

PHIL-2060: BUSINESS ETHICS

Cuyahoga Community College

Viewing: PHIL-2060 : Business Ethics

Board of Trustees:

November 2018

Academic Term:

Fall 2021

Subject Code

PHIL - Philosophy

Course Number:

2060

Title:

Business Ethics

Catalog Description:

Application of moral philosophy including ethical theories and moral principles to issues in business and other organizations with an emphasis on developing the students ability to identify and analyze ethical issues.

Credit Hour(s):

3

Lecture Hour(s):

3

Requisites

Prerequisite and Corequisite

ENG-1010 College Composition I or ENG-101H Honors College Composition I.

Outcomes

Course Outcome(s):

Explain ethics as a major branch of philosophy.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Explain the core aspects of ethics as a branch of philosophy.
2. Identify the difference between normative (prescriptive) and descriptive statements.
3. Identify accurately ethical problems and dilemmas.

Course Outcome(s):

Explain the classical normative ethical theories in philosophy.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Summarize the normative theory of ethical egoism.
 2. Summarize the normative theory of utilitarianism.
 3. Summarize Kant's normative deontological theory.
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Course Outcome(s):

Explain the core distinctions between utilitarian, libertarian and egalitarian theories of justice.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Give an account of a distributive and utilitarian forms of justice.
 2. Give an account of a libertarian theory of justice.
 3. Give an account of Rawls' egalitarian theory of justice.
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Course Outcome(s):

Analyze the key features of a capitalist system while exploring classical and contemporary critiques of capitalism.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

Objective(s):

1. Identify and explain Adam Smith's justifications for capitalism.
 2. Identify and explain Karl Marx's critiques of capitalism.
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Course Outcome(s):

Assess the concept of corporate responsibility through the prism of normative ethical theories.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

Objective(s):

1. Examine the Citizen's United Supreme Court ruling and its' impact on the modern political process.
 2. Identify the distinction between the narrow and broad views of corporate responsibility.
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Course Outcome(s):

Apply the concepts of paternalism and anti-paternalism to consumer choices.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Examine the distinction between paternalism and anti-paternalism along with its' impact upon consumer choice.
 2. Identify areas where businesses have responsibility along with deceptive business practices.
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Course Outcome(s):

Identify and assess the environmental impact of decisions made by businesses.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Civic Responsibility: Analyze the results of actions and inactions with the likely effects on the larger local and/or global communities.

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Identify and apply the three major approaches to environmental regulatory practices upon businesses.
 2. Identify the impact of business decisions on future generations.
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Course Outcome(s):

Identify common ethical issues which exist in the workplace.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Objective(s):

1. Identify issues related to hiring and firing.
2. Identify testing protocols and safety issues which are inherent in workplace environments.
3. Identify moral dilemmas in the workplace including: conflict of interest, abuse of power and whistle-blowing.
4. Identify common instances of discrimination and sexual harassment.

Course Outcome(s):

Apply aspects of ethical theories and topics to contemporary problems in Business Ethics and successfully argue for a position.

Essential Learning Outcome Mapping:

Critical/Creative Thinking: Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to consider problems/ideas and transform them in innovative or imaginative ways.

Written Communication: Demonstrate effective written communication for an intended audience that follows genre/disciplinary conventions that reflect clarity, organization, and editing skills.

Objective(s):

1. Apply the ethical theories to practical problems in case studies.
2. Argue in depth for a position on one of the aforementioned controversial topics in the course.

Methods of Evaluation:

1. Examinations, tests and quizzes
2. In class assignments
3. Small group discussions
4. Student presentations
5. Written assignments
 - a. Case study analysis
 - b. Ethics Log
 - c. Research paper
 - d. Annotated bibliography
 - e. Conduct interviews with business people

Course Content Outline:

1. Ethics as a branch of philosophy
 - a. Morality vs. Law
 - b. Moral vs. non-moral
 - c. Two widely discredited views in ethics
 - i. Divine command theory
 - ii. Ethical relativism
 - d. Individual integrity and responsibility
 - i. Organizational norms
 - ii. Conformity
 - iii. Groupthink
 - iv. Diffusion of responsibility
 - e. Prescriptive (normative) vs. descriptive ethics
2. Normative ethical theories
 - a. Consequentialist ethical theories
 - i. Egoism
 1. Psychological egoism (descriptive)
 2. Ethical egoism (prescriptive)
 3. Critiques of egoism
 - ii. Utilitarianism

