I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

A strong democracy requires public officials with the ability to lead in an ethical manner. Although the media focuses public attention on ethics violations and failures in leadership at the highest and most visible levels of government, the effectiveness of the vast majority of public sector activity relies on the responsible exercise of discretion by public administrators at every level. Another premise of this course is that ethical leadership is the responsibility of not just elected or appointed public leaders, but every public servant and citizen. Examining your own ethical dilemmas can raise awareness of the challenges of being an ethical public servant.

Students will receive a firm grounding in general leadership and ethics theory, but will then study more specifically how these theories apply to the government setting. Specifically, ethical leadership in government requires an understanding of the shared nature of power and the multiple sources of responsibility in the public sector. Case studies, biographies of exemplary public administrators, literature, cinema, and personal reflection will be used to build awareness and understanding.

II. REQUIRED TEXTS


Required articles will also be placed on library reserve for second part of semester.
III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Contribution to Class (15%)

Discourse and participation are central features of this course. Students are expected to contribute to class discussion by expressing opinions, asking questions, and challenging each other in a respectful manner. This course will challenge students to engage in authentic dialogue; that is, to be open and honest about their beliefs and the basis for them. Each student is also expected to come to class fully prepared to discuss readings and present any assignments.

Specifically, each student should be prepared to share the following two items for each reading assignment:

***The single most significant sentence of passage in the readings.

***One key question from the reading.

Since it is not possible to contribute to class without being there, attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. More than three unexcused absences or frequent lateness to class (or leaving early) will result in a lowering of the grade for this portion of the course.

Students should understand that earning an A in this class will therefore require more than merely A’s on papers and exams.

B. Journal (15%)

Students must keep a personal journal during the course consisting of at least one journal entry each week. Consistent with the purpose of the class, the journal is meant to stimulate personal reflection over class readings and discussion, as well as relevant events experienced in one’s daily life or in the news. The purpose is to raise awareness of ethical leadership by continuous mental exercise.

A handout will be provided with guidelines for keeping a journal. The journal may be handwritten; it is required that a standard 8 1/2 X 11 notebook be used to keep the entries together. Each entry must be a minimum of four handwritten pages (single spaced). Entries should begin the first full week of class (January 7-11). To foster exchange between the students and instructor, all journals will be exchanged between students every two weeks, with student comments and suggestions provided each time. The instructor will also collect a random sample of the journals every two weeks, and will read all student journals over spring break and at the end of the course. Grading will be based on level of effort and thought demonstrated.
C. Personal Ethical Case (15%)

Each student must write and present a three page analysis (typed, double spaced) of a real ethical dilemma they have either personally experienced or observed. The Cooper decisionmaking model discussed in class must be used (p. 20 in text). Students will be asked to share their personal cases with the class during the course of the semester.

D. Exemplars Paper (15%)

Students must write and present a ten page paper (typed, double spaced) describing a public official (either current or historical) whose career demonstrates at least five of the ethical leadership concepts discussed in class. The paper must be based on a biography or autobiography of the official. A suggested framework for the paper will be distributed to the class. Student presentations will be scheduled throughout the second half of the semester. Since this assignment will require research on a chosen public figure, students will be expected to identify a public figure within the first month of class (by February 7). **No more than two students can do the same public figure, so subjects will be approved by the instructor on a first-come, first-served basis.**

E. Mid-Term and Final Exams (20% each)

In-class short answer or essay style exams will be given on February 28 and May 3 to test knowledge of course materials and the ability to apply concepts.

IV. CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan. 8  
**Introductions and Course Expectations**

**PART 1: THE RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC SERVANT**

Jan. 10  
**Overview of Ethical Decisionmaking**
Cooper, Preface and Chapter 1

Jan. 15  
**Public Ethics in Society Today**
Readings to be assigned.

Jan. 17  
**Objective and Subjective Sources of Responsibility**
Cooper, Chapter 3

Jan. 22  
**Film Excerpt: “The Contender”**
Cooper, Chapter 3 (cont’d)

***Journal Exchanges (Entries 1 & 2 Due)***
Jan. 24  Conflicts of Responsibility  
Cooper, Chapter 4

Jan. 29  Film Excerpt: “Primary Colors”  
Cooper, Chapter 4 (cont’d)

Jan. 31  External and Internal Controls in Public Organizations  
Cooper, Chapter 5

Feb. 5  Film Excerpt: “The Green Mile”  
***Journal Exchanges (Entries 3 & 4 Due)***  
Cooper, Chapter 5 (cont’d)

Feb. 7  Integrating Ethics Within the Organization  
Cooper, Chapter 6

Feb. 12  Film Excerpt: “Serving in Silence”  
Cooper, Chapter 6 (cont’d)

Feb. 14  Safeguarding Ethical Autonomy in Organizations  
Cooper, Chapter 7

Feb. 19  Film Excerpt: “Patch Adams”  
Cooper, Chapter 7 (cont’d)  
***Journal Exchanges (Entries 5 & 6 Due)***

Feb. 21  Wrap-up of Cooper Text  
Conclusion in Cooper

Feb. 26  Mid-Term Review

Feb. 28  Mid-Term Exam  
***Journals Due to Instructor (Entries through 7 & 8 Due)***

March 5&7  Spring Break

**PART 2: ETHICAL LEADERSHIP**

March 12  Guest Speaker Roundtable on Ethical Leadership

March 14  The Link Between Ethics and Leadership  
Reading: “Political Prudence and the Ethics of Leadership” by Patrick Dobel  
Begin Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case
March 19  
**Serving Multiple Masters**  
Reading: “Constitutional Subordinate Autonomy” by Thomas Barth  
Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case  

March 21  
**Promoting the Public Interest**  
Reading: “The Public Interest and Administrative Discretion” by Thomas Barth  
Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case  

March 26  
**Public Duty and Private Conduct**  
Readings: To be assigned  
***Journal Exchange (Entries 9 & 10 Due)***  
Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case  

March 28  
**Easter Vacation**  

April 2  
**Leading Citizens**  
Readings: To be assigned  
Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case  

April 4  
**Leadership in a Shared Power World**  
Readings: To be assigned  
Student Presentations on Personal Ethical Case  

April 9  
**Servant and Transformational Leadership**  
Readings: To be assigned  

April 11  
**Building Trust in Government**  
Readings: To be assigned  
***Journal Exchange (Entries 11 & 12 Due)***  

April 16  
**Student Presentations on Exemplars**  

April 18  
**Student Presentations on Exemplars**  
Readings: To be assigned  

April 23  
**Student Presentations on Exemplars**  
***Journal Exchange (Entries 13 & 14 Due)***  

April 25  
**Student Presentations on Exemplars**  

April 30  
**Review and Course Wrap-Up**  
***Journals (Entries 1-15) and Exemplars Papers Due***  

May 3  
**Final Exam**  
(Friday) 8:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.