



School of Arts & Science

Markets and Morals

PHL 218, A

Standalone Core Course

Fulfills department major/minor/elective

Course Description

In this standalone core course, students will learn to reason morally about business case studies and moral issues that arise for individuals in the business world. They will learn about major moral theories from the philosophical tradition, such as Utilitarianism and Virtue Ethics, and the two major approaches to business ethics (Stockholder Theory and Stakeholder Theory). They will engage with philosophical articles addressing questions such as: Does a media world full of advertising limit or enhance your ability to make decisions of your own? Should you set aside your personal ethical standards for “game strategy” when making business-related decisions? What are your obligations as a consumer whose purchases affect yourself and others? Students will learn to think critically about these questions and construct their own arguments for specific answers, drawing on the moral theories covered in class.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students are expected to...

Course SLO Narrative	Supports Core SLO # and Narrative	Method(s) of Course SLO Assessment
Summarize major ethical theories.	Critical Reading (2.2)	Readings, Exams
Identify and describe ethical issues that arise in the business setting.	Ethical Reasoning (3.4)	Participation in Class Discussion, Exams, Paper, Reasoning Assignment
Propose ethical rulings and solutions for business case studies.	Critical Analysis (2.3), Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (2.4)	Participation in Class Discussion, Exams

Course SLO Narrative	Supports Core SLO # and Narrative	Method(s) of Course SLO Assessment
Explain the reasoning of others and present your own reasoning in speaking.	Oral Communication (2.5), Teamwork and Collaboration (2.9)	Participation in Class Discussion, Group Exam
Explain the reasoning of others and present your own reasoning in writing.	Written communication (2.6), Teamwork and collaboration (2.9)	Paper, Reasoning Assignment, Exams

Required Texts/Source Materials

All of the readings for this course will be on the course Blackboard page [BB]. I recommend bringing assigned readings with you, in hard copy, to class.

Core Signature Assignment

The Core Signature Assignment for this course will be your Paper 1 or your Paper 1 Rewrite. This assignment must be uploaded to your Taskstream e-Portfolio under CORE SLO #3.3 (Ethical Reasoning) and you **MUST** post an accompanying set of reflections about the work to your e-Portfolio as well.

Grading Criteria & Assessment Information

Attendance and Participation: Philosophy relies on critical and creative thinking, and that is not only easier, but also a lot more fun, to do with more than one mind. For that reason, it is essential to the success of this class that you are actively engaged in discussion. **That being said, you may (and should!) attend remotely on any days when you are feeling ill or if you have tested positive for COVID-19: please just send me an email so that I know! If, due to COVID-19, you would prefer to attend class remotely instead of in person for the whole semester, please let me know as soon as possible.**

Assignments: Assignments include readings, papers, and exams, which are all detailed below.

Readings: All readings must be completed before the day they are discussed in class. If you have not completed the reading when class discussion begins, you should go back to it and complete the reading after class discussion.

Papers: Aside from in-class discussion, your two papers will be the main way for you to demonstrate your critical thinking skills for the course. In the paper and the reasoning assignment, you will present an

argument of your own for a moral conclusion related to the class. (Alternate Option: For all papers, you will also have the option to schedule a meeting with me and present your argument orally instead of in writing. If you choose this option, it is your responsibility to contact me in a timely fashion to set up the meeting, which must occur on or before the due date for the assignment. I will make a recording of your argument and grade it using the same rubric with which I grade the written paper assignments.)

Exams: There will be two exams for the course, in which you will be tested on your knowledge of readings and theories from class and your ability to morally assess business cases. We will do case-study work in class in order to prepare for the latter.

Grading Components: Information about how final grades and paper grades are calculated as well as grading scales and points can be found in this section. Please note that generally speaking, **I do not use Blackboard Grades to calculate or share grades.** I will tell you how to find your paper grades and your exams grades. If you want to know how you are doing at class at each step of the way, I recommend storing these grades yourself as you receive them and using the percentages below to make your own estimates about how you need to perform on upcoming assignments. (If you're unsure how to do this, just ask! It's a good thing to learn!) Of course, you are also welcome to come to office hours or schedule a meeting with me to discuss your grade in more detail at any point.

What Matters for Your Final Grade:

Participation and Attendance (15%)

Exam 1 (20%)

Paper 1* (with rewrite) (20%) (grade on rewrite replaces preliminary grade)

Paper 2 (20%)

Exam 2 (25%)

*Denotes Core Signature Assignment requiring e-Portfolio upload to SLO 3.3 and reflections

Credit for improvement: There is no extra credit offered in this class. However, you will receive more credit for later assignments if you improve over the course of the semester. If you receive a higher grade on Exam 2 than on Exam 1, Exam 2 will be worth 30% and Exam 1 will drop to 15%. If you received a higher grade on your Paper 2 than on Paper 1, the former will jump to being worth 25%, and the latter will drop to 15%.

