

BUSINESS ETHICS

TTh ##:##-##:## ♦ Room: ###

The contemporary firm differs significantly from the pre-industrial operation of the grocer or merchant. Corporate hierarchies have become ever more sophisticated and supply chains now stretch out across the globe. The expansion of industry has brought with it new moral concerns. This class surveys how we ought to address those concerns. We first take a look at whether the firm has responsibilities only to its shareholders, or whether it has responsibilities to stakeholders as well. We then examine the rights and responsibilities of employees and executives. We next cover the ethical permissibility of certain corporate policies and practices. We conclude with a discussion of whether corporations are persons and whether executives ought to be held liable for corporate malfeasance.

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Office Location: ###
Office Hours: TBD

Texts and Readings

All readings will be distributed through the university's online platform.

Learning Outcomes

This course serves as a survey of contemporary work in business ethics. Students will primarily consider arguments on a variety of topics in business ethics and reason through practical case studies. Throughout the course, students will also:

- » Gain familiarity with some basic moral frameworks.
- » Apply moral theories to and develop a personal stance on controversial issues in business ethics.
- » Understand the need for ethical decision making in business and management.
- » Practice reasoning well and articulating views clearly.
- » Write clear and articulate responses and papers that show an understanding of the subject matter.

Assessment

To benefit from this course, you must be prepared and engaged in class. This means being on time and completing required assignments before class.

The grading distribution is as follows:

- » Written Responses: 35%. There will be four written assignments, each 2 to 3 pages in length. These assignments could consist of reaction papers, argument reconstructions or argument analyses.
- » Case Study Analyses: 20%. I will periodically assign and collect responses to case studies. In these assignments, students will summarize the case study and suggest an optimal outcome by appeal to the moral concepts we develop in class.
- » Media Project: 15%. Students may choose to do either an audio or video project. The audio project consists of a recorded interview with a professional in sales, marketing or management. The video project will be a short "consciousness raising" clip to inform the class of an issue in business law or policy.

- » Final Paper: 20%. Students will produce an argumentative paper on one of the topics we cover in class. Some outside research and secondary sources are required. Students may build on the research they have already done for the media project.
- » Participation: 10%. Students will be expected to attend class and participate in class discussions and activities.

Class Policies

Attendance - Assignments are frequently handed out in class, so missing a significant amount of class will result in missed written responses, missed case study analyses and a reduced class participation grade. Students will also be responsible for lecture material on the final exam. Homework response assignments must be turned in on the online platform and as a hard copy in class. Any response assignments turned in only on the online platform will not be graded. Written assignments, case study analyses, the media project and the final exam cannot be made up without a formal excuse.

Electronic Devices - Without express permission from the instructor, no electronic devices are allowed in class.

Late Assignments - Late response assignments and case studies will not be accepted without a formal excuse. The final paper and media project will be accepted after the day they are due, but either will lose a third of a grade point for each day it is late. For example, an A paper turned in one day late will be assigned an A-. For those students who present a valid formal excuse, makeup work is due by the last day of classes.

Disabilities or Special Needs - Any student requiring special accommodations should speak to the instructor immediately.

Academic Dishonesty:

No cheating or plagiarism will be tolerated. Clear cases of cheating or plagiarizing will result in an immediate F for the assignment. Be aware that unintentional plagiarism still counts as plagiarism. If you copy a passage or idea from your notes and forget where it came from, that still counts as plagiarism. It is up to you to make sure that you properly cite any claim, passage or idea that is not your own. Ideas in student writing that are not original or properly cited will count as plagiarism. Please look over the university's policy on plagiarism carefully.

Course Outline

Please make sure to do the readings *before* class.

Week	Content
Introduction	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T Introduction to Business Ethics (no reading) – Th J. Moriarty “Business Ethics: An Overview”; T. Donaldson “Values in Tension”
The Social Responsibility of the Firm	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T M. Friedman “The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits” – Th A. Sen “Does Business Ethics make Economic Sense?”
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T R.E. Freeman “Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation”; case study: “NYSEG Corporate Responsibility Program” – Th D. Rodin “The Ownership Model of Business Ethics”
Employee Rights and Responsibilities	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T J. Moriarty “Compensation Ethics and Organizational Commitment” – Th T.L. Carson “Conflicts of Interest”; case study: “R. Foster Winans”
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T I. Maitland “Rights in the Workplace: A Nozickian Argument” – Th P. Werhane “Justice and Trust”
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T M. Cranford “Drug Testing and the Right to Privacy”; case study: “Testing Employees for Substance Abuse” – Th Faden & Beauchamp “The Right to Risk Information and the Right to Refuse Workplace Hazards”
Policies: Affirmative Action, Bluffing and Exploitation	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T Mid-Semester Break (no class) – Th J. Narveson “On Discrimination in Hiring”; T. Nagel “Defense of Affirmative Action”
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T T.L. Carson “Second Thoughts about Bluffing”; case study: “Shoe Sales” – Th C. Provis “Ethics, Deception and Labor Negotiation”
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T G. Brenkert “Marketing and the vulnerable”; case study: “Advertising Joe Camel” – Th Palmer & Hedberg “The Ethics of Marketing to Vulnerable Populations”
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T M. Zwolinski “Sweatshops, Choice, and Exploitation” – Th C. Meyers, “Wrongful Beneficence: Exploitation and Third World Sweatshops”; case study: “Nike’s Suppliers in Vietnam”
Policies: Whistleblowing, the Environment, Intellectual Property and Spying	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – T F.A. Elliston “Anonymity and Whistleblowing” – Th R.A. Larmer “Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty”; case study: “The Reluctant Security Guard”

Course Outline (continued)

Week	Content
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T N. Bowie "Money, Morality, and Motor Cars" - Th Arnold & Bustos "Business, Ethics & Global Climate Change"
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T Werhane & Gorman "Intellectual Property Rights, Moral Imagination and Access to Life-Enhancing Drugs" - Th L.S. Paine "Corporate Policy and the Ethics of Competitor Intelligence Gathering"; case study: "Email Policy at Johnson & Dresser"
Who's Responsible for Corporate Wrongdoing?	
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T P. French "The Corporation as a Moral Person" - Th M. Velazquez "Debunking Corporate Moral Responsibility"; case study: "Who Should Pay?"
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - T J.D. Bishop "The Moral Responsibility of Corporate Executives for Disasters" - Th R.A. Larmer "Corporate Executives: Disasters and Moral Responsibility"