

THE FUND FOR AMERICAN STUDIES:
THE INSTITUTE ON PHILANTHROPY AND VOLUNTARY SERVICE

GOVT 472-10 The Ethics and Values of Philanthropy
Course Syllabus, Summer 2009

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Course Description

The theme of this course is, adapting a motto from development economist William Easterly: “Just asking that aid actually help.” More on this momentarily.

The course examines both domestic and international giving, and in each we will examine arguments and evidence about how we should help. The word “philanthropy” does not have exactly the same meaning as “charitable giving,” the former suggesting larger gifts or more systematic giving. But the topic we are interested in is *giving*: When should I give? To whom should I give? For what purposes should I give? How should I give? We will read works defending various positions, we will examine the reasons the authors give defending their positions, and we will evaluate the soundness of the positions. We will also consider the American tradition of philanthropy, which is almost unique in the modern world.

We begin the course with a review of some central elements of moral theory, political theory, and the principles of the American Founding. We then consider a handful of classic sources on the topics of markets, money-making, and responsibility to others. We then move to the topic of domestic philanthropic giving, charity, and aid. In the final part of the course we turn our attention to international and overseas aid.

Throughout the course we will ask not only about intentions and plans but also about results. Our starting premise is that the primary purpose of philanthropy and aid is to help their recipients. A corollary of this premise is that if some kinds of giving do not actually help—or if, God forbid, they make things worse—then these count as reasons to reconsider that kind of giving.

The West has a great deal of wealth; indeed, our level of wealth is unprecedented in the history of the world. Thus the good we can do is considerable. But the damage that wrongheaded programs or policies can do is considerable as well. We thus owe it to the potential recipients of our aid, to the potential donors, and to ourselves to work through the complexities involved carefully and conscientiously.

Required Books and Materials

Note: Where they are not available online, the books listed below are available in every research library, or for purchase from any online book store. Many of them are available in discounted used copies as well. Required readings not listed below will be available either by e-mail or as handouts.

1. Friedman, Milton. "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits" (1970). Available here: <http://www.colorado.edu/studentgroups/libertarians/issues/friedman-soc-resp-business.html>.
2. Jefferson, Thomas. First Inaugural Address. Available here: <http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres16.html>.
3. Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government* (1690). Available here: http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php&title=763.
4. Otteson, James. *Actual Ethics*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.
5. Otteson, James, ed. *Adam Smith: Selected Philosophical Writings*. Imprint Academic, 2004.
6. Murray, Charles. *In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State*. AEI Press, 2006.
7. Singer, Peter. *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty*. Random House, 2009.
8. Sumner, William Graham. "The Forgotten Man" (1883). Available here: http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=1654&chapter=108194&layout=html&Itemid=27.
9. Washington, George. Farewell Address. Available here: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp.

Course Requirements

1. You must attend every class, each time having read the assigned materials and prepared to discuss it.
2. There are in-class quizzes every Thursday.
3. You have to write a final paper on an assigned topic. This will be due shortly after the last class meets. Details will be forthcoming.

Tentative Course Schedule

Note: The schedule below is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in advance.

Week One, June 8–11: Foundations

1. Review of general moral theory: deontology vs. utilitarianism.
2. The American Founding: Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*, chaps. 1–5, 7–11, 18, and 19; Washington's Farewell Address; and Jefferson's First Inaugural Address.
3. Review of general political theory: Rawls vs. Nozick. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, chap. 43 (handout); Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 155–74 (handout).
4. Judgment based on freedom and responsibility: Otteson, *Actual Ethics*, chaps. 1 and 2.

Week Two, June 15–18: Classic Sources

1. Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *Wealth of Nations* (SPW, 42–50, 69–75, 91–102, 129–36, 143–9, 151–2, and 166–73).
2. Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth,” parts I and II (1889) (handout); and “The Advantages of Poverty” (1891) (handout).
3. William Graham Sumner, “The Forgotten Man” (1883).

Week Three, June 22–25: Domestic Aid

1. Milton Friedman, “The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits.”
2. Murray, *In Our Hands*, Introduction and chaps. 1, 2, and 8–12.
3. Brooks, *Gross Domestic Happiness*, chaps. 7, 8, and Conclusion (e-mail or handout).

Week Four, June 29–July 2: International Aid

1. Singer, *The Life You Can Save*, chaps. 1–3 and 8–10.
2. Otteson, *Actual Ethics*, chaps. 3–5.
3. Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, chaps. 1–3, 5, and Postscript (e-mail or handout).
4. Easterly, *The White Man’s Burden*, chaps. 1–3 and 11 (e-mail or handout).

Institute on Philanthropy and Voluntary Service
 The Ethics and Values of Philanthropy (3 credits)
 Summer 2009
 GOVT: 472-11

Instructor: Nicholas Capaldi

Text: Susan Raymond, *Future of Philanthropy*
 Additional Articles to be e-mailed

PURPOSE

This purpose of this course is to enhance your appreciation for, and ability to deal with, (a) the ethical issues that can arise in the course of philanthropic activity: (b) the reciprocal interaction between philanthropy and commerce and the other institutions in society, and (c) the new ethical challenges posed by the evolution of science, technology, globalization, bureaucratization, government, law, politics, and religion.

Expected Outcome: Students will become more self-conscious and more constructively self-critical of their ethical preconceptions. They should have some awareness that ethical, social, and political issues are of vital importance to all organizations. Students should be better able to identify ethical challenges and be aware of the strategies of resources available to deal with them effectively.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Requirements and Grading:

4 papers @ 10% each	40%
In-class Essay Exam	20%
Class exercise	10%
Take-Home Final Exam	20%
Class Participation	10%

Three One Page Papers

One page papers (250 words maximum, double-spaced). You will learn how to get to the point and be concise. Remember that any paper not double-spaced or error-free is an automatic failure. There should be at least two paragraphs on the page. **All papers written as one-paragraph will be automatic failures and receive a grade of “zero.”** Please read instructions on how to write a one-page paper. **ALL PAPERS WRITTEN FOR ME MUST HAVE AT LEAST TWO PARAGRAPHS ON EACH PAGE. I do not accept stream-of-consciousness writing.** Any paper that is not double-spaced will be an automatic failure. Since you have spell check and grammar check on your software, all spelling and grammatical errors will result in an automatic failure.

Schedule

1. **July 6**
Introduction
Read: Capaldi, Ethical Foundations of Free Market Societies

2. **July 7**
Two narratives of Modernity: Locke v. Rousseau
Read: Locke, Rousseau; Simon, “Is the Supply of Natural Resources Finite?”
First one-page paper: Simon

3. **July 9**
Poverty & Welfare
Read: Oakeshott, “The Masses in Representative Democracy”
Second one-page paper: What is Oakeshott’s explanation of the Anti-Individual?

4. **July 13**
Role of Government
Read Sunstein, “Paradoxes of Regulation”
Third one-page paper: Identify and exemplify three of the paradoxes.

5. **July 14**
Affirmative Action
Read Capaldi on AA

6. **July 16**
In class essay-exam

7. **July 20**
Nature, Structure, and role of Corporations
Read: Friedman, Freeman
Fourth one-page paper: Compare and Contrast Friedman and Freeman
Foundations and the Biz-War
Read: Jarol Mannheim

8. **July 21**

Globalization
Read: Maitland

9. **July 24**

Philanthropy Economics

Read Susan Raymond, Section One (pp. 1-66)

10. July 27

Philanthropy Ethics

Read Susan Raymond, Section Two (pp. 67-100)

11. July 28

Philanthropy Management

Read Susan Raymond, Section Three (pp. 101-154)

Take-Home Final Exam due July 30