

**PPA 746: ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY**  
Spring 2009

Times: TTH 2:00 – 3:20  
Room: Eggers 209  
Instructor: Dana Radcliffe  
Office: Eggers 215g  
Office hours: TTH 12:55 – 1:55  
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In a democracy, those who make and implement public policy are charged with serving the interests and protecting the rights of everyone. They are obligated to act responsibly in using the powers and resources entrusted to them, to address fairly the competing demands and needs of their constituents. But, in the government's distribution of benefits and burdens, public officials are constantly pressured by powerful individuals and institutions for special consideration, often at the expense of other citizens. Moreover, the issues confronting public decision-makers are frequently complex, involving conflicting values and strongly-held preferences, incomplete and possibly unreliable information, and consequences that no one can foresee. Effectively serving the common good, then, requires that public officials exercise sound moral judgment in performing their duties—that their actions be defensible ethically as well as legally. It requires an appreciation of ethical principles and an understanding of their application in the tangled domain of public affairs. This course is designed to enhance students' ability to think ethically about the means and ends of public policy. Accordingly, we will examine normative concepts and principles that typically enter into moral reasoning and use those tools in analyzing actual cases. In our case discussions, we will seek to get clear about the moral issues facing the decision-makers and explore how those issues might be resolved in ethically responsible ways.

Texts:

- Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, eds., *Ethics & Politics: Cases and Comments*, 4th ed. (Nelson-Hall Publishers, 2006).
- J. Patrick Dobel, *Public Integrity* (Johns Hopkins, 1999).
- Periodical articles distributed by the instructor.

Reading Assignments:

It's appropriate that a course on ethics in public affairs consider current issues as they emerge as topics of public discourse. Consequently, throughout the semester, I will hand out articles from current periodicals which we will discuss at subsequent class sessions. This feature of the course precludes my providing you now with a readings schedule. So, at each class session, I will give you the reading assignment for the following class.

Grading: Your grade in the course will be based on the following:

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| • <u>Six</u> short papers (appx. 3 pages each) | 65% |
| • A final project (appx. 8 pages)              | 25% |
| • Class participation                          | 10% |

Paper and Break Schedule

Thursday, January 22	Paper 1 assigned
Tuesday, February 3	Paper 1 DUE
Thursday, February 5	Paper 2 assigned
Tuesday, February 17	Paper 2 DUE
Thursday, February 19	Paper 3 assigned
Tuesday, Mar 3	Paper 3 DUE
Thursday, March 5	Paper 4 assigned
Tuesday, March 10	NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Thursday, March 12	NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Tuesday, March 17	Paper 4 DUE
	Final Project assigned
Thursday, March 19	Paper 5 assigned
Tuesday, March 31	Paper 5 DUE
Thursday, April 2	Paper 6 assigned
Tuesday, April 14	Paper 6 DUE
Tuesday, April 21	NO CLASS (Mayfest)
Final Exam Period (TBA)	Final Project DUE

**NOTE: Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Syracuse University Code of Academic Integrity (<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>). Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Sources used in written assignments will be properly cited, either in footnotes or in the text.**