

## Political Science H567

### Honors Seminar in Political Science: Politics and Ethics

Winter 2005

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Tues., Thurs. 1:30-3:18  
Office hrs: Wed. 2-4  
2127 Derby Hall

*This seminar will explore the relationship between ethical action and political reality. We will consider the problem of "dirty hands" in political theory and the conflicts among ethical frameworks that appear to give rise to it. In the course of our investigation, we will trace these theoretical difficulties through a variety of specific issue areas, including violence and war, deception and corruption, and cooperation with and disobedience to authority, using both philosophical analyses and case studies. No particular background is required for the course, though a familiarity with normative political theory and/or philosophical ethics will be helpful.*

#### Course Requirements

There are three main course requirements:

1. Seminar presentation and seminar participation. Each member of the seminar is expected to participate each week in seminar discussion. In addition, each member of the seminar will be responsible for making a presentation designed to summarize one of the supplementary texts as well as help spark seminar discussion. These topics will be assigned on January 8. The presentation and seminar participation more generally count for 25% of the final course grade (10% for the presentation and 15% for general participation).
2. Midterm paper. One 6-8 page paper on a subject of the seminar members' choice, based on the course readings. This paper will count for 25% of the final course grade and is due on February 10.
3. Final paper. One 12-15 page paper on a subject of the seminar members' choice, based on the course readings. This paper will count for 50% of the final course grade and is due on March 12.

#### Course Materials

The following books are available for purchase at the Ohio State Book Store, SBX, and Long's:

Arthur Isak Applbaum, *Ethics for Adversaries*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Marshall Cohen, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Scanlon, eds. *War and Moral Responsibility*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974.

Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, editors. *Ethics and Politics: Cases and Comments*. Third edition. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, Inc.

Kazuo Ishiguro. *The Remains of the Day*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993

Michael Walzer. *Just and Unjust Wars*. Third edition. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

**Academic Honesty:** I expect all of the work you do in this course to be your own. I will tolerate absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation). I will report any cases of cheating or plagiarism to the university committee on academic misconduct, and they will be handled according to university policy.

**Disability:** If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Office for Disability Services, I encourage you to do so.

### Course Syllabus and Schedule of Class Meetings

#### I. Introductory

##### Tuesday, January 6

Introduction and overview of course; Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch, 15-18 (distributed in class)

##### Thursday, January 8

Principal texts: Michael Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" (in Cohen et. al.); Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" (in coursepack); Kenneth Winston, "Necessity and Choice in Political Ethics: Varieties of Dirty Hands" (in coursepack)

Supplementary texts: Ronald Beiner, "Missionaries and Mercenaries"; Mark Bowden, "The Dark Art of Interrogation"

## IV. Deception and Corruption

### A. Deception

Thursday, January 29

Principal texts: "Lying in Office," "Disinformation for Quadaffi," and "The Iran-Contra Affair" (in *Ethics and Politics*); "The Two Oaths of Richard Helms" (in coursepack); Christine Korsgaard, "The right to lie: Kant on dealing with evil" (in coursepack)

Supplementary text: Hannah Arendt, "Truth and Politics"

### B. Publicity

Tuesday, February 3

Principal texts: Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, "The Value of Publicity" (in coursepack); "The Senate Confirmation of Justice Clarence Thomas" (in *Ethics and Politics*); "17 People" (in coursepack)

### C. Corruption

Thursday, February 5

Principal texts: "The Keating Five" and "Scandal in Santa Clara," in *Ethics and Politics*; Walter Lippmann, "A Theory about Corruption." (in coursepack); Michael Sandel, "Votes for Sale" (in coursepack); Michael Walzer, "Power Drill" (in coursepack)

Supplementary text: Dennis Thompson, "Dynamics of Legislative Corruption"

## V. Role Morality

Tuesday, February 10

Principal texts: Sir Michael Quinlan, "Ethics in the Public Service" (in coursepack); Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*, pp. 31-44, 85-117, 138-139, 146-154, 164-169, 199-201

MIDTERM PAPERS DUE TODAY IN CLASS

Thursday, February 12

Principal texts: Michael Hardimon, "Role Obligations"; Arthur Applbaum, *Ethics for Adversaries*, ch. 2

Supplementary text: A. John Simmons, "External Justifications and Institutional Roles"

Supplementary texts: David Ross, "Prima Facie Duties"; R.M. Hare, "Moral Conflicts"; Alan Donagan, "Consistency in Rationalist Moral Systems"

Tuesday, March 9

Principal texts: Bernard Williams, "Conflicts of Value"; Thomas Nagel, "The Fragmentation of Value"; Charles Taylor, "The Diversity of Goods"

Thursday, March 11

Principal texts: Michael Stocker, "Dirty Hands and Ordinary Life"; Charles Taylor, "Leading a Life."

Friday, March 12

FINAL PAPERS DUE FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 4:00pm

## **GRADING STANDARDS for essay assignments**

**John M. Parrish**

Essays will be graded by evaluating the degree to which they achieve the standard set for the course in five categories:

### **THESIS and ARGUMENT**

The essay offers a complex, interesting, and satisfactory answer to the question or problem presented, and the essay focuses exclusively throughout on stating, explaining, and defending that answer.

### **STRUCTURE and ORGANIZATION**

The essay consists of a series of unified paragraphs logically following one another, with a clear point to each, and with effective transitions between them. The ideas of the essay develop within paragraphs sentence by sentence, without digressions, toward the establishment of the thesis and argument.

### **EVIDENCE and SUPPORT**

The essay offers support for each major point of its argument, drawing on the assigned readings and, where appropriate, other sources. The evidence (facts, reasons, or examples) which it offers as support for its points is relevant, clear, precise, and detailed, to a degree sufficient to support belief in its claims.

### **ANALYSIS and NUANCE**

The essay demonstrates the writer's clear familiarity with and understanding of the assigned reading. It qualifies and differentiates its thesis where possible; analyzes evidence when introduced; deals where appropriate with possible objections to the evidence and interpretation offered; confronts where appropriate the best alternative views to those of its thesis; and generates where possible original and stimulating insight into the material.

### **CLARITY and STYLE**

The essay clearly expresses the writer's thoughts and especially the major points of the writer's argument. It conforms to standard patterns of spelling and grammar; employs words chosen to express the writer's meaning with specificity and precision; uses a sufficient variety and sophistication of sentence patterns; and engages the reader in the essay with its liveliness and, where appropriate, even artistry or flair.