Course Syllabus
PUA 423 - Ethics in Public Administration- Summer 2009

Instructor: Carol Servino

Contact Info: E-mail through WebCampus PUA 423. I will respond within 24 to 48 hours.

Office Hours: by appointment in Room 4113 of the UNLV Greenspun Bldg. Please email through WebCampus for an appt.

Course Description
Before taking this class, students are expected to have an understanding of bureaucratic procedures such as planning, budgeting, and personnel processes (PUA 241). The purpose of this course is to explore the ethical issues that face public administrators. This course examines the philosophical foundations of ethics as well as contemporary case studies of ethical problems such as gift giving, nepotism, privacy and secrecy, whistle-blowing, and protections. Attention is given to codes of ethics and training for administrators.

Summer sessions are short and move quickly. Students in PUA 423 are required to purchase and read two textbooks, log-in daily, actively participate in online discussions, and submit written answers 2-3 times per week to assigned questions about case studies and current events. A 3-5 page paper is due at the end of the course.

Required Texts


Note: The required textbooks may be purchased through the UNLV bookstore or other locations.

Additional readings may be made available by the instructor through UNLV’s Lied Library or posted online through WebCampus. A variety of techniques, including but not limited to online discussions and individual Web-based research, will be used in this course.

* Students are to turn in assignments via the Assignment Drop-box in WebCampus; emails to the instructor should be sent via the WebCampus Mail module. If WebCampus
is not working, e-mail the instructor at servinoc@unlv.nevada.edu for permission to use alternate e-mail rather than turn in a late assignment.

**Learning Objectives (and how they will be evaluated)**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Define clearly and concisely what is meant by ethics in public administration (writing assignment and class discussion postings).
- Explain why ethics are important in a democratic public administration (online discussion).
- Identify the responsibilities of public administrators and the basis of administrative ethics (written assignment).
- Analyze the tenets of the codes of ethics for a variety of professional organizations and explore how they are applied in practical situations (written assignment and discussions).
- Recognize the pressures and forces that may contribute to unethical behavior in public administration (discussions).
- Apply the ethics triangle in case studies to judge and rank actors and their courses of action (written assignments).
- Suggest ways that public managers might reduce the risk of ethics violations (written assignment).

**Points for Assignments and Grading**

Active participation & quality of communication: 10% or 100 points
3 Current Events (2 Discussion Posts for each): 30% or 300 points
4 Case Study Written Assignments (1-2 pages each): 40% or 400 points
Final Paper (3-5 pages): 20% or 200 points

**Total Points:** 100% or 1,000 points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>940 – 1000 pts.</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>895 – 939 pts.</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>870 -- 894 pts.</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>830 – 869 pts.</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>795 – 829 pts.</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>770 – 794 pts.</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>720 – 769 pts.</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>690 – 719 pts.</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>660 – 689 pts.</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>610 – 659 pts.</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>590 – 609 pts.</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>below 589 pts.</td>
<td>F</td>
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Students will receive points for their work based on the **Grading Scale** shown on this page.
Participation in online discussion means more than showing up!
Bad manners are not tolerated in my classroom discussions. Participation requires thought and attention to detail. The best approach is to post intelligent comments that indicate you’ve done the required reading every week.

I recommend composing your thoughts in a Word document and revising it a bit before you copy and paste -- or retype your own words -- for posting discussions on WebCampus. **This allows you to check spelling and grammar** (or have someone you trust edit and help you) **before posting**. It helps to re-read what you’ve written to be sure it says what you want to say. This revision and attention to detail gives you an opportunity to see if others will understand what you have written.

Avoid waiting until the last minute to post to the discussion threads. Aim for full credit by following instructions, using correct spelling, grammar, and common sense when you write. Use clear, concise, and complete sentences with subjects, verbs and objects.

Save a copy of **all of your work** in case there are technical problems. **Do not forget to cite sources** if you are using someone else’s ideas, concepts, and/or words to avoid issues or allegations of plagiarism and misconduct.

**Late Work** – **Late work is not accepted.** Exceptions may be made for documented illnesses or other serious situations. If a student misses an assignment without obtaining prior permission of the instructor or providing evidence of a medical, work, or family emergency, the points for that assignment will be forfeited by the student.

**Course Assignments and Timeline**
Assignments cover relevant topics and are explained when given. Questions about assignments should be addressed online within WebCampus via email to the instructor. **Due dates and times will be posted with each assignment. Assignments must be turned in on their due dates.**

**Discussion Postings on Current Events** – We will use the Discussion Module to share thoughts and information about current events that involve ethical and public issues. Newspapers, magazines, online news stories or other sources may be used. Sources (name of publication, dates, page numbers or URLs) must be cited.

