

School of Government

MMPM 528
PUBLIC SECTOR ETHICS
(15 Points)

Trimester One / 2010

COURSE OUTLINE

Names and Contact Details

Course Coordinator: **Dr Russell Harding**
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Office Hours: 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday

Trimester Dates

Trimester Dates: Monday 1 March – Wednesday 30 June 2010
Teaching Period: Thursday 25 February – Monday 28 June 2010

Class Times and Room Numbers

Module One:	Thursday 25 February 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Two:	Thursday 15 April 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm
Module Three:	Thursday 10 June 2010	8.30am – 6.00pm

Locations: Classes will be held on the Pipitea Campus of Victoria University in Wellington and you will be advised of your classroom one week prior to each module by email.

Withdrawal Dates

Notice of withdrawal must be in writing / emailed to the Masters Administrator. Ceasing to attend or verbally advising a member of staff will NOT be accepted as a notice of withdrawal.

Students giving notice of withdrawal from this course after **Wednesday 10 March 2010** will NOT receive a refund of fees.

Associate Dean (Students)'s approval required for withdrawal from this course after **Monday 17 May 2010**.

See more information available via:

- **Withdrawal dates: Late withdrawals with Associate Dean (Students) permission (See Section 8: Withdrawals – from the Personal Courses of Study Statute)**
<http://policy.vuw.ac.nz/Amphora!~~policy.vuw.ac.nz~POLICY~000000001743.pdf>
- **Withdrawal dates: Refunds:**
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx

Course Content

The course is grounded in moral philosophy, theories of human behaviour and organisational theory. A range of ethical theories will be explored, including intuitionist, consequentialist, deontological, and virtue ethics – suitably illustrated. The course will also consider current topics such as the responsibility and accountability of officials, organisational responsibility, and the 'Dirty Hands' syndrome. Class discussions will focus on topics such as the public interest, public good, and professional and organisational ethics.

There will be an emphasis on integrating and managing ethics in an increasingly complex, public environment. Every endeavour will be made to use current examples, and to examine cases relevant to central and local government.

Students are expected to participate fully in class discussions and, along with invited speakers, will be asked to share experiences and expertise. The *Chatham House Rule* will be observed.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Differentiate between ethics and morals;
2. Understand the context of ethics within the New Zealand public sector;
3. Differentiate ethical from unethical behaviour in the public sector;
4. Understand the role of organisations in maintaining and in inhibiting ethical action;
5. Articulate the philosophical bases for ethics generally, and public sector ethics specifically.

Course Delivery

This course is delivered in a modular format, which includes a minimum of 24 hours contact. The 24 hours are broken up into three separate days of eight hours each (a 'module'). There are three modules in the course with approximately five to six weeks between each module. **Attendance is required at all three modular teaching days (8.30am – 6.00pm).**

Expected Workload

The learning objectives set for each course are demanding and, to achieve them, candidates must make a significant commitment in time and effort to reading, studying, thinking, and completion of assessment items outside of contact time. Courses vary in design but all require preparation and learning before the first module. Regular learning is necessary between modules (students who leave everything to the last moment rarely achieve at a high level). Expressed in input terms, the time commitment required usually translates to 65-95 hours (excluding class contact time) per course.

Readings

There is one set text for this course, available from VicBooks, the university bookshop (www.vicbooks.co.nz):

Richter, William L. and Frances Burke (2007) *Combating Corruption, Encouraging Ethics: A Practical Guide to Management Ethics*, Second Edition, Plymouth, Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN: 0-7425-4451-6.

The following texts and reference works are recommended for additional reading:

Public Management

Boston, J. et al (1996) *Public Management: The New Zealand Model*, Auckland, Oxford University Press.

Martin, J. (1991) *Public Service and the Public Servant* Wellington, SSC.

Scott, Graham (2001). *Public sector management in NZ: lessons and challenges*, Australian National University, Canberra.

Moral Philosophy

Craig, Edward (Ed) (1998). *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, London and NY, Routledge.

Rachels, James (2007). *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, McGraw Hill College Division.

Public Sector Ethics

Cooper, T. (1994). *Handbook of Administrative Ethics*, NY, Marcel Dekker.

Lawton, A. (1998). *Ethical Management for the Public Services*, Buckingham, Open University Press.

Oakley, Justin & Dean Cocking (2001). *Virtue ethics and professional roles*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Preston, N et al (eds) (1998). *Ethics and Political Practice*, The Federation Press, NSW.

Preston, Noel, and Charles Sampford, with Carmel Connors (2002). *Encouraging Ethics and Challenging Corruption: Reforming Governance in Public Institutions*, The Federation Press

Rohr, John A. (1998). *Ethics for Bureaucrats*, 2nd Ed, Marcel Dekker, NY.

Sampford, Charles et al (Eds) (1998). *Public Sector Ethics*, The Federation Press, NSW.

Singer, Peter (Ed) (1991). *A Companion to Ethics*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Uhr, John (2005). *Terms of Trust: Arguments over ethics in Australian government*, University of New South Wales Press.

