Ethics and Leadership
LDSP 450, Section 03

Fall 2005
Course Syllabus

Instructor:    Dr. Douglas A. Hicks
Offices:    Jepson Hall, Room 134 / Tyler Haynes Commons 201
E-mail:   dhicks@richmond.edu
Phone:    X-1601 (484-1601) (office)
Office hours:   Tuesday, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. in Jepson 134
Thrusday, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. in Jepson 134
and by appointment

Class meeting time   Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:45 – 2:00 p.m.
and location:   Jepson Hall, 102

Learning Objectives

This course seeks to enable students:

• to recognize the morally relevant features of leadership situations and of the actions of leaders and followers;
• to develop an intellectually sophisticated view of the relationship between morality and self-interest and, in particular, of the ways in which this relationship is manifested in the exercise of leadership;
• to learn how to critique moral arguments and how to present moral arguments of their own;
• to analyze past and current ethical problems from a broadened perspective and to address future ones with the mature use of moral imagination;
• to understand the ethical dimensions of contemporary social, political, economic, and environmental problems, with a particular emphasis on global dimensions;
• to become cognizant of the distinctive moral perils and challenges that leaders face, given their distinctive privileges and responsibilities;
• to provide an ethically informed reading of leadership theory.

Statement of Course and its Purposes

Ethics is the study of right and wrong, good and evil, and virtue and vice. Constructing and analyzing arguments about what actions are morally right, what goals are morally good, and what aspects of character are morally virtuous, those engaged in ethical inquiry ultimately
seek to determine the morally relevant features of the world. The present course is similar to other endeavors in ethical inquiry in that it too seeks to answer the basic question: what matters, and what is going on, morally? However, it is different from other courses in ethics in that it addresses the central issues of ethics in the study of leadership. This course assumes that many familiar, abstract moral problems are made concrete in the exercise of leadership. One aim of this course, then, will be to work through general ethical problems as these problems are made manifest in the work of leaders and followers. That said, the present course also seeks to identify and understand moral challenges that are peculiar to the study and practice of leadership.

A particular focus of the course will be on how the moral beliefs, commitments, and behaviors of individual leaders and followers relate to the moral ethos and actions of groups and/or societies. Does the leader help shape a moral environment, and if so, how? What role do individual leaders play in influencing the social or political balancing of competing ethical values—e.g., the tension between individual civil liberties and collective security? How do the new cultural and economic realities, challenges, and opportunities of a globalizing world affect how we view our obligations, our identity(ies), our loyalties, and our environment? What role do personal attributes (e.g., race, class, gender, family background) play in the shaping of one’s morality? Do persons from privileged groups have more ability to shape social morality, and if this is the case, to what extent is the guise of morality employed to uphold social hierarchies?

Along with the substantive exploration of these questions that are fundamental to ethics and leadership studies, the seminar format of the course will encourage critical ethical discussion, reflection, and debate during each class period. In other words, it is crucial that class sessions embody one of the course’s central tenets: a moral community requires the active, candid, and thoughtful engagement of all participants.

**Texts**

Required texts of the course, available for purchase at the UR bookstore, include:


A few additional required readings will be placed on reserve via the Boatwright Library online system.
Notes on Grading Procedures and the Honor System

The deadlines for assignments are designed to create a framework in which students are treated fairly and equally and in which they are able to complete all assignments during the course of the semester. Requests for extensions will be granted only under dire circumstances. Weekly essays are due to the instructor by noon on Monday and will not be accepted or counted for credit beyond that deadline. The weekly papers should be posted electronically on the course’s Blackboard site. Other assignments are due as indicated below on the syllabus, and late term papers will be penalized by one full letter grade for each day they are late. (Term papers arriving on the due date but after the time indicated will be counted as a day late.) Assignments may NOT be sent via email. Unexcused absences from the final examination may not be made up. Please note that any difficulties or problems should be brought to the instructor’s attention as soon as possible—and before the deadline or exam. Please note well that computer problems are not a valid excuse for late essays or other assignments.

The Jepson School supports and adheres to the provisions of the Honor System as sanctioned by the School of Arts and Sciences. Every piece of written work in this course must have the word, “Pledged,” along with the student’s signature, signifying the following: “I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.”

Course Components and Requirements

Class Contribution (20% of course grade)
The first mark of a successful course will be the active participation of each member of the class. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to engage fully in the discussions and activities. The emphasis is on quality, not quantity, of participation. The classroom discussions and activities depend upon the timely completion of the assigned readings. Coming to each session prepared for discussion of the “texts of the day” is a necessary condition for individual and group learning; thorough preparation will also result in a strong evaluation of class participation. Further, reading with care will enable successful examinations and strong essays.

Class contribution will be evaluated based on attendance, engaged participation that draws on careful reading, and occasional in-class presentations. Please note that during class, students are expected to have turned off their cell phones and not to leave the classroom except in emergency situations. Students will be penalized by a third of a letter grade for the course for each unexcused absence beyond one absence.

