

McCOURT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
SPRING SEMESTER 2016

SYLLABUS

ETHICS IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

LECTURER: Chloe Schwenke, Ph.D.

Course Number: PPOL 519-02 Class Room: to be announced

Time: Thursdays 6:30pm to 9pm

INTRODUCTION

Public policy can – in fact always will – involve navigating your way through an ethical minefield. The perceptive analyst will recognize when the public policy discourse pretends to be “values free” (an impossibility), or when morality and ethics in policy discourse becomes both skewed and impoverished. This course is intended to help you become that “perceptive analyst”, and to empower you to discern the existence of numerous ethical dilemmas (they are all around us!) and the need for explicit values-based thinking.

Specifically, this is a graduate level course designed to develop within students the fundamental reflective and discernment skills and sensibilities to be aware of and responsive to some of the leading ethical challenges within a rapidly globalizing world. Through the application of a range of prominent moral theories and through an appeal to our normative sensibilities, students will discern and consider morally troubling aspects of international affairs, national security, development, human rights and freedoms, civil society, gender equity relationships – all within

the framework of globalization.

We will consider together such questions as:

- To what extent are certain moral obligations universal and applicable to – and enforceable upon – all countries, and individual citizens? Or is morality by its nature always “relative”?
- Does rigorous thinking guided by established moral theory have any potential to influence or guide policy formulation, resource allocation, and geo-political interventions in the face of globalization, and the rapidly weakening international consensus on universal human rights?
- Would our societies, and our commitments to democratic principles, survive in the absence of robust moral and ethical influence?
- Do each of us have a direct stake in how these questions are answered, and an obligation to find such answers?

The course will begin with a review of two fundamental issues: **globalization as an**

embracing and coherent concept, and the relevance of ethics to public policy. Both topics will be explored together in readings and class discussions. The dilemmas and opportunities arising out of globalization will be considered, as will the role morality and normative assessment plays in shaping daily decisions about such dilemmas and opportunities – from the personal and local to the global.

In the first half of the course, students will be exposed to some of the leading debates about the nature of globalization, approached from the perspective of recognizing both moral dilemmas and ethically-sound opportunities for human flourishing for all genders. During this period, students will also explore their own moral narratives, and the moral resources that they draw upon to reach decisions, starting from the Golden Rule. The motivations (or lack thereof) to act in a good and/or right way (individually, as a community, a society, a nation, or a global moral community), or to be a good person leading a meaningful life, will receive particular attention.

The second half of the course will concentrate on some specific ethical “tools” – leading ethical thinking that can facilitate deliberations and inform decision-making. The course will provide insights into such leading moral theories as virtue ethics, utilitarianism, Kantianism, human rights approaches, feminist moral theory and ethics of care, social contract theory, and the capabilities approach – but will not provide a comprehensive study of any specific moral theory. Instead, the focus will be on establishing awareness of these “moral tools” and discerning moral content, appreciating the potential impact of normative analysis, and learning the vocabulary of moral discourse in the context of global challenges and opportunities. Classes in this half of the

course each will begin with a discussion of a specific case study example, linking ethics directly to current global issues, national security, and international affairs.

One or more guest speakers may join in such discussions, as schedules permit. Class time will be divided among lectures, discussions, and student presentations.

Students will:

- ❑ Review and become well versed in essential terminology, definitions, and concepts of globalization, internationalism, transnationalism, national interest, international development, social capital, moral burden, and community.
- ❑ Review and become well versed in essential terminology, definitions, and the basic concepts of several leading moral theory and ethics.
- ❑ Review and become well versed in the characteristics, advantages, limitations, and applicability of contending theories of human well-being and human flourishing, human dignity, social and distributive justice, virtue and duty, universalism and relativism, gender equality principles, and “traditional” values.
- ❑ Achieve an understanding of the moral character, practical constraints, and normative opportunities that pertain to such political and social processes and issues as democracy, authoritarianism, patriarchy, popular participation in decision-making and governance, war and defense, terrorism, digital freedom and social media, global climate change, welfare, public health, and economic growth.

