders?
18. How similar or dissimilar are the ethics of government officials and nonprofit managers?

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

Class attendance (10%): The lecturer will regularly check attendance right after the class starts. Total attendance will constitute total 10% of final grading score. No excuses will be accepted regarding class absence unless a student notifies the instructor prior the class and submits formal evidence for exceptional circumstances within two weeks from the day of absence. For each class a student misses, 1% will be deducted from their final grade, starting with the second absence.

Case summary and discussion leading (25%) A small group of two or more students (depending on the class size) will choose one case in ethics and leadership from Sharp et al.’s book (or their own sources if they wish). These groups will be formed during the first week. These teams will determine in which week they will lead the case discussion. From the third week, the assigned team will lead the case discussion. They will first present a summary of the case study, which should last about 10 to 15 minutes. The group will then provide discussion questions for the class. The group has to offer multiple alternatives based on philosophical foundations (subjectivism, cultural relativism, teleological ethics, deontological ethics, virtue ethics etc.) which were introduced during the first and second week’s lecture. The discussion leaders will divide the class into separate groups based on assigned position advocating different philosophical perspectives. The discussion leaders themselves also have to divide their positions and
advocate the assigned roles leading the debates of the whole class. The discussion will be 25 to 30 minutes. After the class discussion, the discussion leading group will summarize the main arguments from different positions and submit a debate group report within a week of their presentation session date (One report per group, not individual reports). The report should contain the following elements: case title, case summary (what haven the issues in the case; what the ethical dilemma is in the case), the main arguments from varied philosophical ethical points, and final concluding remarks after the discussion. The report should be 5 double-spaced pages.

Midterm Exam (30%): Midterm exams will be provided on the seventh week of the course. The midterm exam will measure whether students fully understand the philosophical foundation and theoretical concepts in administrative ethics. By asking students to apply their knowledge to actual cases, this exam will test how deeply they understand the actual meaning of their knowledge in the actual organizational setting.

Term paper on ethical dilemma in public administration (35%): Each student will write a paper (minimum 2,000 and maximum 2,500 words, double spaced) on ethical dilemma from his or her experience in the actual organizational setting in public administration. The paper will demonstrate how the main philosophical positions conflict in his or her case. The student has to show his or her understanding by applying diverse perspectives into the real case of ethical dilemma. This assignment intends to offer an opportunity for students to apply the classroom learning and lecture to the actual case from their experience in the field.

Grading Policy:
A  90 – 100
B+ 85 – 89
B  80 – 84
B - 75 - 79
C+ 70 – 74
C  60 – 69
F Below 60

Course Readings

There is no one text book for this course. However, chapters and sections from the following books will be used as main sources of readings for this course. These reading sources will be available either on the Blackboard, course reserve or the online library.


* Student may refer to a textbook on public administration.


**Movie & Media Materials**

- Schindler’s List (1993), Director: Steven Spielberg
- A Few Good Men (1992), Director: Rob Reiner
- Thirteen Days (2000), Director: Roger Donaldson
- Erin Brockovich (2000), Director: Stephen Soderbergh

**Reasonable Accommodations**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations.

Contact: GENEVIEVE SUMSKI  Assistant Dean, Student Life and Leadership  Robeson Room 352  973-353-5300  famoso@andromeda.rutgers.edu

**Academic Integrity** at Rutgers - Principles of academic integrity require that every Rutgers
University student:
- properly acknowledge and cite all use of the ideas, results, or words of others
- properly acknowledge all contributors to a given piece of work
- make sure that all work submitted as his or her own in a course or other academic activity is produced without the aid of unsanctioned materials or unsanctioned collaboration
- obtain all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with his or her interpretation or conclusions
- treat all other students in an ethical manner, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference. This requires that a student neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress
- uphold the canons of the ethical or professional code of the profession for which he or she is preparing

**Code of Student Conduct:**

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

**Student Learning Outcomes**
- To be able to lead and manage in public governance.
- To participate in and contribute to the public policy process.
- To analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions.
- To articulate and apply a public service perspective.
- To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenship.

**Course Schedule and Main Topics**

**Section I. Foundation for Administrative Ethics**

**[Lecture 1] Introduction: What is ethics?**
Lecture goals: This lecture introduces the basic concept of administrative ethics, clarifies the meaning of related concepts of administrative ethics, and introduces the two main types of administrative responsibility: objective responsibility and subjective responsibility. This lecture also clarifies the meaning of accountability and responsibility. We will discuss situations in which an accountability system conflicts with ethical standards.

