

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
Undergraduate Course Outline 2015**

**Philosophy 4071F: Markets and Morals**

**Fall Term, 2015**

**W 2:30-5:30**

**StvH 1145**

**Office Hours: Tu 11:30-12:30 & Th 1:30-  
2:30 & by appointment**

**Instructor: Barry Hoffmaster**

**4137 Stevenson Hall**

**661-2111 x85745**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We live in an economically dominated, money preoccupied, market driven society where advertisements have become ubiquitous and everything seems to have a price. Are there some things that money cannot buy, such as friendship, loyalty, or trust? If so, why? Are there some things that money could buy but should not be able to buy, such as a kidney for transplantation, eggs for *in vitro* fertilization, or improved attendance at school and better grades? If so, why? These questions raise general issues of whether there are any moral limits to markets, and if so, what those limits are and how those limits are justified. These issues will be examined in the contexts of specific examples.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course has four principal objectives:

- 1) To give students a better understanding of the nature of morality, in particular, an appreciation of how morality pervades our lives, our institutions, our cultures, and our societies, and to enable students to develop an informed, critically acute perspective on the issue of how, if at all, morality should be relevant to the nature of a market and impose constraints on the operation of a market;
- 2) To improve students' comprehension and critical reading skills;
- 3) To enhance students' capacities to identify issues and critically assess positions and arguments; and
- 4) To enhance students' capacities to develop and defend their own positions on issues and to present them in a clear, organized, well argued, and well written manner.

**TEXT**

Michael J. Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux

**REQUIREMENTS**

Two critical reviews of required readings (3-5 pages), each worth 15% of the mark

An oral presentation on an issue approved by the instructor, worth 30% of the mark

An essay on an issue approved by the instructor (15-20 pages), worth 40% of the mark

## **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://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/proceduresappeals.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus cannot be used as grounds of appeal.