Upon successful completion of the course, students with a wide variety of specific sectoral interests should be able to:

- Articulate a persuasive view of the role of ethics in a global context, and ways in which ethics ought to apply to policies and citizens of all genders addressing the leading and most challenging aspects of globalization.
- Contextualize specific moral challenges in international relationships and national security, and suggest approaches to address these.
- Understand and articulate many dimensions of human dignity, human well-being, human flourishing, and gender equality.
- Understand the role and limitations of deliberative democracy and popular participation (equally by persons of any gender) within the context of good governance.
- Articulate many of the essential differences and assumptions between Western and non-Western moral theory and theory-based practice.
- Place moral thinking on global politics and economics in a context that also addresses environmental ethics.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

There will be one short paper required early in the course, a mid term examination, a group presentation, and a final examination (with an option of a final paper in lieu of a final exam):

□ Course Blog

There is a dedicated (a password-protected blog) for this course. **Over the term you are required to post a minimum of eight short comments (or responses to a post) on this blog (not more than one per week).** Your postings they can be on any topic clearly linked to *ethics and values in public policy*, and they can involve a professional dilemma, a relevant news story, a topic you are considering in another course, and so forth.

I especially recommend that you post your thoughts about the course readings: What were the readings most compelling ideas? Their biggest weaknesses? The parts that left you most perplexed? When possible, please post in the appropriate content section, and tag your posts so that others can search for them. Either original posts or comments count as a post. You should begin posting before the second class meeting and continue posting through the final week of class.

Your blog posts and comments will frequently be used to initiate class discussions.

Assignment One: Students will prepare a policy-analysis memo, taking the position of a policy analyst in the U.S. State Department. The memo should address the policy and ethical implications and one or more possible official U.S. Government response(s) that are ethically defensible, with respect to the report of the World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology on the [Ethical Implications of Global Climate Change](#). The memo should focus on two of the following four core governance and foreign affairs issues (your choice):

- Threats to political and economic stability in States particularly vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate change.
- Threats of possible mass emigration by climate change refugees, particularly in the case of sudden irreversible submergence of inhabited land.
- Possible destabilization of the economy or health status of countries receiving large numbers of refugees.
- Possible threats to the world order and world economy.

The policy-analysis memo will also make specific observations and recommendations regarding how the U.S. State Department should become aware of and responsive to associated threats to the dignity of people who become victims of climate change (20% of grade).

Notes: 1) See Appendix B for detailed requirements for the Policy Analysis Memo. 2) During the mid-terms week students will be allowed but not required to revise and resubmit their Policy Analysis Memo to respond to grading comments, to possibly improve their grade by a maximum of one letter grade.

- ❑ **Exam:** There will be a one-hour closed book mid term examination (20% of grade), and a two-hour closed book final examination (30% of grade).
- ❑ **Assignment Two:** Prepare, in groups of two students each, a professional quality PowerPoint (or similar) presentation of not more than 15 minutes, summarizing and making persuasive the moral arguments pertaining to a leading issue in globalization, and arguing for a specific policy direction or outcome. One two-person team will support the proposed policy, and one will oppose it. The students will determine which team is the more persuasive. The presentations will be open to anyone from the McCourt School to attend, as well as selected guests and reviewers. A discussion period will also be scheduled after each presentation. The professor will evaluate this presentation on the basis of its content, and effectiveness of presentation, and its persuasiveness (30% of grade), and the grading will be influenced by the quality and content of the response elicited from those attending the presentation.

Class attendance and participation are extremely important. Students will be expected to complete the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. Since the class does not follow a text consistently, students can only keep up through regular attendance.

CLASS SCHEDULE

14 January 2016 ~ **Week 1: General Introduction**

The Moral Dimension in a Globalized World ~ What moral issues arise in the context of globalization? An examination of notions regarding human nature, our individual and national obligations and duties, our common humanity, our social separateness and cultural diversity, gender and power, and our self-interest.

- Moral actions and moral being. Duties, rules, virtues, and vices.
- The role of moral concerns in shaping public policy in the North and South.
- The differences between internationalizing, democratizing, and globalizing.
- A new world economic order but the same human nature.
- Patriarchy, the disadvantaged 51%.
- The significance and moral dimensions of power and wealth, vulnerability and poverty.
- International development in an inequitable world.
- Participation and governance – who gets to decide, and why?
- Quality of life, human flourishing.
- Motivation and moral resources.

