

Science and Values in the Policy Process

Dr. Michael Hoffmann

Focus

The goal of this seminar is to clarify the concept of “value”: its meaning in relation to ethical and philosophical theories and its significance for the analysis for policy processes. In the first part, we will discuss three very different approaches to formulate the foundations of ethics. The second part focuses on criticisms of the so-called “fact-value dichotomy” according to which factual statements can clearly be separated from evaluative statements. The third discusses the concepts of “value” and “attitude” within social psychology, and the fourth part is about an anthropological study of environmental values in American culture.

New Ways of learning

Public Policy is not only a field of theories, but also a *practice* that demands specific skills. In order to foster our abilities to formulate ideas, to argue and to think critically, and to justify what we think, the basic activities in this seminar will be *reading, writing, discussing, re-writing, and presenting*. Our class meetings will be reserved for discussions about one or two chapters per week. To prepare these discussions, I will give you for each chapter a few questions that allow us to focus on the texts’ most central points, or a task in which you should apply what is described in the text. Your job is to read the texts and to answer these questions, or to perform the task on about one page. The idea is that we are best prepared for our common discussions when we have formulated already at home what will be the focus of our meetings.

The most interesting point will be to see how many different answers, interpretations, and arguments are possible. Our discussions will reveal these differences, and they will give you both an opportunity to reflect critically on what you have done individually at home, and an opportunity to improve your own thinking by learning from others. That is what is most important for learning. I am not interested in what you already know, but I will see how you improve your own thinking.

To do this, your second task in each week will be to revise the answers you formulated for the preparation of the discussions. The procedure in detail is as follows. You can find the questions or tasks for each week on our course page in WebCT (<http://webct.gatech.edu/>), and I expect your first version of answers before we meet on Tuesday. Just send them attached to an e-mail (Word or pdf file) to michael.hoffmann@pubpolicy.gatech.edu. Make sure that the *subject line of your e-mail* contains “PST-2068” as a marker that I need to collect your e-mails in a separate folder, and make sure that the *document name* of the files you send as attachments is formulated according to the form “PST-2068_your name_week of course_1. or 2. version.”

You will see that you are much better prepared for our discussions when you have already written something in advance. And I hope that our discussions again will motivate you to improve these writings in a second round of reflections at home again. This will be your task between our Tuesday and Thursday class. Again, send your new version before we meet. The discussion on Thursday is supposed to deepen our understanding based on open questions that come to your mind while revising your answers. This discussion will be opened up by small

group presentations about the reading and about the Tuesday discussion. Each of you has to sign in for one Thursday presentation.

Reading

Books to buy at the Engineers Bookstore:

- Putnam, Hilary (2004 <2002>). *The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and Other Essays*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kempton, Willett, James S. Boster, and Jennifer A. Hartley (1996 <1995>). *Environmental values in American culture*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Download from our course page in WebCT at <http://webct.gatech.edu/>:

- Aronson, Jerrold L., Rom Harré, and Eileen C. Way (1995). *Realism Rescued. How Scientific Progress Is Possible*. Chicago and La Salle: Open Court, pp. 50-54, 92-93.
- Ayer, Alfred Jules (1952 <1936>). *Language, Truth and Logic*. New York: Dover, pp. 33-45, 102-120.
- Economist (2003). American values. Living with a superpower. Jan 2nd.
- Economist (2004). American values. The triumph of the religious right. Nov 11th, 29-31.
- Economist (2005). Climatology: Changing Science, *The Economist* December 10th, 89f.
- Haack, Susan (1997). The First Rule of Reason. In *The Rule of Reason. The Philosophy of Charles S. Peirce*, Jacqueline Brunning and Paul Forster (eds.), 241-261. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.
- Kant, Immanuel (1994 <1785, 1788>). Pure Practical Reason and the Moral Law (from *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *Critique of Pure Practical Reason*). In *Ethics*. Ed. by P. Singer: Oxford University Press, 123-131.
- Kant, Immanuel (1994 <1785>). The Categorical Imperative (from *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*). In *Ethics*. Ed. by P. Singer: Oxford University Press, 274-279.
- Kant, Immanuel (1994 <1797>). On a Supposed Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives. In *Ethics*. Ed. by P. Singer: Oxford University Press, 280-281.
- Lyons, David (2001). utilitarianism. In *Encyclopedia of Ethics*. Ed. by L. C. Becker and C. B. Becker. 3 vols. Vol. 3. New York: Routledge, 1737-44.
- Mill, John Stuart (1863). *Utilitarianism*, <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm>. (Excerpts as a pdf-file.
- Moghaddam, Fathali (1998). *Social Psychology: Exploring Universals Across Cultures*. New York: W.H. Freeman. pp. 64, 99-113.
- O'Neill, Onora (1993 <1991>). Kantian ethics. In *A Companion to Ethics*. Ed. by P. Singer (Blackwell Companions to Philosophy). Oxford: Blackwell, 175-185.
- PewResearchCenter (ed.). 2005. *Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics. Support for Terror Wanes Among Muslim Publics* (Released: July 14,

