

## **PHL 295 Business Ethics (Writing Intensive)**

Instructor: Mark Schranz

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Lectures: Mondays, 6-9 PM, SF 1105

Office/Hours: After lecture and by appointment (Jackman Humanities Building, rm 520)

### **Course Description**

In this course we shall examine some fundamental issues in business ethics while paying a great deal of attention to writing development. The course has three parts. In the first part, we examine the social purpose of businesses (or corporations) and the debate between the two major theories of corporate social responsibility. Here we shall try to determine roughly whether managers ought to only have obligations to shareholders or whether they ought to also have obligations to other stakeholder groups, given the important role that business activities play in generating value for society. In the second part of the course, we shall examine how corporate decisions are made and how these decisions may impact the environment and human health. Here we shall try to determine what sort of external legal constraints ought to be put on corporate activities. In the third part of the course, we shall examine ethical issues that arise within corporate workplaces. More specifically, we shall aim to determine how corporate structures (including recruitment structures) may impact the rights of employees to, for example, non-discrimination in hiring, protection from arbitrary dismissal, and freedom from (sexual) harassment.

Students should be aware that this is designated as a writing intensive course, and so there will be a great deal of writing throughout the term. In particular, there will be four separate assignments (Two papers, plus two sketches of papers) as well as a final exam. Students must be prepared to complete all of these assignments in order to succeed in the course.

### **Texts**

- *Business in Ethical Focus*, Fritz Allhoff and Anand Vaidya, eds., Broadview Press
- Additional articles and case studies posted online or distributed in class by professor

### **Course Requirements**

- Paper 1 Sketch, 3-3.5 pages in length (11%) - due Thu., Oct. 1 by end of day
  - Returned Fri., Oct. 9 by end of day
- Paper 1, 5-6 pages in length (22%) - Due Monday, Oct. 19 by 5pm
  - Returned Fri. Oct. 30 by end of day
- Paper 2 Sketch, 3-3.5 pages in length (11%) - Due Fri. Nov.13 by end of day
  - Returned Mon. Nov. 23 by end of day.
- Paper 2, 5-6 pages in length (22%) - Due Fri. Dec.4 by end of day.
- Essay-Based Final Exam (34%) – during exam period

### *Paper Sketches and Full Papers*

In advance of each full paper for the course, students will be asked to submit a 'sketch' of their final paper. These sketches will demonstrate that the student has an understanding of the foundational material they are arguing about, as well as a brief preview of the argument they will be giving for their position. This process of providing a sketch of the full paper is a vital part of the writing development that will take place in this course and hence must be completed. The mark for the sketch is separate from the mark for the full paper, and students who do not submit a sketch of a full paper will lose the corresponding mark for that sketch (11% of the course grade) even if they do subsequently submit the full paper.

### *Submission of Papers*

There are **NO** hard copies of papers in this class; papers are **ONLY** to be submitted electronically through blackboard/portal and through turnitin (for plagiarism detection). Papers must be submitted by the due date and by the time due to each of blackboard/portal and turnitin. Papers will be graded electronically and returned electronically.

Please note that papers are to be submitted according to a standard format so as to ensure fairness for all students: The font must be 12-point, double-spaced, Times New Roman, and with margins no less than one inch on all sides. Moreover, if you include notations, be aware that these count towards your page-count. No cover page is required, but you must include your student number as well as your name (in a 'Last Name', 'First Name' format) to ensure that you are readily identifiable as the author of the paper. Failure to respect these guidelines will result in a reduction of your mark, unless otherwise noted, normally by one full increment (e.g. from a 'B' to a 'B-') *for each of the guidelines that is not respected*. Failure to adhere to the prescribed page limits for papers will also result in additional reductions of your mark.

### *Late Papers*

Late papers will be penalized 3% per day, including weekends. Extensions will only be permitted because of illness, bereavement, or other extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances. Documentation will be required.

### **E-mail Policy**

I will attempt to respond to all valid e-mail inquiries within 24-48 hours during the work week. Valid e-mail inquiries *do not* include questions about course information that is easily accessible through the course website, questions about the content of missed lectures, or substantive philosophical questions. The latter two sorts of questions are better addressed during lectures or during office hours. Please note that teaching assistants will not answer e-mails.

### **Classroom Etiquette / Behavior**

The general rule for behavior in the classroom is to behave in a way that is respectful to your professor and, more importantly, to your fellow students.

We will (hopefully) have a lot of discussion in the class about (somewhat) controversial philosophical issues. You are encouraged to engage in class discussions and are welcome to argue for whatever viewpoint you think is correct. But in doing so you must keep two things in mind: First, in class discussions (and more generally in philosophy) you have to argue for your view and not just assert it. Second, if you disagree with someone else, you are welcome to critique / attack their view / argument but you are not welcome to critique / attack the person holding that view / argument; if you attack the person rather than the argument, you will be instructed to cease or, in extreme cases, will be asked to leave the classroom and may even forfeit participation marks.

Being respectful to others in the classroom also means that you must do your best not to distract others. You are welcome to eat and drink in class. Sending text messages while in class is strongly discouraged. Carrying on private conversations with other students during class must be kept to an absolute minimum. Talking on the phone while in class is absolutely unacceptable. You may be asked to leave the classroom if your activities are overly distracting to your fellow students.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will not be tolerated. The penalties for plagiarism can be very severe, and will be enforced should cases of it arise in this course. The University defines plagiarism and related academic offences as follows: “to represent as one’s own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work”, “to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere”, and “to submit any academic work containing a purported statement of fact or reference to a source which has been concocted”. To avoid plagiarism, you must ensure that your sources are properly cited and documented.