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, edited by David Held, Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 3; pages 1-92
- *Economic Justice in an Unfair World*, by Ethan B. Kapstein, Preface and Chapter One, pages 1-44
- “[The End of Human Rights](#)”, by Prof. Stephen Hopgood, Washington Post of January 3, 2014
- *Case Study 1 – [rising global inequalities](#) and [concentration of wealth in oil countries](#)*

21 January 2016 ~ **Week 2: Introduction to Morality and Globalization**

The Globalization Story

- A global community? Or Hobbesian survival? Gender lens?
- Relativism, communitarianism, and particularism – do human rights principles still matter?
- Universalism, transnationalism, and “traditional” values
- Economy, Technology, and Environment ~ Growing linkages and systems
- The growing cost of war and the need for peace, global “peace institutions”
- Civil society and “closing space”
- Decline of the nation state?
- Global governance?

The Moral Narrative

- What is the meaning of ethics?
- Discerning individual moral content and dilemmas ~ personal moral judgment
- Personal and community moral resources
- Establishing some basic definitions ~ moral philosophy, ethics, morality, moral theory, metaethics, normative, sentimental, deontological, virtues and vices, good and right, bad and wrong, rights and obligations... morality versus moralizing, including:
 - Justification for moral theories
 - Reflective equilibrium
 - Rationality and Sentiment
 - Acts of omission and commission
 - The role of rules, duties, and general principles
 - Being good, being virtuous
 - The moral narrative through the gender lens

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- ❑ *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, edited by David Held, Introduction and Chapter 5; pages 130-159
- ❑ “Do Morals Matter in International Politics?”, Chapter One in *Moral Vision in International Politics*, by David Halloran Lumsdaine, pages 3-29 (text to be posted by professor)
- ❑ “Is globalization a challenge or a threat to nation-states as a dominant form of polity?” by Nikola Lakić, *Western Balkans Security Observer* No. 21, Sep-Dec 2011 (article to be posted by professor)
- ❑ “Globalisation and the State: Still Room to Move?” by Layna Mosley, *New Political Economy*, Vol. 10, No. 3, September 2005 (article to be posted by professor)
- ❑ *Case Study 2 – to be announced*

28 January 2016 ~ **Week 3: Nations on the Global Stage**

The Decline of the Nation-State?

- The rise of civil society, and authoritarian push-back
- Digital freedom and social media
- Realism and national interest
- The power to coerce
- The obligation to defend

Patriotism and the larger moral community

- The character and boundaries of the moral community
- Patriotism, nationalism
- Cosmopolitanism

* First assignment due

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- ❑ *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, edited by David Held, Chapter 4; pages 93 - 129
- ❑ *Economic Justice in an Unfair World*, by Ethan B. Kapstein, Chapters 2 and 5, pages 45 – 85, 147 - 174
- ❑ *Case Study 3 – to be announced*

4 February 2016 ~ **Week 4: Money Matters ~ Power and Wealth**

Globalization, Global Capitalism, and the Economy

- Moving money ~ diminished control by the state over the economy
- Amoral markets and value-neutral economics
- Trans-national corporations, regional institutions
- Controlling money flows ~ stopping terrorists and international crime, but also harming global civil society
- Crime, corruption, sex, and power
- The global economic order ~ who wins, who loses, who doesn't get to play?

Power, Wealth, Winning, and the “Meaningful Life”

- Measuring success by wealth
- Commodification of meaning

- Human flourishing
- The life lived well
- Competition compared to collaboration

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, edited by David Held, Chapter 6; pages 160 - 186
- *Economic Justice in an Unfair World*, by Ethan B. Kapstein, Chapters 3 and 4, pages 86 – 146
- *Case Study 4 – to be announced*

11 February 2016 ~ **Week 5: Personal and Global Responsibility**

Globalization, Community, Justice, and Caring

- Political community and the state
- Do community or “traditional” values trump national/international values?
- The possibilities of global civil society
- Social justice
- Digital freedom

Am I my brother’s (or sister’s) keeper?