1. Act vs. Rule Utilitarianism
2. Critiques of utilitarianism
- b. Non-consequentialist ethical theories
 - i. Kantian ethics
 1. Categorical Imperative I
 2. Categorical Imperative II (practical imperative)
 3. Hypothetical Imperative
 4. Categorical Imperative III (Autonomy vs. Heteronomy); Acting from a good will
 5. Critiques of Kantian theory
 - ii. Ross's Theory
 1. Prima facie obligations
 2. Critiques of Ross's theory
 - iii. Rights-based theories
 1. Positive vs. Negative Rights
 2. Legal rights
 3. Human rights
3. Theories of Justice
 - a. Distributive justice
 - b. Utilitarian theory of justice
 - i. Enhanced worker participation
 - ii. Greater income equality
 - iii. Declining marginal utility of money
 - iv. Critiques
 - c. Libertarian theory of justice
 - i. Lockean rights (property rights)
 - ii. Entitlement theory
 - iii. Wilt Chamberlain example (Nozick)
 - iv. Critiques
 - d. Egalitarian theory of justice
 - i. Justice as fairness (Rawls)
 - ii. Original position
 - iii. Veil of ignorance
 - iv. Difference principle
 - v. Maximin rule
 - vi. Critiques
4. Major economic systems
 - a. Communism
 - b. Socialism
 - c. Capitalism
 - i. Companies/corporations
 - ii. Profit motive
 - iii. Free competition
 - iv. Private ownership of the means of production
 - d. Adam Smith's justifications for capitalism
 - i. Natural rights to property (Lockean Rights)
 - ii. Invisible hand
 - e. Critiques of capitalism
 - i. Leads to inequality of outcomes
 - ii. Reinforces materialistic ideals
 - iii. Anti-competitive
 - f. Marxist Critiques of capitalism
 - i. Leads to oligopolies
 - ii. Corporate Welfare
 - iii. Exploits & Alienates workers
 - iv. Workers serving as a means of surplus value for the bourgeoisie
 - g. Modern concerns with capitalist systems
 - i. Outsourcing / decline in American manufacturing
 - ii. U.S. trade deficit
 - iii. Short term focus on profit

5. Corporations
 - a. On inception, owners of corporations had private liability ex. East India Company
 - b. Privately held vs. publicly held corporations
 - c. LLC"s
 - d. Corporate moral agency
 - i. Citizens United Ruling (2010)
 - ii. CID
 - iii. Diffusion of responsibility
 - e. Corporate Responsibility
 - i. Narrow view (Milton Friedman)
 1. Exclusively profit driven
 2. Stockholders control
 - ii. Broad view (Keith Davis)
 1. Externalities & spillover
 2. Socially responsible
 - iii. Regulating corporate actions
 1. Invisible hand
 2. Governmental regulations
6. Consumers
 - a. Legal Liability
 - i. Due Care
 - ii. *Caveat Emptor*
 - b. Legal Paternalism
 - c. Areas of responsibility
 - i. Quality
 - ii. Pricing
 - iii. Manipulative pricing
 - iv. Price fixing
 1. Horizontal
 2. Vertical
 - v. Price Gouging
 - vi. Labeling
 - d. Manipulative practices
 - i. Ambiguity
 - ii. Concealment of facts
 - iii. Exaggeration
 - iv. Psychological appeal
 - v. Advertising directed at children
 - vi. Assessing free speech and advertising
7. Environmental Ethics
 - a. Ecosystems
 - i. Tragedy of the commons
 - ii. Free-rider problem
 - b. Who should pay for environmental cleanup
 - c. Competing views designed to handle pollution
 - i. Regulatory
 - ii. Incentives
 - iii. Pricing mechanisms & pollution permits (cap and trade)
 - iv. Advantages & Disadvantages of the aforementioned views
 - d. Global fairness
 - e. Obligations to future generations
 - f. Inherent value of nature
 - g. Industrialized farming
8. Issues in the workplace
 - a. Employment at will
 - b. Hiring procedures
 - i. Screening
 - ii. Bona fide occupational qualifications (BFOQ)
 - iii. ADA

- c. Discrimination
 - i. Language
 - ii. Physical appearance
 - iii. Education
 - iv. Employment history gaps
 - v. Testing procedures
- d. Promotions
 - i. Seniority
 - ii. Inbreeding
 - iii. Nepotism
- e. Dismissal
- f. Wages
- g. Unions
 - i. Acts in favor of unions
 - ii. AFL-CIO
 - iii. Card Check
 - iv. Strikes
 - v. Boycotts
- 9. Issues of privacy & safety in the workplace
 - a. Suggested activities
 - i. Civic activities
 - ii. Wellness programs
 - b. Testing protocols
 - i. Polygraph testing
 - ii. Personality tests
 - iii. Drug tests
 - c. Safety
 - i. OSHA
 - ii. Maternity / Paternity Leave
 - iii. Child Care
- 10. Moral Dilemmas faced by employees
 - a. Loyalty
 - i. Conflict of interest
 - ii. Investing in competitors
 - b. Abuse of power
 - i. Insider trading
 - ii. Proprietary data
 - iii. Bribes
 - iv. Kickbacks
 - v. Grease Payments
 - c. Whistle-blowing
- 11. Discrimination
 - a. Historical overview of the topic
 - b. Affirmative action
 - i. Arguments in favor
 - ii. Arguments against
 - iii. Comparable worth
 - iv. Reverse discrimination
 - c. Sexual Harassment

Resources

Boatright, John R. *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2016.

Desjardins, Joseph. *An Introduction to Business Ethics*. 5th. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2014.

Beauchamp, Tom L., Denis G. Arnold, and Norman E. Bowie. *Ethical Theory and Business*. 10th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2018.

DeGeorge, Richard T. *Business Ethics*. 7th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2014.

Shaw, William H. and Barry, Vincent. *Moral Issues in Business*. 13th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2016.

Instructional Services

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