Useful Websites

Cabinet Office	www.dpmc.govt.nz/cabinet/
Centre for Public Integrity	www.publicintegrity.org/
State Services Commission	www.ssc.govt.nz
Transparency International	www.transparency.org/
OECD PUMA	www.oecd.org/topic/
US Office of Government Ethics	www.usoge.gov/

Assessment Requirements

Students will be assessed on group participation and involvement, and by three completed assignments.

The purpose of assessment is three-fold: 1) to ensure students have met the standard of work required of the course; 2) to give feedback on a student’s performance to assist with future study; and 3) to provide the teaching staff with feedback on the progress of the class. Students will be assessed on the basis of their individual work.

Summary of Assessment Requirements				
Assignment	Type	Indicative length	Due Date	Percentage of Overall Mark
Essay One	Written	2,000 words	Friday 26 March 2010	15 percent
Essay Two	Written	2,000 words	Friday 14 May 2010	30 percent
Essay Three	Written	2,500 words	Monday 28 June 2010	40 percent
Class Participation	Oral		Throughout Course	15 percent

Essay Topics

1. Using the deontological, consequentialist and virtue ethics frameworks, explain upon what basis lies for the public good are:
 - a) justifiable; and
 - b) excusable.

Illustrate your answers with examples – actual or hypothetical.

2. Describe a public sector code of ethics with which you are familiar. Analyse it in light of the views of Carl Friedrich and Herman Finer.
3. Discuss the concept of *administrative evil*. How do you suggest *administrative evil* be avoided? Please relate your suggestions directly to your characterisation of *administrative evil*.

Please submit ALL assignments VIA BLACKBOARD.

Note: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Students should keep a copy of all submitted work.

Class Attendance

The School expects you to attend all three modules for the course. If, before enrolment for a course, you are aware that you will not be able to attend a module, you must notify the Director of Master's Programmes when you enrol explaining why you will not be able to attend. The Director of Master's Programmes will consult with the relevant course coordinator. In such circumstances, you may be declined entry into a course.

If you become aware after a course starts that you will be unable to attend a module or a significant part of a module (i.e. more than two hours in any given day), you must advise the course coordinator before the module explaining why you will be unable to attend. The course coordinator may excuse you from attendance and may also require you to complete compensatory work relating to the course content covered during your absence.

Deadlines and Failure to Meet Due Dates

The ability to plan for and meet deadlines is a core competency of both advanced study and public management. Failure to meet deadlines disrupts course planning and is unfair on students who do submit their work on time. It is expected therefore that you will complete and hand in assignments by the due date. Marks will be deducted at the rate of five per cent for every day by which the assignment is late and no assignments will be accepted after five working days beyond the date they are due. For example, if you get 65% for an assignment, but you handed it in on Monday when it was due the previous Friday, you will get a mark of 50%.

If ill-health, family bereavement or other personal circumstances beyond your control prevent you from meeting the deadline for submitting a piece of written work or from attending class to make a presentation, you can apply for and may be granted an extension to the due date. You should let your course coordinator know as soon as possible in advance of the deadline (if circumstances

permit) if you are seeking an extension. Where an extension is sought, evidence, by way of a medical certificate or similar, may be required by the course coordinator.

Mandatory Course Requirements

To fulfil the mandatory course requirements for this course, you are required to:

1. Submit all assignments by the due dates;
2. Attend all modular sessions of the course.

Communication of Additional Information

Additional information may be provided in class, by post, by email or via Blackboard.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, and the Use of Turnitin

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must still acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- material from books, journals or any other printed source
- the work of other students or staff
- information from the Internet
- software programs and other electronic material
- designs and ideas
- the organisation or structuring of any such material.

Acknowledgement is required for all material in any work submitted for assessment unless it is a 'fact' that is well-known in the context (such as "Wellington is the capital of New Zealand") or your own ideas in your own words. Everything else that derives from one of the sources above and ends up in your work – whether it is directly quoted, paraphrased, or put into a table or figure, needs to be acknowledged with a reference that is sufficient for your reader to locate the original source.

Plagiarism undermines academic integrity simply because it is a form of lying, stealing and mistreating others. Plagiarism involves stealing other people's intellectual property and lying about whose work it is. This is why plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, you may be penalised under the Statute on Student Conduct. You should be aware of your obligations under the Statute, which can be downloaded from the policy website (www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx). You could fail your course or even be suspended from the University.

Plagiarism is easy to detect. The University has systems in place to identify it.

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine www.turnitin.com. Turnitin is an on-line plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted materials on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

There is guidance available to students on how to avoid plagiarism by way of sound study skills and the proper and consistent use of a recognised referencing system. This guidance may be found at the following website: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx.

If in doubt, seek the advice of your course coordinator.

Plagiarism is simply not worth the risk.

Other Information

For the following important information, follow the links provided:

- **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx
- **General University Policies and Statutes**
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy
- **AVC (Academic) Website: information including Conduct, Academic Grievances, Students with Impairments, Student Support**
www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcademic/Publications.aspx
- **Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices**
www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/
- **Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme**
www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/