Weekly Essays (20% of course grade)
By noon each Monday, the student must post, on the course’s Blackboard site, an essay of no more than 500 words on the assigned reading for the upcoming week. The essay should engage directly, critically, and imaginatively with one or more central ideas of the text(s). Of
the ten weeks for which an essay is assigned, each student must write eight essays (and thus may opt not to write two of the assigned ten essays). While a grade will not be assigned to each paper, students will receive (on October 13) a grade for the essays of the first half of the semester and a grade for the remainder of the essays at semester’s end.

Midterm Examination (20% of course grade)
A midterm exam will be administered in class on Thursday, October 13.

Term Paper (20% of course grade)
A major component of the course is a term paper that explores some dimension of ethics and leadership. Students will have a limited choice of topics; a research proposal, which must be approved by the instructor, is due on Thursday, October 27. Every student is encouraged to meet with the professor prior to submitting a research proposal topic. The term paper is due on Tuesday, November 22.

Final Examination (20% of course grade)
A final exam will be administered from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. on Monday, December 19, 2005. This date/time has been set by the Registrar and may not be moved.

Topics and Assignments (Subject to change as the course progresses)

Week A: Introduction to the Course and its Themes

Tuesday, August 30
Bowen McCoy, “Parable of the Sadhu,” in Ciulla, ed., xvi-xviii

Thursday, September 1
Michael Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands,” on reserve

Week B: Virtue and Character

Monday, September 5 Essay 1 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, September 6

Thursday, September 8
**Week C: Deontological Ethics**

Monday, September 12  Essay 2 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, September 13

Thursday, September 15
Bernard Williams, “Moral Luck,” in Ciulla, ed., 112-117

**Week D: Consequentialist Ethics**

Monday, September 19  Essay 3 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, September 20

Thursday, September 22
Peter Singer, *One World*, preface and chapter 1

**Week E: Environmental and Economic Justice**

Monday, September 26  Essay 4 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, September 27
Peter Singer, *One World*, chapter 2

Thursday, September 29
Peter Singer, *One World*, chapter 3

**Friday, September 30, 12:30-1:25, Center for Civic Engagement, THC 201**

“Considering Sudan” program and discussion.

**Week F: Human Rights and Global Obligation**

Monday, October 3  Essay 5 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, October 4
Peter Singer, *One World*, chapter 4
Thursday, October 6
Peter Singer, One World, chapters 5-6

Week G: Equality, Deprivation, and Justice

Monday, October 10  Essay 6 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, October 11

Thursday, October 13
MIDTERM EXAM TO BE WRITTEN IN CLASS

Week H: Egoism and Altruism

Tuesday, October 18  No class meeting—Fall Break

Thursday, October 20

Week I: Identity I

Monday, October 24  Essay 7 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, October 25
K.A. Appiah, The Ethics of Identity, preface and chapter 1

Thursday, October 27
K.A. Appiah, The Ethics of Identity, chapter 2
TERM PAPER PROPOSALS DUE at beginning of class

**Friday, September 28, 12:30-1:25, Center for Civic Engagement, THC 201
Discussion of Bevery Daniel Tatum’s “Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?”**
Week J: Identity II

Monday, October 31  Essay 8 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, November 1
K.A. Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity*, chapter 3

Thursday, November 3
K.A. Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity*, chapter 4

Week K: Identity III

Monday, November 7  Essay 9 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, November 8 (election day)
K.A. Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity*, chapter 5

**Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 p.m., Jepson Alumni Center**
“The Intersection of Science, Politics and Ethics,” Dr. Leon R. Kass, University of Chicago and chair, President’s Commission of Bioethics

Thursday, November 10
K.A. Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity*, chapter 6

**Friday, November 11, 12:30-1:25, Center for Civic Engagement, THC201**
“Sprawl and Justice,” Dr. Thad Williamson, Jepson School Assistant Professor

Week L: Sympathy and Moral Imagination

Monday, November 14  Essay 10 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, November 15

Thursday, November 17
Martha Nussbaum, “Compassion and Terror,” on reserve
Week M: Term Papers to be Submitted

Tuesday, November 22  No class meeting  TERM PAPERS DUE at 2:00 p.m. in hard copy, with signed Honor Pledge, to Ms. Nancy Nock, Jepson Hall 125.

Thursday, November 25  No class meeting—Thanksgiving Break

Week N: Freedom and Security

Monday, November 28  Essay 12 due at 12 noon

Tuesday, November 29
Michael Ignatieff, The Lesser Evil, preface and chapters 1-2

Thursday, December 1
Michael Ignatieff, The Lesser Evil, chapters 3-4

**Thursday, December 1, 7:00 p.m., Jepson Alumni Center
“Truth, Lies, and Other Forms of Corruption in Public Communication,” Dr. Harry Frankfurt, Princeton University of author of On Bullshit

Week O: Conclusions

Tuesday, December 6
Michael Ignatieff, The Lesser Evil, chapters 5-6

Thursday, December 8
Readings TBA

FINAL EXAM DATE and TIME:  Monday, December 19, 7:00-10:00 p.m.  Students must bring two blank blue books to the examination.