- The Golden Rule
- Moral consciousness and moral will
- Being good or doing good?
- Personal projects or maximizing the good of all?
- Caring for others and the “affective” response
- Allocating aid
- Protecting human dignity

Globalizing Democracy

- Realities of growing inequalities
- Superficial democracies
- Democratic deficits
- Corruption and integrity
- Global sexism
- Conflict and peacebuilding
- Terrorism

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- Research/brief **scan** of leading global environmental websites, including but not limited to:
 - World Resources Institute ~ www.wri.org
 - UN Environment Programme ~ <http://www.unep.org/Geo/geo3/english/404.htm>
 - UN Development Programme ~ <http://www.un.org/Docs/SG/Report99/envIRON.htm>
 - The Globalist ~ <http://www.theglobalist.com/DBWeb/Community.aspx?FeatureId=7>
 - Global Envision ~ <http://www.globalenvision.org/library/1/693/>
 - Yale Global Online ~ <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/environment/>
 - Global Issues ~ <http://www.globalissues.org/EnvIssues/GlobalWarming.asp>

18 February 2016 ~ **Week 6: Mid-Term Examination during First Hour**

Second Hour and One Half: One Planet

Globalization and the Environment

- Environmental justice
- Dissipating boundaries, global threats

Environmental ethics

- Access to and stewardship of resources
- Current and future generations

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- “The Earth Charter and Global Ethics” (2003) by Nigel Dower (article to be posted by professor)
- The Earth Charter, at http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/invent/images/uploads/echarter_english.pdf
- “[Global Ethics in Theory and in Practice: The Case of The Responsibility to Protect \(R2P\)](#)”, by Nigel Dower, *Nordicum-Mediterraneum* vol. 9, no 2, 2014
- *Economic Justice in an Unfair World*, by Ethan B. Kapstein, Chapter 6, pages 175 –196
- *Case Study 5 – to be announced*

25 February 2016 ~Week 7: An Ethics Primer, Part One

World Ethics

- Human nature, social realities and ethics
- “Applied” ethics and the Earth Charter
- Ethical international relations?
- Realism
- Enforcing ethics
- Historical origins
- Morality of states
- “Community” concept
- Citizenship – global or national?
- Consequentialism
- Kantianism
- Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as a global ethic

International and Global Skepticism

- National autonomy

Internationalism and Communitarianism

- Communitarianism

Cosmopolitan Theories

- Natural law
- Human rights
- Contract theory
- Marxism

Feminist Ethics and the Ethics of Care

Virtue Ethics

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- *Developing Partnerships: Gender, Sexuality, and the Reformed World Bank*, by Kate Bedford, Introduction, chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, and Conclusion.
- *Case Study 6 – to be announced*

3 March 2016 ~ Week 8: Development and Trade, Gender Equity, Marginalized Groups
Gender Equality/Equity

Regional Differences in Development and Human Rights

- Africa
- Latin America
- Asia and East Asia
- Middle East
- Eastern Europe
- Australia, New Zealand, Oceania

Contending Visions of Development

- Relief versus development
- Altruistic
- Charitable
- Strategic
- “Legitimate” self-interest
- Human rights driven

“Us” and “Them”

- Stakeholders and roleplayers
- Male, female, other genders
- Marginalized groups, LGBTI
- Who leads development? Why?
- Who is responsible for development? Why?
- What about trade-offs? Who decides?

Global Trade

- The elusive “level playing field”
- The role of markets: fair versus free
- Should developing countries get special treatment?
- Who gets to trade? Control of economic resources by gender, status, ethnicity

Reading Assignments for the following class (16 March):

- Chapters by David Crocker (text to be posted by professor)
 - “Democratic Leadership, Citizenship, and Social Justice”
 - “Well-being, Capability, and Development: Essays in International Development Ethics. Fundamental Concepts”
- *Case Study 7 – to be announced*

10 March 2016 ~ No Class, Spring Break

17 March 2016 ~ Week 9: Global Profits, Global Resources; and an Ethics Primer, Part Two

The Capability Approach

Intellectual Property

- Who owns it?
- Globalization and universal duties to share knowledge to save lives
- Trade and values
- Digital “property”

Resources

- Appropriating public wealth
- Not enough to go around?
- The resource curse

Reading Assignments for the following class:

- To be confirmed (as selected by guest speaker)

24 March 2016 ~ No Class, Easter Break

31 March 2016 ~ **Week 10: Multinational Actors, Multinational Burdens, and Global Financial System**

Guest Speaker ~ Dr. Robert Herman on Global Civil Society (to be confirmed)

Multinational Corporations

- Corporate social responsibility
- Corporate governance

Global Debt

- Who lent, who borrowed, and why?
- Debt relief and the responsibility to pay
- “Odious debts” - borrowing by corrupt regimes

The Global Financial System

- Reforming the global reserve
- Instability and the global economy

7 April 2016 ~ **Week 11: Class Presentations**

14 April 2016 ~ **Week 12: Class Presentations**

21 April 2016 ~ **Week 13: Final Exam Review class**

28 April 2015 ~ No class, review week

12 May 2016 ~ Final Examination: 7pm to 9pm (to be confirmed)

READINGS

Readings will include the following complete books or e-books (purchase recommended):

- *Economic Justice in an Unfair World: Toward a Level Playing Field*, by Ethan B. Kapstein, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2006
- *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, edited by David Held and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2003

- *Developing Partnerships: Gender, Sexuality, and the Reformed World Bank*. By Kate Bedford. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2009

Case Studies ~ Readings will also include case studies 1 – 7, which will be posted online by the professor

OFFICE HOURS AND FACULTY BIO

Students may schedule time by calling or emailing the lecturer, so as to understand issues more fully or to discuss their work. Dr. Schwenke's home telephone is 301-260-1281, and cell phone 301-448-2953. Dr. Schwenke's email is **chloemaryland@gmail.com**.

Dr. Chloe Schwenke is an independent consultant in human rights and international development. She previously served as vice president for global programs at Freedom House in Washington, D.C. and was earlier a political appointee for the Obama Administration at the US Agency for International Development (USAID) as USAID's Senior Advisor on LGBTI Policy and as USAID Africa Bureau's Senior Advisor on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance.

Dr. Schwenke is a human rights activist, development practitioner and academic with over three decades of international experience, nearly half of it while living in developing countries. She has



worked in a senior capacity with some of the leading American development organizations, and as an independent consultant, on projects of USAID, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank.

She was a Fulbright professor at Makerere University in Uganda from 2005-6, and from 1995 to 1998 she was based in Durban, South Africa where she was managing director of one of South Africa's most successful town and regional planning firms. Her scholarly interests include human rights, LGBTI issues, international development ethics, gender equality & female empowerment, and leadership. As a practitioner, her experience has centered on the design, management, implementation, and evaluation of a wide range of human rights, LGBTI, gender equality, civil society capacity building, conflict mitigation, and ethical leadership programming.

Dr. Schwenke received her Ph.D. in public policy at the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland at College Park, where she was chosen as Alumna of the Year for 2013. She has an extensive list of publications; among her most recent work is the 2013 article "The Provocative Human Right to Be", in the *LGBTQ Policy Journal* at the Harvard Kennedy School. Soon to be published is "An American's view of trans*emergence and feminism's response in Africa", chapter 12 in *Bodies in Resistance: gender politics in the age of neoliberalism*, Palgrave Macmillan, UK. In 2008 her book *Reclaiming Value in International Development: The Moral Dimensions of Development Policy and Practice in Poor Countries* was published by Praeger.

APPENDIX B – GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC POLICY INFORMATION

Disability: If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335 (202-687-8354). The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ASA) and University policies. For more information, go to <http://academicsupport.georgetown.edu/disability/>.

Important Academic Policies and Academic Integrity: McCourt School students are expected to uphold the academic policies set forth by Georgetown University and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Students should therefore familiarize themselves with all the rules, regulations, and procedures relevant to their pursuit of a Graduate School degree. The policies are located at: <http://grad.georgetown.edu/academics/policies/>
(optional: include own personal statement regarding academic integrity)

Provost's Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances:

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday (see below) or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes. The Office of the Provost, in consultation with Campus Ministry and the Registrar, will publish, before classes begin for a given term, a list of major religious holidays likely to affect Georgetown students. The Provost and the Main Campus Executive Faculty encourage faculty to accommodate students whose bona fide religious observances in other ways impede normal participation in a course. Students who cannot be accommodated should discuss the matter with an advising dean.

