

Leadership Ethics

Dr. Javier Hidalgo

Office: 129 Jepson Hall

Email: jhidalgo@richmond.edu or hidalgoj@gmail.com.

Class Room: Jepson 120

Class Time:

- Section 3: 12:00pm-1:15pm
- Section 4: 1:30pm-2:45pm

Office Hours: [I post a sign-up sheet for my office hours online](#). Please sign up for office hours there. I update my office hours on Sunday afternoon for the upcoming week.

Overview

This course is about the ethics of leadership. Students will learn about the ethics of leadership by applying ethical theories and deliberative principles to their own lives every week. In Part 1, students learn about philosophical methodology and ethical theories. These readings provide a foundation for understanding how leaders should make tradeoffs in morally complex situations. Part 2 is about the specific challenges that leaders and followers face when they deliberate about their moral obligations. In Part 3, students reflect on the development of their character and career plans in light of the previous lessons. In this final part of the course, we discuss the relationship between morality and a meaningful life.

Learning Objectives

This course is the capstone class for a Leadership Studies degree. Students are encouraged to reflect on the moral dimensions of leadership considering their Jepson education and their plans going forward.

- Students will discover theories and arguments that change how they think about leadership, work, equality, politics, and the meaning of life.
- Students will develop skills that enable them to develop and evaluate moral arguments.
- Students will write and revise original philosophical essays that address the ethics of leadership.
- Students will apply ethical theories to contexts beyond the classroom.

This class fulfills the Written Communication general education requirement. The learning outcomes for the Written Communication requirement are as follows:

- Students will produce written work that reflects disciplinary conventions and attention to audience and situation.
- Students will produce written work with a clear perspective and, where appropriate, forward claims supported by evidence, and cite sources responsibly.
- Students will produce written work undergoing an iterative process, where content evolves (creation, drafting, and revision) and improves based on feedback from the faculty member.
- Students will compose written work with clarity, cohesion, concision, and minimal error.

Course Requirements

There are a total of 1000 possible points in this class. The points will be distributed as follows:

Description

[Class Participation](#) (100 points)

Click on the links to see a rubric for each assignment!

I expect you to be an active, appropriate, and interesting contributor to the class, both in class and group discussions. To that end, this grade encompasses more than hand-raising. I primarily ask that all students are good citizens of the course. Thus, you should be present, clearly attentive, and show engagement.

[Purpose Projects](#) (300 Points)

Purpose Projects are hands-on assignments that help you explore practical ethics by putting ideas into action. Instead of only reading and writing about ethical principles, you will make real choices, try out new

behaviors, and reflect on what those experiences reveal about living with purpose and integrity. These projects give you a supportive space to take ethical questions seriously, connect course readings to everyday life, and consider the real consequences of your decisions. You will complete a total of ten Purpose Projects during the semester. The required Interview Project in Week 1 counts as your first project. After Week 1, you may choose which weeks to complete the remaining nine projects. You may complete no more than one Purpose Project per week unless you receive permission from the instructor.

[Annotations](#)
(100 points)

We will use an online social program for the readings called *Perusall*. Perusall is a collaborative annotation tool that helps students to do the readings in a more effective and thorough way. I will typically assign readings through Perusall and you'll annotate them before class begins. To do this, you'll write comments on the readings and respond to other students' comments.

[Essay](#)
(200 points)

In this assignment, you will develop and write an extended original essay on an ethical question or problem. All paper writing will take place in a computer lab during designated class sessions. After receiving my comments, you will revise the essay during these sessions to improve the quality of the final paper.

[Midterm and
Final Exam](#)

The midterm and final exams require you to answer short essay questions about the

(300 Points)

course readings. The questions will ask you not only to explain authors' arguments, but also to evaluate them, compare and connect different readings, apply philosophical ideas to leadership and policy issues, and defend your own conclusions. The final is worth 200 points and the midterm is worth 100 points.

You can find additional details about the grading in this class, the AI policy, and syllabus inserts [here](#).

Supporting Your Learning

I care about your success in this class and I'm willing to help you in any way possible. If you'd like to meet with me, you can sign up for my office hours [here](#) (note that I update my office hours for the coming week on Sunday).

If you'd like to leave me an anonymous comment with any questions or concerns, please see [this form](#).

Laptops and Other Devices

Please do not use your laptop, ipad, or phone during class unless I direct you to do so. I ask this because a growing body of research finds that the use of laptops and cell phones in class diminishes student learning. So, if you use a laptop or other device without authorization during class, I'll ask you to put it away. Please review the class participation rubric for more information on my policies regarding laptops and other devices.

The Readings

All readings are available on the Canvas page for this class. I may make some modifications to the syllabus as the semester progresses. I'll announce any changes to the syllabus in class and you can always find the updated syllabus on Canvas.