Throughout the course students will need to find three such examples, cite the source, write one or two paragraphs to explain the issue, and then another paragraph to explain why this is relevant to the course (5 pts). Students also need to post a thoughtful response to a classmate’s posted example (5 pts). (An example will be provided and it will be further explained in the assignment at the time it is due).
Assessment Tools for Other Assignments
Examples and/or grading rubrics will be provided in advance of the assignments as needed and appropriate.

Course Organization and Reading Assignments
Prior to Course Starting or before June 7:

- **Read** Welcome Letter from Instructor, complete and return the Student Agreement Form to the instructor as attachment to WebCampus email;
- **Introduce** self to rest of the class through the Introduction thread of the Discussion module (include name, major course of study/degree sought, reason for taking course, what you hope to learn in this course);
- **Log** in to WebCampus and become familiar with its features and functions.

Week 1 (June 1 – June 7)

Assignments:
- Watch video of Dr. Thompson’s introduction to the course.
- **Read Learning Module** for Week 1
- **Read Svara** Preface and Chapters 1 - 4 (pages vii – 72);
- **Read Thompson & Leidlein** Case Study - Chapter 4. Prepare and submit answers to the questions at the end of the chapter as a written assignment through the Assignment module.
- Find a Current Event pertaining to ethics and public administration, and post two paragraphs about it to Discussion module; post a comment (a meaningful response that shows you’ve given it some thought) to a classmate’s current events posting.
  All are due by 5 p.m., Sunday, June 7.

Week 2 (June 8 – June 14)
- Topics: Codes of Ethics, Challenges to Ethical Behavior, Acting Responsibly

Assignments:
- **Read Learning Module** for Week 2
- **Read Svara** Chapters 5, 6, & 7.
- **Read Thompson & Leidlein** Case Study - Chapter 7. Prepare and submit answers to the questions from the end of the chapter as a written assignment through the Assignment module.
- Refer to Chapter 4 Ethics Triangle to place agent in the triangle for the case study. (More detailed instructions will be available in the WebCampus Assignment module).
• Find a Current Event pertaining to ethics and public administration, and post two paragraphs about it to Discussion module; post a comment (a meaningful response that shows you’ve given it some thought) to a classmate’s current events posting. 
  **All are due** by 5 p.m., Sunday, June 14.

**Week 3 (June 15 – June 21)**
• Topics: Whistleblowing, Elevating Ethical Behavior, External Measures

**Assignments:**
• **Read Learning Module** for Week 3
• **Read Svara** Chapters 8, 9, 10.
• **Read Thompson & Leidlein** Case Study – Chapter 9. Prepare and submit answers to the questions at the end of the chapter as a written assignment through the Assignment module. Refer to Chapter 4 Ethics Triangle to place agent in the triangle for the case study.
• Find example of Current Event pertaining to ethics and public administration, and post two paragraphs about it to Discussion module; 
  **All are due** by 5 p.m., Sunday, June 21

**Week 4 (June 22 – June 28)**
• Topics: Review of Codes of Ethics

**Assignments:**
• **Read Learning Module** for Week 4
• **Read Svara** Chapter 11 and Appendices
• **Read Thompson & Leidlein** Case Study – Chapter 12. Prepare and submit answers to the questions at the end of the chapter as a written assignment through the Assignment module. Refer to Chapter 4 Ethics Triangle to place agent in the triangle for the case study. 
  **All are due by 5 p.m., Sunday, June 28**

**Week 5 (June 29 – July 2)**
• Topic: Final Paper on Ethics

**Assignments:**
• Read Learning Module for Week 5
• Work on final paper on the topic approved by professor earlier in course. Properly cited sources are required for this 3-5 page paper. As always, grading is based on content, organization, timeliness, spelling & grammar, and following instructions provided by the instructor.

  **Paper is due** on or before noon, **Thursday**, July 2nd

*Note:* **Susie Skarl** at UNLV’s Lied Library is the Department of Public Administration’s liaison librarian. She is available to help with subject matter questions. Her contact information is found on her webpage: http://guides.library.unlv.edu/content.php?pid=10312
Important Policies and Notes

The following language has been taken from UNLV’s Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs:

Academic Misconduct – “Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.”

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: “Using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources.” See the “Student Academic Misconduct Policy” (approved December 9, 2005) located at: http://studentlife.unlv.edu/judicial/misconductPolicy.html.

Copyright – “The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.” To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, you are encouraged to visit the following website: http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright/.

Disability Resource Center (DRC) – The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Faculty should not provide students accommodations without being in receipt of this plan.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: Voice (702) 895-0866, TTY (702) 895-0652, fax (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/.

Rebelmail – Communication outside classroom will be done via Rebelmail. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after admission to the university. Non-admitted students should contact the Student Help Desk at (702) 895-0761, in the Student Union Room 231, or by e-mail: studenthelp@unlv.edu. See http://rebelmail.unlv.edu/ for additional information.

UNLV Writing Center – One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/.