PHIL 119: Ethical Leadership

Syllabus

Credits:	3
Prerequisites:	None
Delivery:	Web (ANGEL, http://cms.psu.edu)
Dates:	See the Calendar tab in ANGEL.
Instructor:	See the Orientation folder in ANGEL.

Note on Email: Please use Course Mail (ANGEL Email) for all private correspondence with the instructor. Only use the psu.edu email address above in an emergency.

Note on Response Time: Your instructor will reply to your questions, concerns, and comments in a timely manner, not to exceed TWO business days.

Course Overview

"He that outlives this day and comes safe home will stand o' tiptoe when this day is named." --Shakespeare (Henry V, Act 4, Scene 3)

Description

In politics, business, education, and society more generally we depend on leaders not only for their special expertise, but also for their integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness. Leaders are called upon to distribute important resources and to make difficult decisions on behalf of others, so we expect our leaders to be fair and just. Leaders also influence the conduct of others as they set examples for their followers. We expect our leaders to lead ethically and to encourage ethical conduct in others. A leader should be able to identify ethical challenges, be capable of analyzing them and imagining possible solutions, and be motivated to do the ethically right thing. In other words, we expect our leaders to possess a high degree of moral literacy.

Many of you will hold leadership positions at some point. One of the main goals of this course is to assist you in responding to ethically challenging leadership situations by introducing you to the framework of moral literacy and helping you to develop the capacities it involves. After an introductory module on Moral Literacy, you will hone the skills it involves through engaging with philosophical texts that articulate ethical theories, with literary texts that present ethical challenges, and with contemporary discussions that bear on ethics and leadership in our own contexts. .

In this course, we will look at a number of very different texts: some are classics of moral philosophy, some are dramatic depictions of leaders in action, and some are modern examples of both good and bad leadership. Throughout, I invite you to draw parallels between fictional examples, modern cases of ethical leadership and the philosophical theories we have studied.

The main goals of the course are as follows:
1. Learn how to identify, analyze and respond to challenging situations in an ethical way.
2. Learn some of the main ethical theories and apply them to resolve ethical dilemmas in leadership cases in various disciplines.
3. Engage in critical and respectful discussion with your peers on the basics of effective and ethical leadership.
4. Integrate a practice of moral literacy and ethical leadership in your own life.

Hopefully, this course will be more than an academic exercise: my goal is to confront you with serious issues that you will face both in and out of the classroom. Ultimately, I hope that it will help to make you more thoughtful, more effective, and more human leaders and followers.

Objectives

- **Moral Literacy:** Students will learn a certain set of skills to help them identify, analyze and respond to ethically challenging situations.
- **Ethics Content**: Students will learn several key concepts and ideas in ethics. In addition to learning the main ethical theories, students will also engage in discussions of plausibility of these theories.
- **Ethical Leadership Content**: Students will work on cases of modern ethical leadership in various disciplines and apply their skills of moral literacy and knowledge of ethics to discuss these cases.
- **Critical Reading, Thinking, & Reasoning Skills**: Students will learn to critically read and interpret philosophical texts. They will gain critical reasoning skills by assessing the quality of arguments in terms of their validity, strength, cogency, soundness, etc.
- **Dialogue & Formal Expression**: As most issues in ethics tend to be controversial and emotionally charged, students will develop their ability to engage in respectful conversation with others. Students will thus be encouraged to formulate their views on ethical issues by providing reasons for their position and criticizing alternatives by objecting to the *arguments* supporting these positions.
- **Articulation & Writing Skills**: Students will develop the capacity to respond to various arguments concerning ethical leadership in a rigorous and articulate way. They will learn how to summarize issues in ethical leadership in a succinct, charitable, and illustrative way and learn how to critically respond to arguments by raising objections and supporting their views with reasons.

Organization

This course is divided into 4 modules of varying length, from 2-6 lessons. Each will include some combination of primary and secondary readings, discussions, video lectures, film, and

writing assignments. The specific content and deadlines for each lesson is included on the course schedule, which is available on Angel.

