

Political Science 6201  
 Theory of Public Administration--Responsibility  
 Fall 2003  
 lhowe@westga.edu  
 770-830-2375

Professor Howe  
 Pafford 134  
 Hours: MW: 10–3:00

“To find justice in the family, where everyone counts, is hard enough; to find it in a bureaucracy, where no one counts, is infinitely more difficult.”

--Lewis Mainzer.

“We’re not a communal nation, dear; giving, but not sharing, outgoing, but not friendly.”

--Edward Albee, *A Delicate Balance*.

## Syllabus

Purpose: What is the meaning of administrative responsibility in a democracy and how might we foster it? This course will engage students in a number of ethical debates concerning our lives in organizations. What characteristic obstacles and dilemmas does the bureaucratic life throw in the path of the good person? What ought a good career public servant do when confronted with these obstacles? Is there a substantial range of actions concerning what is morally good or bad about which serious people can legitimately disagree which require an administrator to act? What sorts of ethical behavior can we rightfully demand of public servants? What sorts of ethical standards can we realistically demand of ourselves? This course is not densely fact-based; it seeks to induce reasoned reflection about good public administration and good public officials.

### Materials:

McSwite, O.C. (2002) *Invitation to Public Administration*  
 Hannah Arendt. (1964) *Eichmann in Jerusalem*  
 Warren, Mark R. (2001) *Dry Bones Rattling*  
 Berman, et. al. (1998) *The Ethics Edge*  
 Other materials will be on reserve at the Library Circulation Desk

Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate an ability to identify and critically assess ethical issues arising out of a variety of administrative settings. Through written papers, presentations, and debates students demonstrate their familiarity with competing ethical perspectives within the American political regime.

Requirements: Each student is asked to read the assigned items carefully, to write five brief review essays on the readings, to participate actively in seminar discussions of the readings, to prepare an original term paper and to give an oral presentation based on the term paper (it may be in progress or completed at the time of presentation). There will be no examinations. I am sympathetic to your finding a topic that suits your intellectual background, and work plans. However, your paper must have relevance beyond the narrow concerns of your program or workplace and anecdotes from work must be related to substantial ethical themes from the discipline’s literature: like democratic accountability, professionalism, or justice.

- Five Brief Essays	(8% each)	40%
-Term Paper		
Oral Presentation		10%
Paper		50%

### Assignments

Aug 23	Introduction: Ethical Theories
Sep 6	Thompson, “The Possibility of Administrative Ethics” (handout) Lewis Mainzer, “Injustice and Bureaucracy” (handout)

	Lipsky, "Street-Level Bureaucracy" (reserve)
Sep 13	BERMAN, pp. 1-57; BERMAN, pp. 159-236.
Sep 20	Rose, "Governing Enterprising Individuals" (reserve) O'Malley, "Consuming Risks" (reserve)
Sep 27	Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" (reserve) Thompson, "Democratic Dirty Hands" (reserve)
Oct 3	MCSWITE, <u>Invitation to Public Administration</u> pp. ix-65 Movie, "Roshomon" In class (83 min)
Oct 11	MCSWITE, <u>Invitation to Public Administration</u> pp. 66-113
Oct 18	Chaloupka, Excerpts from <u>Everybody Knows</u> , pp. 3-53. (reserve) Movie, "Breaker Morant"
Oct 25	ARENDT, <u>Eichmann in Jerusalem</u> Chapters 1-8 Movie, "Wannsee Conference" (90 min) In class
Nov 1	ARENDT, <u>Eichmann in Jerusalem</u> Chapters 9-15; Epilogue, Postscript <b>Paper topics due</b>
Nov 8	WARREN, Dry Bones Rattling, Chapters 1-4.
Nov 15	WARREN, Dry Bones Rattling, Chapters 5-9.
Nov 22	Student Presentations
Dec 6	Student Presentations

### Essays

Five brief review essays over the assigned readings are required. They ask for good reading and careful reflection, not research. A review should demonstrate that one has read and understood the assigned text. The last paragraph might contain such things as: your evaluation of the material, any perplexities or questions you need to raise, any inconsistencies you found, any moral disagreements you care to mention, and, of course, any new thoughts of your own concerning the issues of administration and democracy, responsibility or accountability. Each review should be two to three double-spaced typewritten pages. It should use good grammar and sentence structure and stick to a theme. Please do not write substantially longer papers.

