



Royal Military College of Canada
Military Psychology and Leadership Department

PSE 401: Military Professionalism and Ethics

Course Description and Outline – Winter 2020

This course examines the ethical foundations of the military profession. The course content is drawn from the disciplines of moral philosophy, psychology, and sociology. The main objective is to stimulate the moral development of Naval and Officer Cadets and military students by promoting an educational environment that contributes to critical analyses and debates regarding the factors that influence ethical action.

The main objectives of the course are to:

- 1. Understand and apply basic and intermediate ethical concepts integral to the military profession.** This goal draws the attention of students to the military values and principles that constitute the Canadian professional military ethos – duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage as described in *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada* (DND, 2009). The students will grasp important intermediate level concepts, such as just conduct in war and conflicting obligations that are central to many of the ethical problems faced by junior military leaders.
- 2. Develop moral sensitivity.** This goal involves working on moral imagination, and considering the perspectives of others in an effort to develop the moral awareness of students.
- 3. Develop moral judgment.** Students learn to solve ethical and professional dilemmas using a variety of approaches, such as rule-based, consequence-based, and virtue-based ethics, while recognizing the limitations of each.
- 4. Internalize professional standards into the professional self-concept.** Through a process of self-reflection, students should examine the extent to which they have internalized professional military standards. They can monitor their personal growth and evaluate their progress in developing professional military values.
- 5. Promote an ethical leadership climate.** This goal is based on the recognition that unit culture and other environmental factors can influence the ethical behaviour of military personnel. Officers have the ability to shape the culture and climate within their unit. This objective is aimed at showing students the range of social influences that guide individual actions and the important role for leaders in establishing ethical leadership climates.

Instructors

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Textbooks and References

Thiroux, J. P., & Krasemann, K. W. (2012). *Ethics: Theory and practice* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Pojman, L. P. (2002) (4th ed.). *Ethics: Discovering right and wrong*. Toronto: Wadsworth.

Peer reviewed articles available on Moodle.

Course Management

Administrative details (e.g., assignments, term paper instructions, etc.), core slides, and assigned readings will all be available through Moodle. Students are required to be sufficiently familiar with this website in order to read the compulsory readings, obtain access to the core slides, and submit course assignments.

Expectations

This is a mandatory professional development course for all RMC students. It is expected that all PSE 401 students will approach the course professionally, maximizing their learning through regular attendance, completion of assignments, weekly pre-readings and active participation in class discussions.

Absences

RMC policy requires mandatory class attendance. Students will notify their class leader **and** their professor *in advance* if they expect to miss a class for any reason. For an unexpected absence, students will notify their class leader **and** their professor by e-mail *within 24 hours* of missing the class. Those who do not notify their professor within the appropriate timeframe should expect that the professor will notify the student's chain of command (i.e., Squadron Commander).

Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, cheating, and other violations of academic ethics, is a serious academic infraction for which penalties may range from a recorded caution to expulsion from the College. The RMCC Academic Regulations Section 23 defines plagiarism as: "Using the work of others and attempting to present it as original thought, prose or work. This includes failure to appropriately acknowledge a source, misrepresentation of cited work, and misuse of quotation marks or attribution." It also includes "the failure to acknowledge that work has been submitted for credit elsewhere." All students should consult the published statements on Academic Misconduct contained in the *Royal Military College of Canada Undergraduate Calendar*, Section 23.

Evaluation

Type	Weight	Due Date
<i>Term paper 1: Ethical Framework Term Paper</i> Each student is expected to submit a term paper on the ethical framework that best suits their approach to handling moral and ethical dilemmas. Full details on the assignment can be found at Annex A.	25 %	Feb 28
<i>Term paper 2: Ethical Climate Term Paper</i> Each student is expected to submit a term paper analyzing the ethical climate of RMC or a CAF unit. Full details on the assignment can be found at Annex B.	30%	Mar 27
<i>Individual contribution to the course</i> Students are expected to actively engage in the course. Each instructor will choose the best mean to grade this.	10%	Across Term
<i>Final exam*</i> The final exam assesses knowledge, comprehension, and application of all material.	35%	TBA ; April during the final exam weeks

*Note regarding the final exam: In accordance with Academic Regulation 10.2, "the instructor may refuse a student permission to write a final examination in a course if the requirements with regard to course work have not been met" (<http://www.rmcc-cmrc.ca/en/registrars-office/academic-regulations>). **All Term Papers must be submitted no later than 1230 on Friday, 10 Apr 2020 in order to be eligible to write the Final Exam.** In addition, all late papers submitted must be of satisfactory quality as deemed by the instructor. Should a student for some reason write the final exam without having first submitted all assignments, that student's final exam will not be marked.