Online Learning & Attendance

This course has been developed to promote asynchronous learning. The instructor and students do NOT meet on a designated day and time each week. For each lesson, there is a timeframe to complete all activities and assignments, and you may work at your own pace within that timeframe. However, you must adhere to the deadlines outlined on the calendar. (See the **Calendar** tab in ANGEL. Or check the **Orientation** folder under the **Lessons** tab.) You should log into the course daily to check for updates, review lessons, and participate in activities.

"It is best to be both feared and loved; however, if one cannot be both it is better to be feared than loved." -Niccolò Machiavelli, (The Prince)

Synchronous instruction vs. Asynchronous instruction

This course is an asynchronous course. This means that you do not have to meet on a designated day and time for instruction. The pace of this course is entirely up to you. However, it is the responsibility of the student to adhere to all deadlines and due dates. Once the class has completed a lesson, we will move onto the next lesson. This keeps the class on task and enables students to learn the material over an appropriate period of time. You *must* keep up with the course. **You will not be allowed to submit assignments after the due date**.

Texts & Other Materials

The following seven texts provided for you in ANGEL. Under each lesson, there is a link to each week's readings.

1. Plato, *Republic*
2. Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*
3. Mill, *Utilitarianism*
4. Machiavelli, *The Prince*
5. Shakespeare, *Henry V*
6. Euripides, *Iphigenia at Aulis*
7. Plato, *Apology*

Grading

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the scale below.

Scale

LETTER	MINIMUM PERCENT
A	95
A-	90
B+	88
B	82
B-	80
C+	78
C	70
D	60
F	0

Deadlines

All assignments (except the FINAL PAPER) are due by 11:55 pm Eastern Time on the assigned date (please refer to the Calendar for due dates). Students will be unable to go back and complete course work; it is your responsibility to keep up with your assignments.

The FINAL PAPER is due at **9:00 AM** on the assigned date.

Late assignments will not be accepted. They are due when they are due. Since all papers will be submitted electronically via Angel, I will know exactly when they are turned in. Requests for extensions must be received via email at least 72 hours prior to the assignment's due date. I reserve the right to deny any and all requests for extensions, for *whatever* reason. Do not assume that you will get an extension if you request one.

It is important to submit *something* for each assignment. If you do not submit an assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment.

Assignments

An overview of assignment categories is provided below. More specific instructions about each individual assignment can be found in the appropriate area online.

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENT
Quizzes	15
Blog Activities	15
Response Paper	15
Discussions	20
Final Paper Proposal	10
Final Paper	25
Total	**100**

Quizzes

Value: 15 %

Announced quizzes will test only your reading comprehension and your understanding of basic ideas in the text. Quizzes will consist of 5 multiple choice questions each. You will have 5 minutes to complete the quiz and you will have to do it all in one sitting: you cannot save your work and come back to it.

Blogs

Value: 15%

Over the course of the term you will complete a course blog comprised of 6 entries, each entry of which is a brief (approximately 250 - 350 word) answer to the questions/prompts specified for the blog. You are also required to respond to at least one of your classmates' blog post. By the end of the course, you will have made 12 posts in total: 6 original blog posts and 6 responses to your classmates' blog posts. The purpose of this blog is to develop the ability to understand the importance of making ethical decisions in the area of ethical leadership by looking at how ethical decisions influence social, political and cultural life in the world. Blog posts aim at helping students cultivate the core skills of moral literacy and ethical leadership (identifying, analyzing and responding to challenging situations in the domain), by engaging you in current real life ethical leadership cases and examples.

GUIDE for STUDENT BLOG POSTS

CATEGORIES OF POSTS: Discussions will be centered on one of four types of scenarios:

Ethics Sensitivity: Discussions and post will focus on identifying possible challenges and invite discussion about the ethical intensity of the situation.

Ethical Reasoning: Discussions and posts will focus on consequences, duties, and/or character would lead us to make judgments about the rightness or wrongness of certain leadership decisions

Moral Imagination: Discussion and posts will focus on imagining possible courses of action and reflecting on how well each potential course of action would fare according to ethical standards.