Attendance/Participation grading: If you attend all classes (remotely or in person), pay attention in class (not being distracted by your phone/laptop, etc.), engage actively in group activities, and share a question or a comment about weekly or every other week, you will receive an A on Attendance and Participation. If any of these factors is lacking (attendance is low, you are often distracted during class, you do not engage in group activities, or you rarely or never ask a question/make a comment), your Participation and Attendance grade will be lower. If you attend all but three classes and consistently pay attention and work cooperatively during class, you will receive at least a C on Participation and Attendance--but in order to earn above a passing grade, you will need to actively participate in our class discussions by sharing your confusions/ideas with the group. **If you are concerned about participating in class for any reason, please feel free to meet with me or email me so that we can work on a strategy to make it is easier for you to join in!**

Paper grading: Papers are graded on quality and clarity of the student's original argument and presence of consistent citations (not on grammar, spelling, or formatting). **An argument must include a conclusion and the student's own original reasoning in support of that conclusion.**

Generally speaking: A papers contain compelling and clear original arguments. B papers contain clear arguments that require more support to be compelling. C papers contain original ideas/reflection but have not been organized into a clear argument. A summary, in which the student accurately explains the reasoning another author provides for a conclusion, is not an argument, and even extremely well-written summaries will be awarded at highest a D. Paper letter grades correspond to points as follows:

A = 95
A/B = 90
B = 85
B/C = 80
C = 75
D = 65
F = 50

Late Work

Late work will be accepted, with a penalty of 3 point off of the grade per day it is late. I encourage you to ask for an extension ahead of time if you suspect you will not have work finished on time!

Cheating and Plagiarism (Class Policy)

Cheating and plagiarism are subject to school-wide policy (see College Policies section for more information) in addition to in-class penalties. Plagiarism in this course will result in a zero on the assignment, although students will have the chance to resubmit in order to receive 55% instead of 0%. This is my policy because cheating and plagiarism especially interfere with your own learning in a philosophy class. By far the most important goal of this class is for you to develop, articulate, and critically assess your own thinking. Deriving your ideas from other people's ideas makes this impossible, and when you do it you are dismissing the greater potential of your own ideas. Do not do that to yourself.

I know this material is new to many of you, so if you are worried about your ability to complete any assignment, you can contact me at any point for help. I have talked many students through arguments, and I am happy to do it for you, too! You are capable of completing these assignments with your own thinking, especially if you can master the skill of asking for help when you need it!

Course Calendar

Week 1 (Maximizing Benefits)

Tu 2/2

Reading due: None

Th 2/4

Reading due: Mill, What Utilitarianism Is

Fr 2/5

Reading due: None

Week 2 (Business and Ethics at First Glance)

LAST CHANCE TO ADD/DROP/SWAP IS MONDAY 2/8

Tu 2/9

Reading due: Carr, Is Business Bluffing Ethical?

Th 2/11

Reading due: None

Fr 2/12

Reading due: None

Week 3 (Respect and Obligations)

Tu 2/16

Reading due: Friedman, The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits

Th 2/18

Reading due: Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals

Fr 2/19

Reading due: None (Discussing Argumentative Writing/Working on Papers)

Week 4 (Care and Responsibilities)

Tu 2/23

Reading due: Freeman, A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation

Th 2/25

Reading due: Noddings, An Ethic of Care

Fr 2/26

Reading due: None

Paper 1 due

Week 5 (Virtue)

Tu 3/2

Reading due: Hoffman, The Ford Pinto

Th 3/4

Reading due: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

Fr 3/5

Reading due: Watch: Ariely, Our Buggy Moral Code

Week 6

Tu 3/9

None (Review)

Th 3/11

None (Review)

Fr 3/12

Exam 1

PROGRESS GRADES POSTED FRIDAY 3/12

Week 7

Tu 3/16

Reading due: Koehn, Business and Game-Playing: The False Analogy

(Labor)

Th 3/18

Reading due: Maitland, The Great Non-Debate Over International Sweatshops

Fr 3/19

Reading due: None

Week 8

Tu 3/23

Reading due: Arnold and Bowie, Sweatshops and Respect for Persons

Th 3/25

Reading due: Rafieyan and Garcia interview Dominique Morgan, "The Uncounted Workforce" (listen or read transcript)

Fr 3/26

Reading due: None

Rewrite of Paper 1 due

Week 9

Tu 3/30

Reading due: Barry, The Cringing and the Craven

Th 4/1

No class: Holy Thursday

Fr 4/2

No class: Good Friday

Week 10

Tu 4/6

Reading due: None, Barry cont'd.

Th 4/8

Reading due: Epstein, Can A Dumb-Ass Woman Achieve Equality in the Workplace?

.

Fr 4/9

Reading due: None

Week 11 (Consumer Obligations)

Tu 4/13

Reading due: Singer, Rich and Poor

Th 4/15

Reading due: Peacock, Market Processes and the Ethics of Consumption

Fr 4/16

Reading due: None

Week 12

Tu 4/20

Reading due: None, Peacock cont'd.

Th 4/22

Reading due: None

Fr 4/23

Watch in class: Lindsay Ellis, "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Warners"

Week 13 (Environment)

Tu 4/27

Reading due: Hoffman, Business and Environmental Ethics

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A "W" IS WEDNESDAY 4/28

Th 4/29

Reading due: Gee, Animal Rights Group Says... AND Gee and Bunge, Tyson Fires Two...

(Advertising)

Fr 4/30

Reading due: Anker, Kappel, and Sandoe; The Liberating Power of Commercial Marketing (first couple sections only)

Paper 2 due

Week 14

Tu 5/4

Reading due: Reading due: None (A, K, and S cont'd.)

Th 5/6

Reading due: Anker, Kappel, and Sandoe; The Liberating Power of Commercial Marketing (rest of article)

Fr 5/7

Reading due: Current Events Article

Week 15 (In-class Review)

Tu 5/11

Reading due: None

Th 5/13

Reading due: None

Fr 5/14

Reading due: None

Final Exam: Tu 5/18, 8am-10:10am (but exam will be available all day, as with the last one!)