Professional and Business Ethics
Ph 330 A01 Spring 2015
CRN 22451

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Class meetings: Tue, Wed, Fri: 12:30 – 1:20
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Course description

Objectives
In this course we explore ethical issues that arise as a result of the activity of professionals, businesses and businesspersons. We aim to develop a critical vocabulary to enable appropriate discussion of ethically problematic situations. We start from the assumption that professionals, businesses, and those involved in business, co-create, and are dependent on, the fabric of contemporary societies. We will also seek to develop a vision of the contribution that responsible professionals and business persons can make to society, even while pursuing profit-oriented goals.

Method
The course makes available conceptual tools that can enhance the capacity to make ethical assessments of problematic issues in the professions and business. We survey ethical theories and apply them to issues that may arise in the professional and business everyday. As far as time permits, we will explore some alternative modes of creating work, products and services, such as cooperatives, social enterprises, fair trade organisations and ethical sourcing, Critical analysis of assumptions and arguments, supported by case analysis, will be pursued throughout the course.

Sample of the types of questions considered

- What distinguishes the professions from other occupations?
- What makes the professional-client relationship special?
- Ethically, should corporations be considered persons?
- What is the basis of corporate social responsibility?
- What responsibilities does business have toward stakeholders that are not shareholders?
- Why are whistleblowers important and when is it ethically alright to blow the whistle?
- Do businesses have special responsibilities when operating globally?
- What ethical responsibilities does business have concerning the environment?
- What does environmental responsibility require?
- Who is responsible for the safety of products, of employees and of customers?
- What are ethical problems in advertising and targeting?
- What is the foundation of property rights?
- How are work and private property related?
- What is the social economy, and what characterises cooperative businesses?
- Why is fair trade fair? What makes ethical sourcing ethical?

Texts

Required: Allhoff and Vaidya, Business ethics (Broadview Press, 2008), ISBN 978-1-55111-661-7. A number of additional texts will be placed on Coursespaces, and possibly on reserve in the McPherson Library (TBA in class).
**Course organisation**

*Readings and student engagement*

Assigned weekly readings need to be done *ahead of class lectures*. Attendance during class periods, constructive participation, and tolerance with regard to the views of others, will be expected. Students are responsible for class lectures covered, and for informing themselves about announcements missed if absent. Weekly class time will be devoted to brief presentation of key points from the material assigned, and to class discussion. Attendance, constructive engagement, and performance of weekly assignments all contribute to the participation grade credit.

**Tips for best performances**

1. Do readings *ahead of class periods*, and do weekly assignments.
2. Come to class, and constructively *participate in class discussion*.
3. Speak to the instructor if failing to understand the material.

**Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation, including weekly assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term test</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A final, comprehensive, take-home exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
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1. **Participation** is assessed on the basis of a) *regular attendance*, b) *constructive participation in class discussion*, and c) *weekly assignments* based on the course readings and personal analysis of the issues under discussion. *Class attendance will be taken*, and is particularly encouraged in the case of guest speakers. Justified absences should be discussed with the instructor ahead of time.

2. **The mid-term test** covers both readings and further points raised in lectures. Both understanding and recall of material covered, and reflective analysis, is expected. Test questions will likely consist of a combination of shorter and longer answer questions.

3. **The final exam** will be a comprehensive take-home exam with long as well as short answer questions. Questions will be handed out on the last day of classes, and the completed exam must be brought to the Department of Philosophy *no later than 7 days after exam questions hand-out, before 2:00 p.m.* Late exams will NOT be accepted (they will receive 0%). *Exams also have to be submitted simultaneously through Coursespaces.* Understanding of material covered and reflective analysis will be expected. Answers to questions will be assessed on the basis of the following three criteria: (1) explanation of key points, (2) well-developed discussion of points presented, (3) clarity, neatness, and organisation of points.

**Other matters**

*Numerical and letter grades*

Grades will be given as percentile marks. The percentile mark for the course will be converted to a letter grade in the following manner: A+ = 90 - 100, A = 85 - 89, A- = 80 - 84, B+ = 77 - 79, B = 73 - 76, B- = 70 - 72, C+ = 65 - 69, C = 60 - 64, D = 50 - 59, F = 0 - 49. The A range means exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. A grade in the B range means a very good, good and solid performance. A grade in the C+ or C range means satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory, performance. A grade of D or D- indicates merely passable or marginal performance. An F indicates unsatisfactory performance.

