

## **Case Studies in Business Ethics Phil 3840F, 2018**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Instructor: Lucien Lamoureux, LL.B., Ph.D.  
Office: I will be meeting students in Brescia's  
Mercato Cafeteria  
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### **CLASS INFORMATION**

Tue: 6:30-9:30 pm  
Classroom: HC-W106  
Website: <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A seminar course involving the extended examination of major real-world cases in business ethics. Sample areas for examination: pharmaceuticals, the automotive industry, mining, the petroleum industry. The goal of this course is to illuminate the fundamental tension in business activity created by values of truth and profit.

### **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss competing points of view on issues in business ethics.
2. Evaluate conflicting philosophical arguments related to these issues.
3. Formulate well-reasoned solutions to practical dilemmas.
4. Persuade others of a well-reasoned stance or action.
5. Demonstrate effective writing and skillful critical and reflective thinking.

Students may vary in their competency levels on these outcomes. They can expect to achieve these outcomes if they honour course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work in good faith and on time, and meet all other course expectations of them as students.

### **ANTIREQUISITE(S)**

None. Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

### **PREREQUISITE(S)**

None.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT**

3 lecture hours/week; 0.5 course.

Lectures will be integrated with reading materials, legal cases, visual presentations, and group discussions.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Required texts:**

Case Studies in Business Ethics, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., Gini, Al and Marcoux, Alexei M., Pearson (2009).

On Truth, Frankfurt, Harry, Knopf (2006).

On Bullshit, Frankfurt, Harry, Knopf, Princeton (2005).

Additional readings will be posted in OWL.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class Participation	15%
Case Questions	30%
Essay	25%
Final Exam	30%

## **EVALUATION**

### **Class Participation**

This course uses an active learning method, which requires much greater involvement of the student in class than the traditional lecture method. The very nature of this approach demands a high level of student attendance, preparation and contribution in class.

At the end of each class the participation of a student will be assessed on the basis of professionalism and influence according to a grading rubric posted on OWL.

- a. Professionalism: Aside from prompt attendance, in the first class students will consider matters such as attentiveness, etiquette and technology use and determine the criteria of professionalism.
- b. Influence: Students will be evaluated on the basis critical thinking and the sharing of information.

Note: Any student who, without academic accommodation, misses more than 25% of scheduled classes without academic accommodation will receive a class participation grade of "0" for the course.

## **Case Questions**

At the beginning of all but the first and last class, students are expected to submit answers to questions posed in relation to the readings and case studies assigned for the week. The specific questions and the course weight accorded to answering them are posted in OWL. Answers will be assessed according to a grading rubric posted on OWL.

## **Essay**

**Format:** 5 double-spaced pages, i.e. approximately 1250 words. Hardcopy to be submitted in class on the due date.

**Plagiarism Check:** Essays must also be submitted electronically to OWL on the due date to be evaluated through turnitin. Essays not submitted to OWL will not receive a grade.

**Marking Criteria:** Each paper will be graded out of 50 according to the following criteria:

*Understanding:* How well does the author understand and make judicious use of the relevant course material? How well does s/he understand the complexity of the issues involved? [15 marks]

*Argument:* Does the author use cogent arguments to support his or her position? Do the claims made in different parts of the paper follow from one another and are they consistent? [15 marks]

*Clarity:* Is the author's position clear, with an explicitly articulated thesis, and is the paper clearly written overall? Does the paper answer the questions asked? Could another student at the same level who is not enrolled in the course understand the paper? [10 marks]

*Organization:* Does the author reveal a plan for the paper at the outset and does s/he follow that plan? Does the paper have an explicit overall direction? [5 marks]

*Style:* Does the author's paper use correct grammar and syntax? Have the guidelines for proper format been followed? Has the author cited sources where necessary, following a recognized style? [5 marks]

## **Final Exam**

The format may be multiple choice, short answer and/or essay. Further details will be provided to the class later in the term.

**Reading Syllabus (subject to revision)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b> (pages refer to Gini's textbook)	<b>Due</b>
Sept. 11	<b>Truth</b> a. Why care?	Frankfurt, <i>On Truth</i> Kant, excerpt from <i>Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (OWL) Case Study: <i>Tylenol's Rebound</i> (pp. 36-39)	
Sept. 18	b. Bluffing	Carr, <i>Is Business Bluffing Ethical?</i> (text, pp. 18-23) Case Study: <i>The Job Negotiation</i> (text, p 65)	<b>Case Questions #1</b>
Sept. 25	c. Bullshit	Frankfurt, <i>On Bullshit</i> Jackall, <i>Moral Mazes: Bureaucracy and Managerial Work</i> (pp. 414-428) Case Study: <i>The Dalkon Shield</i> (pp. 173-180) Case Study: <i>Volvo's Crushing Blow</i> (pp. 65-68)	<b>Case Questions #2</b>
Oct. 2	<b>Rational Egoism</b> a. Arguments	Rand, excerpt from <i>Atlas Shrugged</i> . (OWL) Maitland, <i>The Human Face of Self-Interest</i> (OWL) Case Study: <i>Not a Fool, Not a Saint</i> (pp. 429-431) Case Study: <i>Purifying an Image: Baxter International and the Dialyzer Crisis</i> (pp. 55-63) Case Study: <i>The New Year's Eve Crisis</i> (pp. 154-159)	<b>Case Questions #3</b>
Oct. 9	<b>Reading Week</b>	<b>Reading Week</b>	
Oct. 16	b. Criticisms	Gini and Marcoux, <i>Ethics, Business and Business Ethics</i> (pp. 1-16) Plato, excerpt from the <i>Republic</i> (OWL) Case Study: <i>The Parmalat Affair: Europe's Largest Bankruptcy Scandal</i> (pp. 126-132) Case Study: <i>Shoe Sales</i> (pp. 64-65)	<b>Case Questions #4</b>

Oct. 23	<b>The Public Corporation</b> a. Law	Documentary: <i>The Corporation</i> (viewed in class)	
Oct. 30	b. Implications	Malden Mills: <i>When Being a Good Company Isn't Good Enough</i> (pp. 432-437) Case Study: <i>The Wal-Mart Way</i> (pp. 159-168) Case Study: <i>The Ford Pinto</i> (pp. 140-147) Case Study: <i>Uptown, Dakota, and PowerMaster</i> (pp. 88-92) Case Study: <i>Volkswagen Emissions Scandal</i> (OWL)	<b>Case Questions #5</b>
Nov. 6	<b>Corporate Evil</b> a. Radical Evil	Kant, excerpt from <i>Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone</i> (OWL) Case Study: <i>Selling Your Sole at Birkenstock</i> (pp. 170-172) Case Study: <i>Into the Mouth of Babes</i> (text, pp. 29-36) Case Study: <i>Kozlowski's Tyco – "I am the Company!"</i> (115-125) Case Study: <i>"The Good Old Boys at WorldCom"</i> (pp. 132-140)	<b>Case Questions #6</b>
Nov. 13	b. Banal Evil	Arendt, excerpt from <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i> (OWL) Bernstein, excerpt from <i>Radical Evil</i> (OWL) Arendt, <i>Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture</i> (OWL) Case: <i>Sears Auto Shock</i> (p. 149-154)	<b>Case Questions #7</b>
Nov. 20	<b>Moral Accountability</b> a. Leaders	Gini, <i>Leadership: An Overview</i> (pp. 383-391) Dolecheck et al, <i>Ethics Take It From the Top</i> (pp. 398-405) Case Study: <i>The Parable of Sadhu</i> (text, pp. 23-29) Case Study: <i>Merck and Roy Vagelos: The Values of Leaders</i> (pp. 437-439)	<b>Case Questions #9</b>

Nov. 27	b. Followers	Wills, <i>The Call of Leaders</i> (pp. 391-398) Davis, <i>Some Paradoxes of Whistleblowing</i> (pp. 45-55) Duska, <i>Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty</i> (pp. 41-45) Case Study: <i>Rhonda Delgado and the Compromised CEO</i> (OWL)	<b>Case Questions #10</b>
Dec. 4	c. Citizens	Bakan: excerpt from <i>The Corporation</i> (OWL)	<b>Essay</b>

**The Appendix to Course Outlines is posted on the OWL course site.**