Moral Motivation: Discussions and posts will focus on the difficulties involved in following a course of action once it has been identified as the ethically right/best option, and reflect on how someone might work to overcome these difficulties.

An ideal blog post would demonstrate ethical literacy by calling attention to some ethical challenge or challenges that people face in leadership contexts and beginning to address the

significance of these challenges in a way that invites commentary and further discussion. In some cases, we might simply be identifying possible challenges and inviting discussion about the ethical intensity of the situation (ethics sensitivity). In other cases, we might offer some suggestions concerning how a focus on consequences, on duties, and/or on character would lead us to make judgments about the rightness or wrongness of certain leadership decisions (ethical reasoning). Some other cases may have us imagining possible courses of action and reflecting on how well each would fare according to ethical standards (moral imagination). We might also want to discuss the difficulties involved in following a course of action once it has been identified as the ethically right/best option, and reflect on how someone might work to overcome these difficulties (moral motivation). The post should make it clear to the reader which of these things the post's author is attempting to do, how they will do it, why it is something that the reader should be interested in, and where further information or other viewpoints might help move the discussion forward.

You must turn in your blog entries when they are due, or you will not receive credit!

Grading Rubric for New Blog Posts

Points	Criteria	Comments
/3	**Structure/Format/Mechanics:** The new blog post meets all the requirements concerning length, use of appropriate language, grammar and outside resources especially current ones etc. The blog is also organized, well-edited, clear and concise.	
/3	**Content:** The new blog post answers the question presented in the prompt and discusses it in a way that shows significant engagement with the moral literacy module and other course material.	
/3	**Ethical Reasoning:** The new blog post presents insightful comments on the challenges the dilemma presents and how to overcome them. It also provides some resources and ideas/questions for further discussion.	
Total:	**/9**	

Grading Rubric for Response Blog Posts

Points	Criteria	Comments
/3	**Structure/Format/Mechanics:** The response blog post meets all the requirements concerning length, use of appropriate language, grammar and outside resources especially current ones etc. The blog is also organized, well-edited, clear and concise.	

/3	**Content:** The response blog post extends the discussion in new directions. It goes beyond affirming/denying what has been stated in the post. It also uses references to literature, readings, and personal experiences.	
Total:	**/6**	

Response Paper

Value: 15%

The response paper, for which you will sign up in the second lesson, is a longer (800 - 1200 word) analysis of some particular element of our reading as it relates to the course. The response paper can be an analysis of some particular element of the text, a comparison to some other text or thinker, or an analysis of how the text fits into the broad topic of ethical leadership. Be sure to make direct reference to the text and do more than just summarize the reading.

Discussions

Value: 20%

Scheduled discussions allow you to demonstrate your knowledge of a particular topic, refine your ideas, and interact with your colleagues. Your participation in these scheduled discussions will be rated on a pass/fail basis. You will be judged on the relevance to ongoing discussions, the sophistication of your inquiry or answer, and the quality of your expression.

For each discussion, you must post at least one original comment on the discussion topic (or you may introduce a new topic if it pertains to the reading) and at least one response to the posting of a fellow student or your instructor. Your first post must be posted by Sunday, and your second by Tuesday, at 11:55pm Eastern Time.

Final Paper Project

Value: 35%

Your final paper for this course will consist of two pieces. The 'Proposal' is worth 10% of your final grade and the Paper itself worth 25% of your final grade. The rationale and details follow below.

1. Final Paper Proposal (10% of the final grade)

You will submit a proposal for your final paper: this will include a brief statement of the topic you wish to research; no fewer than 3 proposed sources (at least 2 of which must be print (i.e. non internet) sources, and a statement of how your project relates to the course. These will

receive feedback if necessary, but will not be given a letter grade. If you submit an acceptable proposal, you will receive full credit.