For more information on plagiarism and the university’s code of academic behavior, consult me during my office hours, or see:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>

### *Turnitin.com*

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Further details about how to submit papers for this course to Turnitin.com will be made available by the time that the first essay topics are assigned. Please note that submitting your paper to Turnitin.com does not stop the late clock, unless otherwise noted. You must submit an electronic copy directly to me if you wish to stop the late clock.

## Lectures and Schedule:

Class normally meets every Monday evening, however there are three exceptions to this: Thanksgiving (*Monday* Oct. 12), Study Break (*Monday* Nov. 9) and Make-Up Day (*Wednesday* Dec. 9), which class we shall use for exam-review and any necessary catch-up.

### Unit 1 : Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Decisionmaking

#### **Monday, Sept 14**

Lecture 1     *Introduction To Course and Overview of Shareholder / Stakeholder Debate*

**Readings:**   Vadiya, ‘Corporate Social Responsibility,’ (BEF, p.63)

#### **Monday, Sept 21**

Lecture 2     *Shareholder and Stakeholder I*

**Readings:**   (1)   Friedman, ‘The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits’ (BEF, p. 65)  
                  (2)   Freeman, ‘A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation,’ (BEF, p. 69)  
                  (3)   Case Study / Discussion: TBA

#### **Monday, Sept 28**

Lecture 3     *Shareholder and Stakeholder II*

**Readings:**   (1)   Mulligan, ‘A Critique of Milton Friedman’s Essay,’  
*Journal of Business Ethics* 5 (1986): pp. 265-269.  
                  (2)   Hasnas, ‘The Normative Theories of Business Ethics: A Guide for the Perplexed,’ *Sections I-III ONLY*, (BEF, p.79).  
                  (3)   Heath, ‘Business Ethics without Stakeholders,’ (BEF, p110)

#### **Thursday, Oct. 1**

*Paper 1 Sketch due by 11:59pm*

#### **Monday, Oct. 5**

Lecture 4     *How Decisions Get Made: Cost-Benefit Analysis*

**Readings:**   (1)   Velasquez Handout - distributed by Professor  
                  (2)   Sagoff, ‘At the Monument to General Meade, *or* On the Difference Between Beliefs and Benefits,’ (BEF, p. 189).

#### **Friday, Oct. 9**

*Paper 1 Sketch returned (posted electronically) by end of the day*

#### **Monday, Oct. 12**

Thanksgiving - No Class

## **Monday, Oct. 19**

*Paper 1 due by 5pm*

Lecture 5      *Critical Approaches to Cost Benefit Analysis*

- Readings:**
- (1) Sagoff (con't)
  - (2) Shrader-Frechette, 'A Defense of Risk-Cost-Benefit Analysis,' (BEF, p.214)
  - (3) Case Study / Discussion: TBA

## **Monday, Oct. 26**

Lecture 6      *Cost Benefit Analysis, The Environment, and Human Rights*

- Readings:**
- (1) Hanley, 'Cost - benefit analysis and environmental policymaking,' *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 19(1), pp. 103-118.
  - (2) Gewirth, "Human Rights and the Prevention of Cancer," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 17(2): 117-125 (1980)
  - (4) Case Study / Discussion: TBA

## **Friday, Oct. 30**

*Paper 1 returned by end of day*

## **Unit 2: Employment Ethics**

## **Monday, Nov.2**

Lecture 7      *Hiring: Non-Discrimination*

- Readings:**
- (1) Miller, 'Deserving Jobs,' *The Philosophical Quarterly* 42: 161-181 (1992)
  - (2) Jan Narveson, 'Have We A Right to Non-Discrimination'.

## **Monday, Nov. 9**

Study Break - No Class

## **Friday, Nov. 13**

*Paper 2 Sketch Due*

## **Monday, Nov. 16**

Lecture 8      *Hiring: Affirmative Action*

- Readings:**
- (1) *Metro Broadcasting Inc. v. FCC* (BEF, p. 324)
  - (2) Hettinger, 'What is Wrong with Reverse Discrimination?' (BEF, p. 326)
  - (3) Pojman, 'The Moral Status of Affirmative Action' (BEF, p. 337)

**Monday, Nov. 23**

*Paper 2 Sketch returned by end of day*

Lecture 9 *Employee Rights: Employment at Will*

- Readings:**
- (1) Werhane and Rudin, 'Employment at Will and Due Process,' (BEF, p.253)
  - (2) Des Jardins, 'Fairness and Employment-at-Will,' *Journal of Social Philosophy* 16: 31-38 (1985).
  - (3) Epstein, 'In Defense of the Contract at Will,' (BEF, p. 259)

**Monday, Nov. 30**

Lecture 10 *Employee Rights: Sexual Harassment*

- Readings:**
- (1) Wall, 'The Definition of Sexual Harassment,' (BEF, p.356)
  - (2) Superson, 'A Feminist Definition of Sexual Harassment,' (BEF, p. 366).
  - (3) CS: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (BEF, p. 458)

**Friday, Dec. 4**

Paper 2 due by end of day

**Monday, Dec. 7**

Lecture 11 *Employee Rights: Safety in the Workplace*

- Readings:**
- (1) Superson, 'The Employer-Employee Relationship and the Right to Know,' (BEF, p.302)
  - (2) Machan, 'Human Rights, Workers' Rights, and the 'Right' to Occupational Safety,' (BEF, p.312)
  - (3) Case Study / Discussion: TBA

**Wednesday, Dec. 9**

Lecture 12 *Catch-Up and Exam Review*