2005). <http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248>: Pew Global Attitudes Project.

- Rawls, John (1971). *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, pp. 11-22, 46-53.
- Rawls. A glossary: <http://mail.bris.ac.uk/~plcdib/rglos.html>.
- Taylor, Charles (1979). *Hegel and modern society*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 59f.
- Tiles, Mary (1997). Science and the Politics of Hunger, *Philosophy of Science. Supplement* 64 (4), S161-S174.
- Please check also additional material on WebCT, especially “Tools for Philosophy”

Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Texts</i>
1	Jan 10 Jan 12	Introduction American Values	--- Economist 2003, 2004
2	Jan 17 Jan 19	Truth versus values in science	Haack 1997, Tiles 1997
Ethical foundations			
3	Jan 24 Jan 26	Kant: The categorical imperative	Kant 1785, 1788, 1797, O'Neill 1993 <1991>
4	Jan 31 Feb 2	Utilitarianism	Mill 1863, Lyons 2001
5	Feb 7 Feb 9	Contract ethics: Rawls' Theory of Justice	Rawls 1971, Rawls glossary
The fact/value distinction			
6	Feb 14 Feb 16	The dualist stance of a logical positivist	Ayer 1952 <1936>
7	Feb 21 Feb 23	The Entanglement of Fact and Value	Putnam 28-45
8	Feb 28 Mar 2	Fact and Value in the World of Amartya Sen	Putnam 46-64
9	Mar 7 Mar 9	Are Values Made or Discovered?	Putnam 96-110, Taylor 1979

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Texts</i>
Social psychology			
10	Mar 14 Mar 16	Attitudes The Experiment (2001), Movie, 119 min	Moghaddam 1998
	21-23	Spring break	
11	Mar 28 Mar 30	Islamic Extremism. The Pew Global Attitudes Project	PewResearchCenter 2005
Anthropology			
12	Apr 4 Apr 6	The methodology of Cognitive Anthropology	Kempton et al. ix f., 10-15, 17-38, 87-115, Economist 2005
13	Apr 11 Apr 13	Cultural Models and Policy Reasoning	Kempton et al. 39-43, 63-86, 117-161, Aronson et al. 1995
14	Apr 18 Apr 20	Case Studies of Influential Specialists, Beliefs, Values, and Models	Kempton et al. 163-187
15	Apr 25 Apr 27	Summary and Implications Final discussion	Kempton et al. 189-226

Grading

The basis for the grades you can get for this course is your *continuous* reading, writing, participating in our class discussions, and one presentation. You have to work hard to get the grades you wish to have, but this work is equally distributed over the whole semester. There will neither be an extra essay, nor a final exam.

Roughly 10% of your final grade will depend on the amount and quality of your contributions to our common discussions over the whole semester. (I expect that you attend each seminar meeting. Please send me a short e-mail note if you are unable to attend).

Further 10% are based on your presentation. Each presentation should be about 15 minutes. If you present together with somebody else, the whole group should not need more than 20 minutes. The task is to summarize the Tuesday discussion, to highlight additional aspects, and to formulate some theses or questions for an interesting discussion.