Final Paper Assignment (25% of the final grade)

Your final paper will consist of a research project of your choice concerning the topic of ethics in leadership. You will find suggestions for paper topics below and in the assignment drop box, but you are not bound by the suggestions given. Your paper should be 1800 - 2400 words and conform to scholarly standards of style and documentation. You may use APA or MLA format for citations, but remain consistent throughout.
You will have two options:

- **Option 1: comparison paper on two figures or schools of thought**

This is, generally speaking, a "compare and contrast" paper. In it you will take up the positions regarding leadership and its ethical content of two thinkers, one and only one of whom is part of our reading list. The other is someone you will research on your own. I expect you to go beyond just the readings we've done in class, and your text should draw on between three and eight outside sources, which must be cited and listed in a bibliography. At least two of your sources must be hard copy (*i.e.* not from the internet.) Compare and contrast the two thinkers you have chosen: in what ways do they overlap, in what ways do they conflict? Is one influenced by another? Do they share some common root? How do they view human nature differently? How do they view the ultimate source of ethical value? What does each one claim constitutes a "good leader?"

The authors we considered in this class are
J. S. Mill   N. Machiavelli
Plato   I. Kant

Some other figures you might wish to take up:

David Hume   Confucius
Cicero   Seneca
John Locke   Karl Marx
G. W. F. Hegel   John Rawls
Paul Tillich   Hannah Arendt
Marcus Aurelius   Julius Evola
Aristotle   Benjamin Franklin
Milton Friedman   Robert Nozick

This is *not* a comprehensive list. If you have other ideas I encourage you to pursue them.

- **Option 2: Application of theory**

In this paper, you will take up one of the key philosophical thinkers (Plato, Mill, Kant, or Machiavelli) from this class, and apply his theoretical or historical approach regarding leadership to some particular contemporary issue. I expect you to go beyond just the readings we've done in class, and your text should draw on between three and eight outside sources, which must be cited and listed in a bibliography. At least two of your sources must be hard copy (*i.e.* not from the internet.)
How are these theories applicable to contemporary issues? Are there elements of today's society that are so different as to make these ideas untenable? How might we make use of philosophical insights into leadership to address contemporary problems?

Some issues you might wish to take up:

Leadership in Religion   Corporate Citizenship Capitalism and Democracy   Leadership in Education Minorities in Leadership   Leadership at home and abroad   Parenting as leadership

This is *not* a comprehensive list. If you have other ideas I encourage you to pursue them

In neither case are you limited by this rubric. If you wish to pursue a paper topic on the subject of Ethical Leadership that does not fit easily into either of these formats, you may still do so. You must submit your proposal in the appropriate drop box by the assigned due date. Be sure to carefully read the requirements for the proposal so you do not leave any element out.

Note on Feedback: Your instructor will reply to your questions, concerns, and comments in a timely manner, not to exceed two *business* days. Sometimes the response will be "I will get back to you later" if the matter is not urgent. Do not expect a reply before the allotted time has elapsed. The "General Questions" or "Technical Help" message boards should be the first recourse for communicating specific questions or problems. Students are encouraged to respond to the problems and questions posted by their peers. When corresponding with your instructor or classmates, please use appropriate language and etiquette. Email correspondence should be free of grammatical and mechanical errors. Email slang and lingo is not appropriate in any type of instructional setting. You can expect meaningful feedback on all written assignments within two weeks of the deadline.

"Power…is often very quiet." -Genesis P-Orridge

Instructor's Discussion Board/Forum Policies

- Try to think of discussion boards as an extension of your real-life classroom.
  - Communicating through writing is different than communicating orally. These pointers cover common issues that may help to convey your ideas more clearly and prevent misunderstandings.
  - While the instructor will occasionally post to the forums, they are primarily for discussion among students, so don't rely on the instructor to guide the discussion.
- For complex posts, try composing in Word, edit, and then copy/paste into Angel.
- Try to keep related ideas organized under separate threads.
  - If you'd like to express a new idea in a particular discussion board, create a new post. The title of your post should be a brief phrase which summarizes your post.
  - If you are replying to someone else's post, hit "Reply." Do not create a new post.
- Very often people will read postings on a discussion board but not make a reply if it is not required of them. Sometimes students become upset when they see that their post has been read but with no replies. Please do not feel offended.
- Also, do not feel obligated to respond to a post if you feel it does not require a response.
  - Excessive posts that contain no essential new ideas may create more work for everyone.

