Leadership Ethics
LDST 450, Sections 3 and 4

Fall 2010
Course Syllabus

Instructor:    Dr. Douglas A. Hicks
Office:    Jepson Hall, Room 134
E-mail:   dhicks@richmond.edu
Phone:    287-6891 (office)
Office hours:    Wednesday, Friday 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. and by appointment

Class meeting time:   Wednesday, Friday 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. (Section 3)
                       1:30 – 2:45 p.m. (Section 4)
Class location:   Booker Hall 217 (Section 3)
                       Richmond Hall 101 (Section 4)

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 Tuesday 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.) Unexcused absences from the examinations 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 (15% of course grade)
The first mark of a successful course is the active participation of each member of the class. Students are expected to attend—and arrive promptly for—all class meetings and to engage fully in the discussions and activities. The course also includes two or three required events outside of class time. The key element of class discussion is quality, not quantity, of participation. Each student will be responsible for leading discussions during the course of the semester, drawing upon their weekly essays and other preparations.

Cell phones, BlackBerrys, etc., must be turned off or to “all sounds off” mode. Students are permitted to use their laptops to take notes, but they are not permitted to use any electronic device for texting, sending IM, emailing, Web surfing, etc. It is by now counter-cultural to switch our brains to “all distractions off” mode—but this kind of focus is needed in order to accomplish the goals of our seminar.

Students will be penalized by three percentage points from their final grade for each unexcused absence beyond one absence.

Weekly Essays (10% of course grade)
By noon each Tuesday, 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 may opt not to write two of the assigned weekly essays. While a grade will not be assigned to each paper, students will receive (by October 19) 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 Friday, October 8.
Term Paper (25% 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 in class on Friday, October 27. Every student is encouraged to meet with the professor prior to submitting their research topic and proposal. The term paper is due on Wednesday, November 17. Students will present their papers in class during the week of November 17.

Final Examination (30% of course grade)
A final exam will be administered during the date/time that has been set by the Registrar and may not be moved. The only exception is that, per established precedent, those students scheduled to take the exam in the later of the two scheduled sections that the professor is teaching this semester may take the exam with the earlier scheduled section. That is, those assigned to take the exam on Tuesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. (i.e., students in Section 3) will be allowed to commit in writing before the last day of classes to take the exam with the students in Section 4 on Monday, December 13 at 9:00 a.m.

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

**Wednesday, August 25  Introduction to Course and its Themes**
Bowen McCoy, “Parable of the Sadhu,” in Ciulla, ed., xvi-xviii

**Friday, August 27  Sympathy, Narrative, and Moral Imagination**

*Tuesday, August 31  Weekly Essay 1 due by noon*

**Wednesday, September 1  Leaders, Followers, and “Dirty Hands”**
Michael Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands,” on reserve

**Friday, September 3  Is There Anything Distinctive about Leadership Ethics?**
Price, Leadership Ethics, 1-37

*Tuesday, September 7  Weekly Essay 2 due by noon*

**Wednesday, September 8  Deontological Ethics 1**
Price, Leadership Ethics, 38-43

**Friday, September 10  Deontological Ethics 2**
Price, Leadership Ethics, 44-51
**Tuesday, September 14  Weekly Essay 3 due by noon**

**Wednesday, September 15  Power and Self-Interest 1**

**Friday, September 17  Power and Self-Interest 2**
Price, *Leadership Ethics*, 73-81

***Required Event: Monday, September 20  Donchian Ethics Symposium  5:00 p.m.***
Timothy Kaine lecture on politics, morality, and the common good
Refer to [http://jepson.richmond.edu/conferences/2010-11/schedule.html](http://jepson.richmond.edu/conferences/2010-11/schedule.html) for other excellent Donchian Ethics Symposium presentations

**Wednesday, September 22  Virtue Ethics 1**
Price, *Leadership Ethics*, 93-101

**Friday, September 24  Virtue Ethics 2**

**Tuesday, September 28  Weekly Essay 4 due by noon**

**Wednesday, September 29  The Social Contract**
Price, *Leadership Ethics*, 119-128

**Friday, October 1  Liberal Egalitarianism**
Price, *Leadership Ethics*, 119-128

***Required Event: Wednesday, October 6, 11:00 a.m., Jepson Alumni Center, Thad Williamson, Sprawl, Justice and Citizenship: The Civic Costs of the American Way of Life***
Note: This presentation will be coordinated with the class meetings on October 6, TBA

**Friday, October 8  MIDTERM EXAMINATION TO BE WRITTEN IN CLASS**
*Tuesday, October 12  Weekly Essay 5 due by 12 midnight

Wednesday, October 13  Consequentialism: J.S. Mill’s Utilitarianism
Price, Leadership Ethics, 192-201

Friday, October 15  Greater Goods and Higher Powers
Hicks, With God on All Sides, 3-25, on reserve
Price, Leadership Ethics, 201-214
Additional readings TBA

*Tuesday, October 19  Weekly Essay 6 due by noon

Wednesday, October 20  Global Poverty and Ethical Obligations 1
Singer, The Life You Can Save, xi-xv, 3-78

Friday, October 22  Global Poverty and Ethical Obligations 2
Singer, The Life You Can Save, 81-125

*Tuesday, October 26  Weekly Essay 7 due by noon

Wednesday, October 27  Global Poverty and Ethical Obligations 3
Singer, The Life You Can Save, 129-173
Hicks, “Public-sector Leadership, Development, and Ethics,” on reserve
TERM PAPER PROPOSALS DUE in class

Friday, October 29  No class meeting
Professor attending International Leadership Association in Boston; students should use time to work on term papers

*Tuesday, November 2  Weekly Essay 8 due by noon

Wednesday, November 3  Sprawl as Moral Case Study 1
Williamson, Sprawl, Justice, and Citizenship, 3-109

***Required Event Thursday, November 4, 7:00 p.m., Jepson Alumni Center
Dr. David Walton, Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, “A View from Haiti: Health Care as a Human Right”

Friday, November 5  Sprawl as Moral Case Study 2
Williamson, Sprawl, Justice, and Citizenship, 110-216
*Tuesday, November 9  Weekly Essay 9 due by noon

Wednesday, November 10  Sprawl as Moral Case Study 3

Friday, November 12  No class meeting – Ethics Bowl trip

Wednesday, November 17  Student Presentations—Day 1
TERM PAPERS DUE at the beginning of class

Friday, November 19  Student Presentations—Day 2

*Thursday, November 25 Happy Thanksgiving*

*Tuesday, November 30  Weekly Essay 10 due by noon*

Wednesday, December 1  Leaders’ and Followers’ Interests

Friday, December 3  Conclusions
Price, *Leadership Ethics*, 215-228
Additional readings TBA

**FINAL EXAM DATE and TIME:**
Section 4 (W,F 1:30 Section): Monday, December 13, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Section 3 (W,F 10:30 Section): Tuesday, December 14, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.
Students must bring two blank blue books to the examination.