40% can simply be reached by sending each week your assignment by Tuesday 1pm. I will not evaluate the quality of your answers. The only thing that counts is whether you send them or not.

What I will evaluate, however, is the quality of your revisions of your first answers, that is the *progress* between them. I expect these revisions each week by Thursday 1pm. On these revisions depends another 40% of your final grade. The main idea is that you do not compete with others for good grades, you compete with yourself. What counts is what you have learnt by our common discussions. If you think it might be useful to improve again your second version after

our Thursday discussion, you can submit a third version by Friday evening. In this case I will compare the first and the third version.

The details for grading are organized as follows: You can get a maximum of 130 points during the whole semester. A maximum of 12 points is possible for your discussion contributions which I will evaluate only at the end based on an assessment over the whole semester. For the presentation you can get a maximum of 10 points. Written answers and revisions are expected for 12 weeks (starting the second week; there are 14 assignments, but you can take two weeks off). Each first version answer has a value of 4 points, so that a maximum of 48 points is possible at the end (12 x 4). For the improvement of your second version answers you can get each week 0 to 5 points, so that a maximum of 60 points is possible (12 x 5). At the end, the points will be transformed in letter grades according to the following list:

117-130	= A
104-116	= B
91-103	= C
78-90	= D
0-77	= F

During the whole semester, you can see all your points in WebCt (<http://webct.gatech.edu>) under "My grades." Please note: if you find a "0" for your first version, I did not get your e-mail (please send again!); if there is a "0" for your second version, either I did not get your e-mail or this submission is the same as the first one. You will get 1 point if there are only marginal changes, or if you do not answer the question. Further points up to a maximum of five are possible if (1.) there are improvements, but no substantial ones, (2.) if there are substantial improvements (for example: a new argument, clarification of terminology, a new structure of your answer, better examples), (3.) if you reflect explicitly on the reading and (4.) on the main point(s) of our class discussion. A 5-points submission must not only be good, but excellent with regard to clarity and adequacy for the topic. Please note that an improvement is not necessarily longer than the original version, quite the opposite. Clarifying the structure of your argument and focusing on the essential points is mostly better than making things more complex.

If there are no special agreements, first version papers will be accepted only when they arrive before our class discussion on Tuesday. Second version papers are expected by Thursday noon as a preparation of our second class discussion about the week's topic, but these papers will be accepted also when I get them within three weeks (exception: general deadline at the end of semester). If you cannot send a first version by Tuesday, I will evaluate what you send later like a first version. Thus, it becomes clear that working continuously is more important than anything else. However, it is possible to submit improvements of these later versions by relating the task to new themes of the ongoing class discussion.

The main point is that I really expect that you revise your first version answers based on what you have learnt in our discussions. Even if your first answers are nearly perfect, there are always new perspectives that can enrich your prior point of view, and it is always possible to structure and formulate an argument in a better way. Learning means the development of your own thinking. There are no absolute standards what you should "know" at the end of this semester. More important is the process of learning and the improvement of your thinking.

Academic Honor Code

Based on GT's Honor Advisory Council recommendation I would like to clarify the following points: You are allowed (and encouraged) to work together with other students on homework, as long as you write up and turn in your own solutions. Submitting any work other than your own is a violation of the Academic Honor Code. Quoting other authors, of course, is common scientific practice. However, you have to make absolutely clear what are your own formulations, and what those of others. You can quote the texts of our seminar in short form (e.g. "Putnam, p. 52"). Other sources have to be listed under "References." Plagiarism will be dealt with according to the GT Academic Honor Code. Note that plagiarizing is defined by Webster's as "to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source."

For any questions involving these or any other Academic Honor Code issues, please consult me or www.honor.gatech.edu.

Contact

Feel free to contact me if there are any problems you would like to discuss. My **office hours** are Thursday 3:00-4:00 pm or by appointment. The office is located in the basement of the DM Smith Building. My **phone number** is 404-385-6083. The easiest way to contact me is by **e-mail**: m.hoffmann@gatech.edu.