

LDST 450: Leadership Ethics

Spring 2022

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M/W 10:30

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Overview: In this course, we will examine historical examples of leadership, current events, and hypothetical cases in light of prominent ethical theories to gain new insights into the ethics of leadership.

In Part 1 students learn about philosophical methodology and we will discuss prominent ethical theories, such as consequentialism and Kantianism. These readings will provide a foundation for understanding ethics, and we will reference these theories throughout the class.

Part 2 is about the specific challenges that leaders and followers face when they deliberate about their moral obligations. For example, we will discuss the temptations of power, the challenges of acting against one's moral emotions, the ethics of making decisions that involve luck or chance, and whether reasons of partiality conflict with moral obligations.

In Part 3, we discuss the basis of leaders' authority, whether followers have duties to obey, and whether bystanders have duties to intervene when they witness oppression. In this part of the course, we focus on political leadership, which provides the foundation for a discussion of justice and leadership. We will address questions about social and economic justice, such as whether leaders are required to promote distributive equality, and whether leader's obligations to others change in the global context.

Finally, in Part 4, students are encouraged to apply these lessons as they reflect on the development of their character and career plans. In this final part of the course, we discuss the challenge of balancing self-interest against the duty to assist others, and the relationship between morality and a meaningful life.

Objectives: This course is the capstone class for a leadership studies degree. Students are encouraged to reflect on the moral dimensions of leadership in light of their Jepson education and their plans going forward.

- Students will **discover** philosophical perspectives that change the way they think about leadership, work, politics, and the meaning of life.
 - o Students will develop skills that enable them to develop and evaluate moral arguments. For example, students will learn to assess the soundness and validity of an ethical argument.
 - o Students will critically evaluate leadership in the real world in order to better understand how the leadership context changes the moral landscape.
- Students will also **create** original philosophical essays that address the ethics of leadership.

- Students will think in a clear and systematic way about the normative dimensions of their career or personal choices going forward.
- Students will learn to develop and write an original philosophical argument.
- Students will learn to revise papers in response to counter-arguments.
- Students will write the best papers they've ever written in their lives.

Class Technology

- **Perusal** (assigned readings)
 - Readings
- **Blackboard** (grade stuff)
 - Study guides
 - Grading rubrics
 - Tips for assignments
 - Sample work
 - Submit assignments (except essays)
 - Check your grades
- **Email**
 - Quick questions
 - Submitting draft essays

Grading:

Grade	Weight
Class Participation	10%
Perusal	10%
Reading Responses	10%
Disagreement Project	10%
Essay	40%
Final Exam	20%

All grades are entered as numbers.

The numerical values of essay grades are:

A+ 98.5	A+/A 97	A 95	A/A- 93	A- 91.5	A- /B+ 90
B+ 88.5	B+/B 87	B 85	B/B- 83	B- 81.5	B- /C+ 80
C+ 78.5	C+/C 77	C 75	C/C- 73	C- 71.5	C- /D+ 70
D+ 68.5	D+/D 67	D 65	D/D- 63	D- 61.5	D-/F 60

are:

A+ 100-97	A 96.99-94	A- 93.99-90
B+ 89.99-87	B 86.99-84	B- 83.99-80
C+ 79.99-77	C 77.99-74	C- 73.99-70
D+ 69.99-67	D 66.99-63	D- 63.99-60

The numerical values for final letter grades

Participation

Your participation grade is based on how well you contributed to class discussion and how often you attended class. I posted participation guidelines online to give you a rough sense of the standards for each grade.

Perusall

Your perusal grade is based on whether you completed the assigned reading and engaged in conversation on Perusall before class.

Reading Responses:

You can do as many reading responses as you want. The top five scores will be included in your grade.

- Use Blackboard to submit each response. Submit your responses online before class starts.
 - I will not accept responses after the corresponding class.
 - If for some reason you cannot access Blackboard you can email me a response before class.

Disagreement Project

To complete the disagreement project, you must talk to someone for 15 minutes about a topic from the class. You must disagree with the person you're talking to. Record the conversation and write 700-1000 words about why you disagree. Then show your interlocutor the summary of the conversation, and ask them to email me to verify that you accurately described your conversation. You can complete this project any time before the last day of class.