**Submit these on or by the day indicated, late submissions will not be counted:**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| (1). Due September 6  | Thompson, Mainzer, or Lipsky                |
| (2). Due September 13 | Berman (any two essays)                     |
| (2). Due September 20 | Rose & O'Malley on governmentality          |
| (2). Due September 27 | Walzer versus Thompson on dirty hands       |
| (3). Due October 11   | McSwite and/or "Roshomon"                   |
| (3), Due October 14   | Everybody Knows                             |
| (3) Due October 21    | Everybody Knows related to "Breaker Morant" |
| (4). Due October 25   | <u>Eichmann in Jerusalem</u>                |
| (4) Due November 1    | Eichmann in Jerusalem & Wannsee Conference  |

(5). Due November 15 Issues brought up by Dry Bones Rattling

Sample Topic: Lewis Mainzer characterized the successful supervisor as a person who, though appearing to be an “organization man,” works only for himself. “In sum,” he says, “the subordinate, through the justified language of the needs of the organization, is used to meet the superior’s need for success.” Is there something about merit systems which encourages people to treat each other as means to their own end?

Sample Topic: Is there a difference between public and private morality? Perhaps the good person would be a bad citizen. Is it possible to hold public servants accountable for atrocities they commit in the name of preserving the freedom and security of the rest of us?

Sample Topic: Hannah Arendt reports that Adolf Eichmann seemed to believe himself to be a decent man because he was a good supervisor and he received routine promotions. Is there something about organizational life itself that fosters a sort of ordered inhumanity?

### Term Paper

Twenty pages or so will normally suffice. Be thorough but concise. Write clearly, organize tightly, and proofread the final version. Any topic reasonably within the scope of the course may be considered. A paper that partially or substantially coincides with one being written for another course may be acceptable, provided both faculty have approved and the paper fits this course. You are expected to use scholarly sources for your paper. Topics should originate in our course readings or movies. Do not write about your own workplace. In any case, you must check with the instructor concerning proposed topics. Submit your topic by **November 1**. Write a short essay with the following format:

My paper topic is \_\_\_\_\_.

I intend to argue (or show, or analyze, or evaluate, or synthesize) that

\_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_.

List at least five sources for your bibliography.

### Grading

All essay exams are graded with the following rubric in mind. The weighting is roughly in the order they appear. Notice, length is not one of the criteria listed; I do not grade by the yard. You should focus on knowing what you are talking about, working out your own thoughts, and making the course ideas your own.

	Not Satisfactory	Weak	Good	Very Good	Excellent	
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Memory of course information.
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Understanding of central ideas
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Imaginative and creative use of subject matter
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Effectiveness of writing



Michel Tournier, Friday (A retelling of the Robinson Crusoe story.)  
Herbert Marcuse, One-Dimensional Man

### **III. With the Organization.**

#### Lawfulness: Rules and Procedures to Control Public Officials

Kenneth Culp Davis, Discretionary Justice, 1979.

Theodore Lowi, The End of Liberalism

Theodore Lowi, "Two Roads to Serfdom: Liberalism and Conservatism and Administrative Power"

#### Regime Values and Agency Authority as a Moral Guide.

John Rohr, Ethics for Bureaucrats

John Rohr, To Run a Constitution (great book!)

Walmsely, "Blacksburg Manifesto"

### **IV. Some Suggested Relevant Movies**

Colonel Redl (dir. Istavan Szabo with Klaus Maria Brandauer)

Mephisto (dir. Istavan Szabo with Klaus Maria Brandauer)

Breaker Morant (dir. Bruce Beresford)

The Wannsee Conference (dir. Heinz Schirk)

City of Hope (dir. John Sayles)

A Taxing Woman (dir. Juzo Itami)

Uranus (dir. Claud Berri with Gerard Depardieu)

Sweet Smell of Success (dir. Alexander MacKendrick with Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis)

Shame (dir. Ingmar Bergman with Liv Ullmann and Max)

The Matrix

-