

Professional and Business Ethics

Ph 330 A01 Fall 2018

Instructor: Thomas Heyd, Ph.D.
Office: Clearihue B 309
Class meetings: TWF 1:30-2:20
Tel.: (250) 853 3767
e-mail: heydt@uvic.ca

THERE IS
NO RIGHT WAY
TO DO
A WRONG THING.



Course description

In this course we explore ethical issues that arise in professional and business life. We start from the assumption that those involved in the professions and business co-create, and are dependent on, the well-functioning of contemporary societies. We aim to develop a critical vocabulary to enable fruitful discussion of ethically problematic situations, while also pursuing a vision of the contribution that responsible professionals and business persons can make to society in balance with personal and corporate benefit.

Course objectives

- To learn about ethical theories and their application to the complexities of issues in the professional and business world.
- As far as time permits, to explore alternative ways of creating work, products and services, through social enterprises, cooperatives, fair trade organisations and ethical sourcing.
- To sharpen our ability for critical analysis of assumptions and arguments, and how to assess their strength and weaknesses, supported by consideration of realistic cases.

Graded student activities

Mid-term test	30%
Final, comprehensive, take-home exam	40%
Class participation, including weekly assignments	10%
Experiential group work	20%

Texts

Required: Primary texts are on **Coursespaces**. Additional resources may be made available (TBA).

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 responsibilities does business have toward stakeholders who are not shareholders?
- When is it ethically right to blow the whistle on one's own company?
- What ethical responsibilities does business have concerning the environment?
- What is bluffing and why is it problematic?
- What is bribery and how can it be avoided?
- Why is sexual harassment of special concern in business and the professions?
- What is the social economy, and what characterises cooperative businesses?
- What is the foundation of property rights and how are work and private property related?