Rationale for the Course

Aristotle, in his *Nichomachean Ethics*, observed that “every activity, artistic or scientific…has for its object the attainment of some good.” Taking the observation as its basic premise, this course will examine the activities we identify with Planning and Public Policy to determine whether Aristotle’s observation applies in their case.

Examining two seminal papers, one on Planning, the other on Public Policy for evidence, course participants will determine what ethical claims, explicit or implicit, Planning and Public Policy make for themselves. For example, if Planning claims to be about “differential access” to resources held in common, what ethical claims on behalf of Planning are to be found there? If Public Policy is premised on pragmatism (what works), what ethical warrant can it claim on its own behalf?

Since Planning and Public Policy professionals function in a society characterized by what Robert A. Dahl calls polyarchy and pluralism, is it possible for them, given those characteristics, to pursue in their respective professions society's common good as their basic ethical objective? To address this question, we will review Dahl's essay, Pluralism, Polyarchy and the Common Good, from the perspective of Planning and Public Policy.

Giving Planning and Public Policy the benefit of the ethical doubt at that point, we will then consider what ethics is by examining the analytical language it uses. With the assistance of RM Hare’s *The Language of Morals*, this will require an analysis of such issues as prescriptive language, and imperatives and logic. The analysis will also include the concept of “good,” its meaning and criteria. In addition, the concepts of “ought” and “right” will be included. The analysis will conclude with an examination of an analytical ethics model.

Since Planning and Public Policy at their core revolve around the tension (positive and negative) between the individual in society and society made up of individuals, the course will now turn its attention to a model practical ethics approach to this tension. The basic premise here will be that the concepts of individual rights and community (society) “far from being antithetical to one another, have a relation of mutual support.” (A Gewirth)

In light of Hare’s discussion of the analytical language of ethics and Gewirth’s notion of “the community of rights,” participants will conclude the course by returning to the two seminal papers with which it opened to compose their written assessment of the ethical claims Planning and Public Policy can make for themselves in their respective pursuit of the good.
**Course Objectives**
Upon completion of the course, participants will be practiced in using analytical ethics, interpreting the concept of “a community of rights” in such contexts as employment, private property, and economic and political democracy; and they will be able to integrate both analytical ethics and the consequences of a community of rights model in their professional activities in Planning and Public Policy.

**Course Expectations**
Since the course is designed to be discursive, requiring active participation in class discussion, participants must have carefully reviewed the reading assigned for each class before that particular class. Note, the readings are quite long and technical. Participants will be divided into teams (numbers will depend upon enrollment), with each team responsible for presenting at the beginning of each class a detailed summary of the reading assigned for that particular class. The summary, which is to be prepared using PowerPoint will constitute 25% of the final grade. In addition, each participant will be required to submit a preliminary written assessment (3 pages) of the merit/demerit of the ethical claims, implicit and explicit, made for planning and public policy in the two seminal papers. Planning students will complete the assessment for the planning paper, public policy students for the public policy paper. This will constitute 25% of the final grade. At the end of the course, each participant, using Hare’s analytical ethics and Gewirth’s concept of “a community of rights” will write an “original argument” (5 pages) for the ethical warrant of planning and public policy. Again, planning students will complete this exercise for planning and public policy students for public policy. During the last class meeting, participants will present orally a summary of their “original argument.” Combined, the original argument and the oral summary will constitute 50% of the final grade.

Since this course, like any course, is a joint enterprise, participants have a moral responsibility to each other to be supportive of one another in pursuing the objectives of the course. This is the justification for requiring attendance at all class meetings. Undue absence is a breach of this responsibility and will affect a participant’s final grade.

Because participants will be composing their own written work, they must be aware that plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade. Please go to the following Rutgers University website for detailed requirements for academic integrity.
[http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#1](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#1)

**Syllabus**

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<td>Sep 11</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
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<td>What is the Moral Standing of Planning? A series of basic questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 18</td>
<td>What is the Moral Standing of Public Policy? A series of basic questions</td>
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<td>Sep 25</td>
<td>Paper on a core ethical challenge to Planning/Public Policy (Pluralism, Polyarchy, and the Common Good, by RA Dahl)</td>
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<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>Paper on a core ethical challenge to Planning/Public Policy (cont.)</td>
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Oct 9    AN ANALYTICAL MODEL:
The Language of Morals: The Imperative Mood (RM Hare, p. 1-56)

Oct 16   The Language of Morals: “GOOD” (RM Hare, p. 79-137)

Oct 23   The Language of Morals: “OUGHT” (RM Hare, p. 151-180)
          Guest Speaker: Meredeth Turshen

Oct 30   A PRACTICAL APPLICATION
          Action and Human Rights (A Gewirth)
          Guest Speaker:

Nov 6    Case Study: Student Presentation

Nov 13   Case Study: Student Presentation

Nov 20   Case Study: Student Presentation

Nov 27   Case Study: Student Presentation
          Guest Speaker: Alan Cander

Dec 4    Planning and Public Policy Papers Revisited

Grading Schema
100-94 = A
93-85 = B+
84-77 = B
76-69 = C+
68-61 = C
60-53 = D
52-Below = F

Text for the Course: