Business Ethics (PHIL 1317)—J-Term 2020

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Course Description
We will begin with a general introduction to ethics by examining several different ethical theories. We will then discuss a number of ethical issues as they pertain to business. These issues will include: capitalism, socialism, distributive justice, corporate responsibility, the automation of jobs, the treatment of animals, and advertising.

Required Text
- All other readings will be available on Canvas (smu.instructure.com)

Requirements
- **Midterm Exam** (20% of final grade)
- **Final Exam** (30% of final grade)
- **2 Quizzes** (15% of final grade): T/F, Logic, Multiple-Choice (these will cover material from lecture and discussion and will be taken on Canvas)
- **Précis** (20% of final grade): By the end of the session, you will have written *five* 1-page (or, 300 word) papers, each of which exhibits that you have read the material and have made a sincere effort to understand both the position and argument(s) of the philosopher in question. Which readings you will write précis for is your choice (except that you may write no more than two précis over the introductory material). Each of these papers must be submitted on canvas no later than the day the reading is to be covered.
- **Participation/Attendance** (15% of final grade): Students must exhibit a willingness to think and be open to revising their current opinions. Frequent absences, sleeping during lecture, text messaging, and being disruptive will negatively affect your participation grade. Engaging with the material, whether that involves asking questions, contributing to discussion, or simply being attentive, will positively affect your participation grade.
- **Laptops/Tablets**: No laptops or tablets may be used in class without my explicit permission. If you normally take notes on a computer, rather than by hand, you should be aware that there is a growing body of research that suggests this is counterproductive. See, e.g., [http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/).

Goals
- PHIL 1317 is a *Philosophical and Religious Inquiry and Ethics Pillar (level I)* within SMU’s University Curriculum. As a result of taking this course, students will be able to describe and explain some of the general features and principal theoretical methods of ethics, social and political philosophy, and logic.
- Students will develop techniques of formal reasoning.
- Students will develop the ability to apply techniques of formal reasoning to business related issues.

Grading Scale
- **A** = 92.5+
- **A-** = 89.5–92.4
- **B+** = 86.5+
- **B** = 82.5–86.4
- ...
Tentative Schedule

Introductory Issues & General Theories*

*PLEASE HAVE THE READINGS FOR THIS SECTION COMPLETED BEFORE THE 1ST DAY CLASSES

Jan 7: Cultural Relativism (canvas), Ethical Egoism (canvas)
Jan 8: Mill (19-25), O’Neill (canvas)

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Jan 9: *Capitalism & Distributive Justice: Smith (43-45), Rawls (55-63), Nozick (canvas)
Jan 10: *Midterm
Jan 11: Corporations & Corporate Responsibility: Friedman (224-229), Freeman (258-266)
Jan 14: Privacy & Big Data: Daley & Howell (canvas); AI & Automation: Tegmark (canvas)
Jan 15: Animals: Singer (423-430), Steinbock (canvas)
Jan 16: *Final Exam

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:  Violation of SMU’s honor code will not be tolerated. Every piece of work you turn in must be entirely your own. Writing a paper means both expressing your own thoughts and expressing them in your own words. You may not copy unquoted passages from our texts, from any other texts (including other students’ papers), or from the internet, even if the passages are brief. No one else may write a paper for you, whether in whole or in part. In a typical case (for example, a student turns in a paper mostly cut-and-pasted from web sites), the penalty for violating the honor code will be an F in the course. On top of this grade penalty, the case may be presented to the honor council, in which case the student may be subject to further disciplinary action, such as suspension or dismissal from the university.

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.