

SENIOR SEMINAR
Pols 190 – Fall 2009
Professor Lawrence Quill
San Jose State University

LECTURES HELD:
Mon/Wed 3-4:15pm
CL 318

OFFICE HOURS:
Mon/Wed 1:00-2:30
Clark Hall, 402E
(408) 924-5563
lawrence.quill@sjsu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an applied ethics course that will employ a text-based and case study approach to examining moral dilemmas in public life. We will draw on different philosophical traditions and employ an applied ethics approach to understanding institutional dynamics and the constraints these impose on the decision-making process. The aims of the course are:

- To introduce students to the main normative ethical theories in Anglo-American Philosophy
- To apply normative ethical theories to questions arising from cases of public policy debate in the US or elsewhere
- To provide an opportunity to study the way in which ideas and principles play a role in structuring public deliberation on questions of ethical importance
- To provide a context for studying key political principles

PREREQUISITES

The course is designed for students with an interest in applied ethics, particularly those interested in pursuing careers in government/public service. Students should be aware that this is a reading and writing intensive course. All students need some background in the critical reading of original texts. Political Science 3 is the suggested prerequisite, but philosophy, literature, and history courses also offer practice in reading original sources.

REQUIRED TEXT

Combating Corruption, Encouraging Ethics
Propaganda
Remains of the Day

Students are required to check the website each week for specific reading assignments and additional handouts.

WEBSITE

<http://web.me.com/lrq/Seminar> (case sensitive!) login: spartans password: spartans

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The B.A. in Political Science requires majors to take a minimum of one upper division course in political thought. This course fulfills the requirement, as well as counting towards the normal total of upper division courses. This course is not designed only for political science students. Students from many other majors have proven that they can do as well in this course as the Political Science majors. By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Present in writing theoretically informed proposals for ethical guidelines in selected public policy areas
- Present in writing some account of the way political systems and procedures constrain the solution of ethical problems in public policy

- Be familiar with some widely employed principles of public policy, understanding their logic and their scope of application

REQUIREMENTS

Essay (30%)

Case Study(30%)

Midterm Examination (15%)

Student Presentation(15%)

Class Participation (10%)

Students are required to check the website every week for instructions regarding essays and exams. Missed or late assignments receive an automatic F.

CALENDAR

Monday	
8/24	Introduction
8/31	Harm
9/7	No Class
9/14	Leadership
9/21	Bureaucracy
9/28	Obedience
10/5	Literature
10/12	Revision Session Essay Due
10/19	Class Cancelled
10/26	Lying
11/2	Dirty Hands
11/9	Hypocrisy
11/16	Corruption
11/23	Dissent
11/30	Future Case Study Due
12/7	Conference Day

Wednesday	
8/26	Ethical Life
9/2	Harm
9/9	Rights
9/16	Leadership
9/23	Bureaucracy
9/30	Obedience
10/7	Literature
10/14	Propaganda Take Home Midterm
10/21	Propaganda Midterm Due
10/28	Lying
11/4	Dirty Hands
11/11	No Class
11/18	Corruption
11/25	Dissent
12/2	Conference Day
Final	Check Website for Instructions

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

CAMPUS POLICY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

See <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/s90-5.htm> about Academic Senate Policy S90-5

PLAGIARISM

See http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct (Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Dev)

DEPARTMENTAL WRITING POLICY

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm.

For assistance, the SJSU Writing Center is staffed by professional [instructors](#) and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the [seven SJSU colleges](#). Writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. It is your responsibility to arrange a time to meet with the instructors. Consult with your professor in advance to determine whether you need assistance with your writing.

Arguably the best way to improve your own writing is to read quality material on a regular basis. To that end, students are encouraged to read articles from scholarly sources but also newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, The New York Times, and The Economist. These publications also contain articles of direct relevance to their political science classes.

QUESTIONS?

Finally, if you get stuck, feel overwhelmed, or just want to clarify something from the reading or lectures, ask me. I am here to help.