*Late assignments*

Late assignments will **not** be accepted (they will be worth 0%) and exams will **not** be rescheduled. If a test is missed for significant reasons of a medical sort (provide medical certificate), or for other serious, **documented** personal reasons, arrangements will be made to accommodate the student within reason. Documented evidence for having legitimately missed an exam and an explanatory statement in writing have to be received **no more than ten days after the deadline or exam missed**.
Plagiarism and other policies
Academic honesty will be expected in this course. Plagiarism (e.g. copying from others or working together on the take-home exam) may lead to dismissal from the course and the university. Any matters not covered in this handout will be handled in accordance with University and Department policies.

Course Experience Survey (CES)
Towards the end of term students have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding their learning experience. It is intended to provide feedback to the university regarding the course and my teaching. In the last two weeks of classes, you will receive an e-mail about this. If you do not receive such an invitation, you can go directly to http://ces.uvic.ca. Class time will be set aside to do the CES.

Transition and inclusivity/diversity
New students needing assistance may contact the Transition Office, www.uvic.ca/transition. This course is committed to inclusivity and diversity, in line with University Senate policy (1999) that “UVic is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.”

Schedule of lectures and tests
Please note that this schedule is subject to changes. Weekly reading assignments will be confirmed in class, so please be attentive to announcements both in class and on Coursespaces. Informed participation in class discussion will be expected, so please read the assigned texts in advance. Readings are from the Coursepack and from the Coursespaces website, unless otherwise indicated.

Week 1
Course introduction
4-10 Jan
Readings: Preliminaries and Foundational Issues, sections 1-2
Reading: Plato, “Ring of Gyges”, Aristotle, “The Good Life” (Coursespaces)

Week 2
Approaches to ethics
11-17 Jan

Week 3
Approaches to ethics continued
18-24 Jan
Readings: skip reading 3 from the textbook and replace with O’Neill, “A Simplified Account of Kant’s Ethics” (Coursespaces); Brown, “Buddhist Ethics” (Section 5), Manning, “Caring” (Section 4) *20 Jan, last day for adding courses*

Week 4
The professions and the professional-client relationship
25 – 31 Jan
Readings: Bayles & Hughes, “The Professions” (Coursespaces), and Bayles, “The Professional-Client Relationship” (Coursespaces); optionsals: C.S. Lewis, “The Inner Ring” (Coursespaces), Ciulla, “What is Good Leadership?” (Coursespaces)

Week 5
Corporate social responsibility, moral hazard and whistleblowing
1-7 Feb
Required readings: Vaidya introduction, Friedman (65-), Freeman (69-), DeGeorge (267-);
recommended optional reading: French (Coursespaces)
CASE: Westray Mine Disaster

Week 6
READING WEEK
8-14 Feb
No new readings, no worksheets
8 February **Family Day**

Week 7
Whistleblowing, review
16-22 Feb
Readings: Larmer (274-), Duska (Coursespaces)
Recommended optional: Edward Snowden, interview in ‘Nation’ journal (Coursespaces)
CASE: Olivieri vs. Apotex
Week 8
22 Feb – 28 Feb
**Mid-term in-class test on Wednesday 24 February**

Globalisation, safety in the workplace, the role of work
Readings: Donaldson, “Values in Tension” (Section 16), McCoy, “The Parable of the Sadhu” (Coursespaces), Schumacher (Coursespaces), Superson, “Safety in the Workplace” (Section 28)
CASES: Dhaka Factory Fire (Bangladesh) and “You Love Cheap Clothes”

Week 9
29 Feb – 6 Mar
Environmental responsibility, bribery
Readings: Heyd (Coursespaces), Dyllick (Coursespaces), Fadiman (447-), Optional recommended: Canadian Bribery Law (Coursespaces)
CASE: Fashion, people and the environment: A case about ethics in sourcing

Week 10
7-13 Mar
Affirmative action, sexual harassment, bluffing
Readings: Dimock and Tucker on affirmative action (Coursespaces), and Superson (Section 34), Carr (400-)
*29 February: Last day for withdrawing from courses without penalty of failure*

Week 11
14-20 Mar
Bluffing, the social economy/cooperatives, and the origin of property
Readings: Allhoff (432-), TBA (Coursespaces)
GUEST SPEAKERS: Murdith McLean, Ph.D. and TBA. ATTENDANCE: Required
Readings: Peredo and McLean (optional, Coursespaces), selections of Locke (475-482)

Week 12
21-27 Mar
Wealth and property under capitalism
Readings: Smith (487-490), Marx (490-497)
CASE: Uzbek cotton (Coursespaces)
25 March GOOD FRIDAY: No Classes!

Week 13
28 Mar – 3 Apr
Course Experience Survey, review and summary-conclusion
28 March EASTER MONDAY

Week 14
4-10 Apr
*Monday 4 April: last Day of Classes. Final take-home exam questions handed out **
**Monday 11 April before 2:00 p.m., final exam submission to the Dept of Philosophy AND on Coursespaces***