Part I: Normative Ethics and Moral Theories

Week 1: Moral Methodology

Tuesday, August 25

- Shafer-Landau, "Ten Arguments Against Moral Objectivity"

Thursday, August 27

- Thomson, "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem"

Purpose Projects

- [The Interview Project \(required\)](#)
- [The Trolley Project \(late adds only\)](#)

Week 2: Utilitarianism

Tuesday, September 1

- Chappell, "Arguments for Utilitarianism"

Thursday, September 3

- Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"
- Nozick, "The Experience Machine"
- Williams, "Consequentialism and Integrity"

Purpose Projects

- [The Hedonism Project](#)
- [The Singer Project](#)
- [The Moral Circle Project](#)

Week 3: Kantian Ethics

Tuesday, September 8

- Shafer-Landau, "The Kantian Perspective."

Thursday, September 10

- Schapiro, "Kantian Rigorism and Mitigating Circumstances"

Purpose Projects

- [The Paternalism Project](#)
- [The Honesty Project](#)
- [The Late Project](#)

- [The Self-Respect Project](#)

Week 4: Partiality

Tuesday, September 15

- Scheffler, "Relationships and Responsibilities"

Thursday, September 17

- Velleman, "Love as a Moral Emotion"
- Topic Worksheet is due in-class

Purpose Projects

- [The Dating Project](#)
- [The Reconnection Project](#)
- [The Community Project](#)

Part II: Leadership, Justice, and Applied Ethics

Week 5: Self-Scrutiny

Tuesday, September 22

- Hill, "Bystanders and the Duty to Resist Oppression"

Thursday, September 24

- Joshi, "What Are the Chances You're Right About Everything?"

Purpose Projects

- [The Bubble Project](#)
- [The Disagreement Project](#)
- [The Protest Project](#)

Week 6: Fairness and Disobedience

Tuesday, September 29

- Nozick, "The Principle of Fairness"
- Brown, "Impartiality and Fair Play Reconsidered"

Thursday, October 1

- Huemer, "What If There Is No Authority?"

- Thesis & outline are due in-class

Purpose Projects

- [The Commons Project](#)
- [The Authority Project](#)

Week 7: Social Justice

Tuesday, October 6

- Frankfurt, "Equality as a Moral Ideal"

Thursday, October 8

- Midterm

Purpose Projects

- [The Living Wage Project](#)
- [The Enough Project](#)

Week 8: Efficiency and Career Choice

Tuesday, October 13

- Fall Break — No Class

Thursday, October 15

- Derek Parfit, "Five Mistakes in Moral Mathematics"
- Sources worksheet is due in class

Purpose Projects

- [The 80K Hours Career Project](#)
- [The Vegan Project](#)

Part III: Meaningful Leadership

Week 9: Forgiveness and Regret

Tuesday, October 20

- Garrard & McNaughton, "In Defence of Unconditional Forgiveness"
- Gregory, "The Sorrow and the Shame of the Accidental Killer"

Thursday, October 22

- Moller, "Anticipated Emotions and Emotional Valence"

Purpose Projects

- [The Forgiveness Project](#)
- [The Apology Project](#)

Week 10: Paper Writing

Tuesday, October 27

- Paper Writing

Thursday, October 29

- Paper Writing: your rough draft is due at the end of this class session.

Week 11: Achievement and Selflessness

Tuesday, November 3

- C. Thi Nguyen, "Value Capture"

Thursday, November 5

- Hampton, "Selflessness and the Loss of Self"

Purpose Projects

- [The Pride Project](#)
- [The Dream Job Project](#)
- [The Demandingness Project](#)

Week 12: Ancient Philosophy as a Way of Life

Tuesday, November 10

- "Stoicism," "Epicureanism," and "Buddhism."
- Setup for the game.

Thursday, November 12

- Game: "Ancient Philosophy as a Way of Life: Buddhism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism at the Court of King Menander"

Purpose Projects

- [The Meditation Project](#)
- [The Simple Life Project](#)

Week 13: Paper Revisions

Tuesday, November 17

- Paper revisions

Thursday, November 19

- Paper revisions: the final draft of your paper is due at the end of this class session.

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, November 24

- Thanksgiving Break

Thursday, November 26

- Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Midlife and the Afterlife

Tuesday, December 1

- Setiya, "Midlife Crisis"

Thursday, December 3

- Scheffler, "The Afterlife"

Purpose Projects

- [The Afterlife Project](#)
- [The Midlife Project](#)
- [The Faith Project](#)

Week 16: Death

Tuesday, December 8

- Nagel, "Birth, Death, and the Meaning of Life"

Purpose Projects

- [The Pointless Project](#)
- [The CoCo Project](#)
- [The Purpose Project Project](#)

Final Exam Schedules:

- Section 3 (the section that meets at 12pm): Thursday, December 10th from 2-5pm.
- Section 4 (the section that meets at 1:30pm): Monday, December 14th from 2-5pm.