Statement on Sexual Misconduct:

Please know that as a faculty member I am committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, including relationship violence, sexual harassment and sexual assault. However, university policy also requires me to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct.

Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources who can provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. These resources include:

Jen Schweer, MA, LPC
Associate Director of Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention
(202) 687-0323
jls242@georgetown.edu

Erica Shirley, Trauma Specialist
Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
[\(202\) 687-6985](tel:(202)687-6985)
els54@georgetown.edu

More information about campus resources and reporting sexual misconduct can be found at <http://sexualassault.georgetown.edu>.

APPENDIX B – POLICY ANALYSIS MEMO

What is a policy analysis memo?

A policy analysis memo is a document that provides analysis and/or recommendations for a particular audience regarding a particular situation or problem. A well-written policy memo reflects attention to purpose; it is well organized; and it has a clear, concise style.

Determining and responding to your audience

In most cases, you will know the audience for your work because (1) you have been hired by that individual or organization or (2) your instructor provides that information to you. Think carefully about the needs and expectations of your audience. For example, if your audience is an elected official seeking analysis on a highly technical matter, you should generally assume that the official lacks substantial technical expertise. You will need to define technical terms and provide enough background about the situation you are discussing that such a "lay" audience can grasp your arguments. On the other hand, if you are writing for a technically trained audience, you will waste time and energy providing background information that your readers already know.

Organizing an effective policy-analysis memo

- Introduction

One distinguishing characteristic of a policy memo is that a summary of the document's conclusion(s) and recommendation(s) is placed right at the beginning of the memo. Remember that the purpose of the document is generally to provide your audience advice about a particular decision, project, or policy stance. Thus, you open the memo by summarizing the problem or situation about which you are writing, and by providing a very brief summary of the conclusions/recommendations you have reached during your analysis. The rest of the memo is designed to support the conclusions or recommendations you present.

- Background

Keeping in mind that different audiences need different amounts of background information (see above), follow your introduction with a concise summary of any historical or technical that your audience needs to understand the arguments you are building. (It may be that no background information is needed at all.)

- Supporting arguments or analysis

Once you have set the stage for your audience, show how this information leads logically to the conclusions/recommendations you have provided.

- Style and format

Your ideas will be no more meaningful to the reader of your memo than you are able to make them. Meaning is not just embellished by style; rather, the two must function together. Muddled writing reflects hazy thinking. Your prose should be simple, clear, and easy to read; you will confuse, not impress, your readers with sophisticated vocabulary. Your reader should be able to describe your conclusions and the general arguments you used to reach them after only one reading of your memo.

Some tips on achieving an effective writing style

- Choose the simplest words available to express your ideas. When discussing technical information, avoid the use of jargon--or at least define your terms clearly.
- Make your sentences "active"; avoid phrases such as "there are" or "it is."
- Use one paragraph to develop one idea or argument. Make that idea or argument explicit within the first one or two sentences of the paragraph.
- **PROOFREAD CAREFULLY.** Don't distract your readers from the content of your memo with poor spelling or grammar.

The format of the memo

Memos must be prepared on 8.5 X 11" paper with margins of one inch on all sides. Paragraphs should be single-spaced and should be separated by a double space. You may use any standard conventions for the layout of your memo, including numbering, bullets, indentation, etc. Do address the memo to your audience at the top of the page.

The length of your policy memo assignment will be between 1200 and 1500 words. Do not exceed this length limit. Staying within the specified memo length is important because:

- You will be likely to continue to write persuasive documents for clients and/or colleagues in the future. Like you, most of these people are busy. They rarely have time to review lengthy documents; these generally wind up unread in a digital filing cabinet.
- Confining yourself to a particular page limit encourages careful editing, establishing priorities, and paring your arguments down. In general, these practices also improve the flow and impact of your writing.
- Tightly written policy memos have a much better chance of influencing others toward a particular point of view.

Getting help

I strongly recommend that you exchange your memos with other students in the class for proofreading and editing. You can help one another with suggestions for clarity and content of your assignments.