

**The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Philosophy  
Undergraduate Course Outline 2011  
Intersession**

**Philosophy 2074F: Business Ethics**

**Instructor:** Professor D. Proessel

**Class Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30 to 11:00

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Email:** dproesse@uwo.ca

**Course Description:**

It is sometimes said that the phrase “business ethics” is a contradiction in terms. In this course we will attempt to dispel this popular conception. By working our way through many of the moral issues to which the practice of business gives rise, we will show that the interests of business people and moral philosophers converge. Topics include: What is the nature of moral reasoning? Do corporations have social responsibilities? What social responsibilities do corporations have when operating in the global context? Are there universal ethical principles which can guide the conduct of multinational corporations? Do international sweatshops violate human rights? Can the free market be justified? What is the appropriate level of taxation? What constitutes a just distribution of the goods and services produced by society? What are the rights of employees in the workplace? Do employees have the right to due process? When is advertising ethically questionable? How much information about a product is a corporation morally obligated to disclose to consumers, and how and to whom should this information be disclosed? In examining these sorts of questions, our aim will also be to foster skills of critical reasoning and thus a way of thinking that can be applied to *all* walks of life.

**Required Text:**

*Business In Ethical Focus*, An Anthology, edited by Fritz Allhoff and Anand Vaidya, Broadview Press, 2008

**Requirements:**

In addition to keeping up with class readings and participating in class discussions, students will be expected to fulfill the following course requirements:

Exam	30%
Paper	30%
Final Exam	40%

## **AUDIT**

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://www.uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.