Scheduled and assigned readings

Week	Dates	Topics / Readings / Remarks
1	6-10 Jan	Topic: Course introduction and the military profession Readings: • Hartle, A. (2004). The military as a profession in moral issues in military decision making (2nd Ed.) Chapter 2, pp.10-28; • Rescher, N. (1990). In the line of duty: The complexity of the military obligation; • Walzer, M. (1989). Two kinds of military responsibility.
2	13-17 Jan	Topic: The military profession in Canada Readings: • Duty With Honour (2009). Chapter 1, Chapter 2, pp. 4-23; • <i>Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations</i> (2005), pp. 21-26 and 45-54 • DND CF Code of Value and Ethics
3	20-24 Jan	Topic: Introduction to moral philosophy Readings: • Thiroux & Krasemann (2012). Chapter 1; <u>OR</u> • Pojman (2002), Chapter 1.

4	27-31 Jan	Topic: Ethical analysis Readings: • Thiroux & Krasemann (2012), Chapters 2, 3, and 4; <u>OR</u> • Pojman (2002), Chapters 6, 7, and 8.
5	3-7 Feb	Topic: Individual and situational factors in ethical decision making Part 1 Readings: • Kohlberg (1976). Stages of moral development; • Trevino, L.K. (1986). Ethical decision making in organizations: A person-situation interactionist model; • Pfeiffer & Owens (2002). <i>Military Leadership and Ethics</i>, pp. 3-8; • Bradley, P. (2008). Why people make wrong choices: the psychology of ethical failure.
6	10-14 Feb	Topic: Individual and situational factors in ethical decision making Part 2 Readings: • Pfeiffer & Owens (2002). <i>Military Leadership and Ethics</i>, pp. 10-12; • Jones, T.M. (1991). Ethical decision making by individuals: An issue-contingent model.
17 – 21 Feb: Reading Week		
7	24-28 Feb	Topic: Leadership in CAF Readings: • <i>Leadership in the Canadian Forces: Conceptual Foundations</i> (2005), Chapter 2 and 5 Note – Term Paper 1 due on 28 Feb @ 0800hrs.

8	2-6 Mar	Topic: Case study – Captain Semrau Readings: • Bradley, P. (2010). Is battlefield mercy killing morally justifiable? • Landry, R. (2012). Was former Captain Robert Semrau solely responsible, from an ethical point of view, for killing an injured man? • Perry, D.L. (2014). Battlefield euthanasia: Should mercy killing be allowed?
9	9-13 Mar	Topic: Case study – Somalia Readings: • Domansky, K. (2012). The Canadian Forces in Somalia: An operational assessment; • Shorey, G. (2000). Bystander non-intervention and the Somalia incident.
10	16-20 Mar	Topics: Just war theory and laws of war Readings: • DND (1999). Code of Conduct for CF Personnel; • Christopher, P. (1994). Hugo Grotius and the Just War.
11	23-27 Mar	Topic: Just war theory: Application to modern conflicts Readings: • Reid, M. (2011). Where ethics and legality collide. Note – Term paper 2 due on 27 March @ 0800hrs
12	30 Mar-3 Apr	Topic: Complexities of military professionalism Readings: • Adams, G., Balfour, D., & Reed, G. (2006). Abu Graihb, administrative evil or moral inversion: The value of putting 'cruelty first'; • Mastroianni, G. & Reed, G. (2006). Apples, barrels, and Abu Graihb.

13	6-10 Apr	Topic: Complexities of the military profession (cont'd) Readings: • Ignatieff, M. (2002). Ethics and the new war; • Whethem, D. (2008). The challenge of ethical relativism in a coalition environment. Note – Last day of class 10 April
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