

Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility

Rollins College Conference Course
(RCC-300)

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This class will examine ethical principles that apply to business and the way businesses and business leaders behave. It will focus on ethical dilemmas that arise in business and corporate life. The topics covered include theories of corporate accountability, goals of business and the corporation, rights and responsibilities of employees and employers, profit and social responsibility, environmental concerns and regulation, the ethics of doing business globally, markets and the allocation of basic goods, truthful marketing and advertising, privacy rights and technology in the workplace, issues in the morality of worker compensation, and others.

Requirements: One take home midterm (30 percent); one final paper on a topic of your choice, including proposal (50 percent); discussion in class (20 percent)

Required Textbooks for class: Michael Hoffman and Robert Frederick: *Business Ethics. Cases and Readings in Corporate Morality.* ***Other material available on blackboard.***

This is a one day a week, three-hour class

Academic Integrity:

You must become familiar with Rollins' Academic Honor Code. You can find the code online at: http://www.rollins.edu/studentrecords/main/academic_regulations.html Please read the honor pledge and learn what constitutes an honor code violation, especially as regards cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism is intellectual theft and you must know what constitutes it to avoid it. Failing to cite sources or incorrectly citing your sources constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism can be unintentional, but it should

be punished regardless of intention since it devalues academic quality, and irrevocably damages the credibility of the individual responsible for it. Because of this, please refrain from committing it, by getting familiarized with the honor code.

Schedule

January 16:

What is Ethics? Where does Business Ethics stand?

Chapter 2 in Hoffman + cases in p. 133 + chapter 1 in Shaw, *Business Ethics: a textbook with cases* (blackboard)

January 23:

Theories of Ethics: Utilitarianism, Deontology, Virtue Ethics

Chapter 2, “The Nature of Morality” in Shaw (blackboard) and chapter 3 “Ethics: Foe or Friend of Economics?” in Bowie, *Business Ethics in the 21 Century* (blackboard)

January 31

What’s the Goal of Business and the Purpose of the Corporation?

Chapter 3 in Hoffman + cases in p. 277 (first half)

February 6

Corporate Governance and Responsibility

Chapter 4 Hoffman + chapter 6, “Varieties of Corporate Social Responsibility” in Bowie, *Business Ethics in the 21 Century* (blackboard) + cases in p. 277 (second half)

February 13

Market Ethics: Issues in Allocation and Access

Jason Brennan et al. “Markets Without Symbolic Meaning” (blackboard); Micheal Sandel, Excerpt from *What Money Can’t Buy* (blackboard)+ chapter 4, “Fair Markets Revisited” in Bowie: *Business Ethics for the 21 Century* (blackboard) cases from Jennings, *Business Ethics: Case Studies and Selected Readings* (blackboard, TBD)

February 20

Theories of Economic Justice and the Ethics of Wealth Creation

Chapter 3, “ Justice and Economic Distribution” and chapter 4 “ The Nature of Capitalism” (with cases) both in Shaw (blackboard) + chapter 2c “ Distributive Justice” in Zwolinski *Arguing About Political Philosophy* (blackboard) + Jason Brennan, extract of *Why Not Capitalism?* (blackboard) + Gerald Cohen, extract of *Why Not Socialism* (blackboard)

Rights and Duties of Employees and Employers

February 27

On the nature of work and workplace organization (family rights of employees, workplace harassment, work-life balance, glass ceilings and discrimination, a right to strike): Chapter 6 Hoffman + cases in p. 434 (second half) + Alex Gourevitch “The Right To Strike: A Radical View” (blackboard),

March 6:

Turn in Midterm

Employee Duties and Their Limits: (whistleblowing, insider trading, occupational safety and risks), Chapter 5 Hoffman + cases in p. 434 (first half)

March 13 **Spring break**

March 20

The Ethics of Consumer Protection

Chapter 7 Hoffman + questions for discussion there

March 27

Turn in proposal

Truth in Marketing and Advertising:

Richard T. DeGeorge, *Marketing and Truth*, in Beauchamp and Bowie (blackboard)

Tom L. Beauchamp, *Manipulative Advertising* (same)

Albert Z. Carr, *Is Business Bluffing Ethical?* (same)

chapter 6 “ The Ethics of Consumer Protection and Marketing” in Velazquez *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases* (blackboard)

April 3

Ethical Issues in International Business

Chapter 9 in Hoffman + cases in p. 636 and 642 + chapter 3 “The Business System and International Trade...” in Velazquez, *Business Ethics* (blackboard) + 2 articles on sweatshops and ethics (for and against regulation thereof) in Jonathan Anomaly, *Philosophy, Politics and Economics* (blackboard)

April 10

Business and Environmental Sustainability

Chapter 8 Hoffman and discussion questions there

April 17

Ethical Issues in Minimum Wage and Worker Compensation

Jason Brennan, “Should Employers Pay a Minimum Wage?” *Journal of Business Ethics* (blackboard) + RA Cordero “Morality and the Minimum Wage.” *Journal of Social Philosophy* (blackboard,) + Zimmerman “Coercive Wage Offers.” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (blackboard)

Adam Smith *Wealth of Nations*, book I, chapter 8, on wages (blackboard)

April 24

Division of Labor and Opportunity Costs

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, book I, chapter 1-3 (blackboard)

Paul Krugman, “Ricardo’s Difficult Idea.” (Blackboard)

Frederic Bastiat “What is Seen and What is Not Seen” (blackboard)

paper due on day of supposed final exam– check college exam calendar