

Phil 330 Professional and Business Ethics A01 Spring 2023

Instructor: Peter Dietsch, PhD
Lectures: TWF 9:30-10:20
Office hours: tbd
Email: pdietsch@uvic.ca

Course description

Building on an overview of common approaches to ethics, this course explores the professional codes of ethics and their ethical foundations in four domains: medicine, law, politics, and business. A special emphasis is accorded to business ethics. In this context, the distinction between approaches that focus on the actions of individuals versus approaches that analyse the institutional structure in which individuals act will be a recurring theme in the course.

Course Website

Online materials will be made available via Uvic Brightspace. Access your customized Brightspace page by signing in to Uvic and clicking on Online Tools. You should see Brightspace as an option.

Texts

Core readings will be available as a course pack for sale at the UVic Bookstore.

Grading System

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definition
90 – 100	A+	9	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior , shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
85 – 89	A	8	
80 – 84	A-	7	
77 – 79	B+	6	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
73 – 76	B	5	
70 – 72	B-	4	
65 – 69	C+	3	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities.
60 – 64	C	2	
50 – 59	D	1	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
0 – 49	F	0	F is earned by work, which after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the TA in a respectful, open-minded manner. If you are still not satisfied

with your grade, you can ask for a re-correction of the copy by the instructor. The new grade will count, whether it is higher or lower than the original one.

For additional information regarding undergraduate grades, please consult the [Grading](#) section of the Uvic Undergraduate Calendar.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

Final examinations are the property of Uvic and are not returned. They are available for viewing at the Records Office according to Uvic Examinations procedures and regulations.

Uvic is committed to providing a safe, supportive learning environment for all members. Further information regarding Uvic policies on human rights, equity, discrimination and harassment are located in the Uvic calendar [General University Policies](#), but if you have any particular concerns related to our course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Graded student activities

- 1500-word essay (40%) due on 1 March
[5 percentage points penalty for each 100-word increment over 1500 words, excluding footnotes and bibliography – *everything* else counts; e.g. 1507 words => 5 percentage points penalty; 1623 words => 10 p.p. penalty]
- 2-hour final exam (50%)
- Weekly summaries of readings (400 words; 10 weeks out of 12; 10%)

Policy on Late Assignments

5% per working day will be subtracted from grade unless students are delayed by illness or family emergency.

Plagiarism

Review the [University Policy on Academic Integrity](#) very carefully, and be aware that anti-plagiarism software may be used in this course. Resources will be provided via Brightspace for students seeking guidance about what constitutes plagiarism and how they can avoid it, but it is the responsibility of each student to be informed about these details.

Counseling Services

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with [Uvic Counseling Services](#), which is an excellent resource you have at your disposal on campus. It is hard to shake the stigma associated with problems like depression and anxiety, but if at any point you can benefit from help with mental health issues, please contact Counseling Services. They genuinely want to help, and why not take advantage of this free resource?

Important Dates

Please consult the Uvic calendar's [Academic Year Important Dates](#) for information about last possible dates to withdraw from courses without penalty, examinations period start/end dates, etc.

Technology in Classroom

Some students require laptops or voice recognition apps for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in the classroom. However, studies demonstrate that multi-tasking reduces the performance of other nearby students. Therefore, I strongly discourage the use of computers in the classroom. Anyone caught on social media, internet surfing, etc. will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action.

Uvic Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response

Learn more about preventing sexualized violence by visiting www.uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs advice, and/or support, please contact the Sexualized Violence Resource Office in EQHR, Sedgewick C119; email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca.

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, visit the Uvic [Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement](#).