Readings:


Discussion on a movie: Schindler’s list

[Lecture 2] **Philosophical foundation of ethics in public administration**

Lecture goals: This lecture introduces the historical tradition or philosophical foundations of administrative ethics. These traditions include subjectivism, relativism, teleology, deontology, intuitionism, and virtue ethics. This lecture will help understand the basic assumptions and focuses of these varied perspectives.

Readings:


Discussion with a movie: A Few Good Men

[Lecture 3] **Ethics in public sector/ Ethics in private sector**

Lecture goals: This lecture intends to compare ethical environments in public sector with those in the private sector. For the comparison, this lecture focuses on job’s specific duties, the culture of the organization, and the significant conditions that pertain at a specific time. In this lecture, we will compare varied types of ethics statements in different professions including the World Medical Association’s ethical statements and American Society for Public Administration Code of Ethics.

Readings:


Discussion with a movie: Thirteen Days/ Erin Brockovich

Section II. Administrative Ethics and Public Values
[Lecture 4] Defining public interests

Lecture goals: This lecture offers an opportunity for public managers to contemplate the meaning of public interests. The American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) states that ASPA members have to serve “public interests.” However, it is the public managers themselves who have to figure out what these public interests mean within real world contexts. This lecture aims to help clarify what questions public managers raise to clarify the meanings of public interests in public organizations.

Readings:


Case discussion [Group 1]

[Lecture 5] The ethical dilemma

Lecture goals: This lecture attempts to clarify when and how public managers face ethical dilemmas in real public organizational setting. We will look into the most typical case of ethical dilemmas, which is the challenge of confronting conflicting responsibilities between incompatible alternatives.

Readings:

Case discussion [Group 2]

[Lecture 6] Ethics and Policy Analysis

Lecture goals: This lecture raises a question about the relationship between ethics and policy analysis. This lecture examines the compatibility of ethics and policy analysis.
Readings:

Case discussion [Group 3]

[Lecture 7] Midterm Exam

Section III. Administrative Ethics and Public Management

[Lecture 8] Ethics and professionalism
Lecture goals: This lecture focuses on the relationship between organizational integrity and professionalism and underlines the significance of professionalism in public organizations and the role of public managers to heighten organizational ethics. In other words, we will pay attention to the crucial role of public managers via their exertion of discretion and professional judgment in public policy and administration.

Readings:


Case discussion [Group 4]

[Lecture 9] Ethics, quality, and performance
Lecture goals: This lecture raises a fundamental question about the relationship between organizational performance and organizational integrity. This lecture offers opportunities for public managers to think about whether high level of organizational ethics lead to enhanced productivity and performance.

Readings:

Case discussion [Group 5]

**[Lecture 10] Ethical leadership**

Lecture goals: This lecture introduces the elements and dimensions of ethics of public managers. This lecture comprehends both the narrow and broad sense of ethics of senior managers. This lecture will help students understand that the senior managers have to conduct multiple tasks demanded by diverse stakeholders with conflicting interests. This lecture underlines the significance of professional judgment and discretion of senior leaders in public organizations from a strategic management point of view.

Readings:


Case discussion [Group 6]

**[Lecture 11] Accountability environment**
Lecture goals: This lecture introduces the concept of an accountability environment in which public and nonprofit organizations exist in a constellation of forces and stakeholders. Through this lecture, we will be able to learn about a conceptual framework which is composed of two dimensions: a set of accountability standards and organizational response.

Readings:

Case discussion [Group 7]

[Lecture 12] Organization and Individual
Lecture goals: This lecture clarifies the different focuses and dimensions between ethics for individual administrators and ethics in the organization and examines the relationship between these two levels of ethics and its compatibility.

Readings:

Case discussion [Group 8]

[Lecture 13] Ethics and nonprofit management
Lecture goals: This lecture introduces how managers in nonprofit organizations perceive the expectations from varied stakeholders and will provide opportunities to examine how similar or dissimilar the ethics for nonprofit managers is from that of government officials.

Readings:

Presentation and discussion from a field study:

Section IV. Application and Synthesis

[Lecture 14] Prism to the real world: discussion on the field in the public sector
Lecture goals: This lecture offers an opportunity for students to share their experience in the field. This lecture will facilitate the learning of the students’ discussions based on students’ themselves.

Readings: Reading sources will be provided accordingly to the arrangement with a guest speaker presentation.

Guest speaker session: Senior manager of public or non-profit organization will be invited for the discussion.

[Lecture 15] Synthesis and discussion
Lecture goals: This lecture intends to synthesize the previous lectures and seminars of the semester. In this lecture, we will review the philosophical foundations and practical skills of administrative ethics.