- Please remember that not everyone comes from the same background, or shares the same values and ideals as you.
- Please be appropriate, professional, and considerate of others.
- Your "tone" is a very important part of electronic communication.
- If you are unsure of your tone, try reading your discussion board post out loud before you submit it.
  - When you read it out loud, does it sound the way you would speak to another student in the classroom?
- The point of the discussion board is to share ideas among your classmates, not to prove that you are right and they are wrong.
- Differences of opinion are going to occur in any forum, and your goal should be simply to convey your ideas as clearly as possible.
- If you wish to convey a humorous tone in your discussion board post, try using emoticons (☺), add comments like "Just kidding!" Do not use slang.
- If you find something on the discussion board that strikes you as upsetting or unacceptable, please be sure to let your instructor know about it *as soon as possible*.
  - Very often, the author of the material does not realize how their words "sound" to you.
  - Dealing with such issues in a straight-forward manner offers a growth opportunity and should be facilitated by the instructor.
  - Not dealing with them will undermine group process.
- The instructor has the right to remove any discussions that are not appropriate or offend another student. Any student who posts an inappropriate of offensive response will be blocked from participating in the discussion board and will receive an F for that assignment. Students are also subject to classroom behavior and conduct policies in the student code of conduct.

Additional Comments

This will be a very intensive course. The demands on you will be very high. Some of the readings are quite difficult, although I've tried to keep their length to a minimum. As I have noted above, I do expect you to keep up with the readings. Do not rely on video lectures or discussions to be a substitute for reading the assignments.

If you have specific problems or requirements, please, by all means, talk to me. The best way to contact me is via E-mail.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction. For further information, please read University Faculty Senate Policy 49-20 at http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20.

Disability Access

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 814-863-1807 (V/TTY). For further information regarding ODS, please visit the Office for Disability Services Website at http://equity.psu.edu/ods/.

In order to receive consideration for course accommodations, you must contact ODS and provide documentation. (See the documentation guidelines at http://equity.psu.edu/ods/guidelines/.) If the documentation supports the need for academic adjustments, ODS will provide a letter identifying appropriate academic adjustments. Please share this letter and discuss the adjustments with your instructor as early in the course as possible. You must contact ODS and request academic adjustment letters at the beginning of each semester.

Nondiscrimination

Penn State is committed to equal access to programs, facilities, admission and employment for all persons. It is the policy of the University to maintain an environment free of harassment and free of discrimination against any person because of age, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), veteran status, sex, sexual orientation, marital or family status, pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, physical or mental disability, gender, perceived gender, gender identity, genetic information or political ideas. Discriminatory conduct and harassment, as well as sexual misconduct and relationship violence, violates the dignity of individuals, impedes the realization of the University's educational mission, and will not be tolerated. For further information, please visit the Affirmative Action Office Website at http://www.psu.edu/dept/aaoffice/.

TEACH Act

The materials on the course Website are only for the use of students enrolled in this course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated.

University Emergency Procedure

In the event of a University-wide emergency, the course may be subject to changes. Exigent circumstances may require alternative delivery methods, class materials, and interactions with the instructor and/or classmates. In addition, there may be revisions to grading policies, attendance policies, and the course calendar, including assignments and their deadlines.

In the event of a University-wide emergency, please refer to the ANGEL Website at http://cms.psu.edu for specific information related to the course. For more general information about the emergency situation, please refer to the Penn State Website at http://www.psu.edu or Penn State News at http://news.psu.edu.

To register with PSUAlert, a service designed to alert the Penn State community when situations arise that affects the ability of a campus to function normally, please go to https://psualert.psu.edu/psualert/. Subscribers can receive alerts by text message to cell phones, and also can elect to have alerts sent to an email address.

Syllabus Subject to Change

The class will likely adhere to the information outlined in the syllabus and calendar, but adjustments may be made based on what actually transpires during the term. Remaining in the course after reading this syllabus will signal that you accept the possibility of changes and responsibility for being aware of them.