Course outline

Week 1 (Jan 10-13): Introduction + three approaches to ethics

Week 2 (Jan 17-20): Three approaches to ethics continued

Week 3 (Jan 24-27): The doctor-client relationship

Week 4 (Jan 31 - Feb 3): Ethics in politics

Week 5 (Feb 7-10): Ethics in the legal context

Week 6 (Feb 14-17): Adversarial ethics in business

READING WEEK

Week 7 (Feb 28 - Mar 3): Stakeholder theory

Week 8 (Mar 7-10): Business ethics as political philosophy

Week 9 (Mar 14-17): Corporate social responsibility

Week 10 (Mar 21-24): Lobbying

Week 11 (Mar 28-31): Corporate tax avoidance

Week 12 (Apr 5-6): Exploitation

Selective bibliography

- Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government. How Employers Rule Our Lives (and How We Don't Talk about It)*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017, chapter 2.
- Daniel Attas, "What's Wrong with 'Deceptive' Advertising?" *Journal of Business Ethics* 21/1 (1999): 49–59.
- John R. Boatright, "Fiduciary Duties and the Shareholder-Management Relation: Or, What's So Special about Shareholders?", *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 4/4 (1994): 393–407.
- Allison Christians, "Avoidance, Evasion, and Taxpayer Morality", *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy* 44 (2014): 39ff.
- David Ciepley, "Beyond Public and Private: Toward a Political Theory of the

- Corporation”, *American Political Science Review* 107/1 (2013): 139-58.
- Peter Dietsch, “Asking the Fox to Guard the Henhouse: The Tax Planning Industry and Corporate Social Responsibility”, *Ethical Perspectives* 18/3 (2011): 341-54.
 - Peter Dietsch & Thomas Rixen, “Tax Competition and Global Background Justice”, *Journal of Political Philosophy* 22/2 (2014), 150-77.
 - Harry T. Edwards, “The Growing Disjunction between Legal Education and the Legal Profession”, *Michigan Law Review*, 91/1 (1992): 34-78.
 - Alan H. Goldman (ed.), *The Moral Foundations of Professional Ethics*, Rowman & Littlefield, 1980.
 - Robert E. Goodin, “Utilitarianism as a public philosophy”, in: Robert E. Goodin, *Utilitarianism as a public philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
 - Joseph Heath, “An adversarial ethic for business: Or when Sun-Tzu met the stakeholder”, *Journal of Business Ethics* 72/4 (2007): 359-74.
 - Joseph Heath, “A Market Failures Approach to Business Ethics”, in: Bernard Hodgson (ed.), *The Invisible Hand and the Common Good*, Heidelberg, Springer, 2004.
 - Joseph Heath, Jeffrey Moriarty and Wayne Norman, “Business ethics and (or as) political philosophy”, *Business Ethics Quarterly* 20/3 (2010): 427-52.
 - Waheed Hussain, “Corporations, Profit Maximization, and the Personal Sphere”, *Economics and Philosophy*, 28/3 (2012): 311–331.
 - Waheed Hussain, “Is Ethical Consumerism an Impermissible Form of Vigilantism?”, *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 40/2 (2018): 111–143.
 - Helga Kuhse et Peter Singer (eds.), *A Companion to Bioethics*, Blackwell, 1998.
 - Hélène Landemore, & Isabelle Ferreras, “In Defense of Workplace Democracy: Towards a Justification of the Firm-State Analogy”, *Political Theory*, 44/1 (2016): 53–81.
 - Pierre-Yves Néron, “Rethinking the Ethics of Corporate Political Activities in a Post-Citizens United Era: Political Equality, Corporate Citizenship, and Market Failures”, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 136 (2016): 715-28.
 - Pierre-Yves Néron and Wayne Norman, “Citizenship, Inc. Do We Really Want Businesses to Be Good Corporate Citizens?” *Business Ethics Quarterly* 18/1 (2008): 1-26.
 - James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 3rd edition, McGrawHill, 1999.
 - Peter Singer and A.M. Viens (eds.), *The Cambridge Textbook of Bioethics*, Cambridge University Press, 2008.
 - Laura Stoker, “Interest and Ethics in Politics”, *American Political Science Review* 86/2 (1992): 369-80.
 - Matt Zwolinski, “Sweatshops, Choice, and Exploitation”, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 17/4 (2007): 689–727.
 - Matt Zwolinski, , “The Ethics of Price Gouging”, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 18/3 (2008): 347–378.