

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2017-18

Philosophy 2074F: Business Ethics

Term: Fall 2017
M W F, 2:30 to 3:30, SSC 2032

Instructor: Dean Proessel
Office Hours: M W, 1:30 to 2:30
Email: dproesse@uwo.ca

DESCRIPTION

It is sometimes said that the phrase “business ethics” is an oxymoron. 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 capitalist market economy be justified? 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? Is business bluffing ethical? 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?

TEXTS

Business In Ethical Focus, 2nd edition, edited by Fritz Allhoff, Alexandra Sager and Anand Vaidya, Broadview Press, 2017

OBJECTIVES

In examining the topics and questions mentioned above, students will be expected to achieve the following course objectives:

- Develop an understanding of ethical theory, in particular utilitarianism, deontology, relativism and human rights.
- Develop the ability to reflect on the practice of business from a critical, moral point of view.
- Develop critical reading and writing skills by preparing a term paper.

REQUIREMENTS

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

Paper	30%
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Final Exam	40%

AUDIT

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

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES

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/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.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested.

The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

ACADEMIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

PLAGIARISM CHECKING

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.