Essay

One of our goals in this course will be to further develop your writing abilities. **You can rewrite your essay as many times as you want** for a higher grade, but I will only re-grade your essay once every two weeks. Further instructions for this assignment are posted on Blackboard.

Final Exam:

The Registrar sets the final exam time and date. The exam will test you on the whole semester. The exam is 10 questions and it will cover the readings, classroom discussions, and handouts. I will post a study guide before the exam and there will be a review session.

Academic Integrity:

Students may not use course materials from previous versions of this course.
Students must complete every assignment on their own
Students must comply with the UR honor code.
Students may not submit work from previous courses for this course.

Materials:

All readings are on Blackboard or Perusall.

You can print the readings and bring them to class.
Laptops and iPads are not permitted in class without authorization.

Readings:

Part 1: Normative Ethics and Leadership

Week 1: How should we reason about moral problems?

January 10- Moral Concepts

Singer - Would you save a drowning child?

LaGuin- The Ones who Walked Away

January 12- Moral Concepts

Shafer-Landau, Eleven Arguments Against Moral Objectivity

Week 2: Moral Methodology

January 17- MLK

January 19- Reflective Equilibrium

Thomson- Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem

Week 3: Should leaders promote the greatest good?

January 24- Consequentialism

Chappell- Arguments for Utilitarianism

January 26- Integrity

Williams- Consequentialism and Integrity

Week 4: Are leaders constrained by moral rules?

January 31- Three accounts of coercion

Pallikkathayil- The Possibility of Choice

February 2- Deception and the murderer at the door

Schapiro- Kantian Rigorism and Mitigating Circumstances

Part 2- Moral Deliberation

Week 5- When is partiality justified?

February 7- Is partiality compatible with universal moral principles?

Velleman- Love as a Moral Emotion

February 9- The moral value of relationships

Scheffler- Relationships and Responsibilities

Week 6- Self-Scrutiny

February 14- Civic Virtue

Hill- Bystanders and the Duty to Resist Oppression

February 16- Partisanship

Joshi- What are the Chances You're Right About Everything?

Week 7- Risks and Small Effects

February 21- Risk and Recklessness

Guerrero- Don't Know, Don't Kill

Gregory- The Sorrow and Shame of the Accidental Killer

February 23- Moral Mathematics

Parfit- Five Mistakes in Moral Mathematics

Part 3- Leadership and Justice

Week 8- Choosing and following political leaders

February 28 – Public Goods, and a defense of obligation

Nozick- The Principle of Fairness

Klosko, 'Presumptive Benefit & Political Obligation'

March 2- Why we should question authority

Huemer The Psychology of Authority

Huemer- What if there is No Authority?

Week 9- Spring Break!

Week 10: Equality

March 14- Privilege

Lowe: "Privilege: What Is It, Who Has It, and What Should We Do About It?"

Case- White Privilege: A Conservative Perspective

March 16- Economic Equality

Frankfurt- Equality as a Moral Ideal

Week 11: Global Justice

March 21- Global Business Ethics

Zwolinski- Sweatshops, Choice, and Exploitation

March 23- Military Leadership

McMahan- The Moral Responsibility of Volunteer Soldiers

Critical Replies to McMahan and Responses

Part 4: Meaningful Leadership: Self-Interest and Character

Week 12: Moral Exemplars

March 28- Forgiveness

Cherry- Forgiveness, Moral Exemplars, and the Oppressed

March 30- Why Faith in Humanity is a Virtue

Preston-Roedder- Faith in Humanity

Week 13: The Meaning and the self

April 4- Against the Self -- Guest Lecture ☺

Siderits -Freedom, Caring and Buddhist Philosophy.

April 6- The Self Strikes Back

Wolf Moral Saints

Week 14:

April 11: Meaninglessness and Morality

Langton- Duty and Desolation

April 13 Future generations as a source of meaning

Scheffler- The Afterlife

Week 15: Meaning and Absurdity

April 18: Meaninglessness and Success

Setiya- The Midlife Crisis

April 20: Morality and Absurdity

Nagel- Birth, Death, and the Meaning of Life

This syllabus may be revised throughout the semester. Please check Perusall and your email for updates.