

UCOR 2910: Ethical Reasoning in Business

Fall Quarter 2018

I. GENERAL

Course information

Course code: UCOR 2910-01

credits: 5

Location: PIGT 208

Class times: 10:55-12:20 MWF

First Class: 9/26/18 Wed

Last Class: 12/7/18 Fri

Final Exam: Wed 12/12 10:00-11:50

Instructor information

Instructor: Nathan Colaner, PhD, MBA

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Office: PIGT 407

Office hours: 10:00-10:55 MWF, or by appointment. Email anytime for setting appointments

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about moral theories and ethical reasoning in a business context. It is divided into ten modules, corresponding to the ten weeks of the course. The first module focuses on the nature of philosophical and ethical reasoning and in general. The second and third modules explore two different approaches to justice, while the fourth and fifth modules explore two different approaches to prudence. As we will see, justice and prudence are the two most important aspects of morality. While the first five modules deal with a few business case studies, the second half of the course focuses more directly on business by exploring how the basic moral values discovered in the first half of the course should inform our understanding of the institution of business. By proceeding in this way, the course consists of a sustained discussion of the moral and philosophical elements of the vocation of the business leader, specifically as it relates to the moral decision-making abilities of both business professionals generally, and executives specifically (“executives” understood as those who make decisions as a representative of the business).

III. BOOKS

Readings will be available as links on the Canvas pages, except those from:

- Boesch, Kris. *Culture Works*. Kalina Publishing, 2017.
- Mackey, John and Raj Sisodia. *Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic Spirit of Business*. Harvard Business Review Press, 2013.



IV. Assignments

10% Online Discussions: Each of the first five weeks, I will post a question for discussion on the Canvas discussion board. You must contribute *three* posts by the deadline to get a full point. You must contribute a one-paragraph answer to the original question, and then make two responses to the contribution of a classmate, or comment on someone else's comment. You are not limited to two comments – that is the minimum. **Please read the instructions posted on Canvas.**

10% Module Journals: Each of the first five weeks, I want you to reflect on two things you learned in that previous module that impacted you most and/or influenced your thinking. The second step is to have a conversation about one of them with anyone not currently in this class – roommate, teammate, friend, professor, parent, co-worker, stranger. Describe to them what you are learning, and get their feedback. Don't worry too much about the quality of the writing, as this is not really a formal writing assignment but a free-flowing journal entry. **Please read the instructions posted on Canvas**

10% Professionalism: Professionalism is about whether you show up, when you show up, and how you show up. From SU's and Albers' perspective, how you represent our School and University as a future worker is extremely important. On the next page, I list some factors in the professionalism grade, but below I detail the attendance policy – the most important part of professionalism.

Attendance: There are no "excused" or "unexcused" absences in this class – only "avoidable" or "unavoidable." All absences will result in a 1 point deduction from the final grade, although you have a chance to make up your absence if it was "unavoidable." Examples of unavoidable absences are athletic absences, highly contagious illness, or extreme illnesses. I do not consider traffic, non-emergency illness, non-contagious illness, doctor appointments, club meetings, meeting for other classes, flight arrangements, travel in general, work, or any similar scheduling conflicts to be truly unavoidable.

If you think your absence was unavoidable, come talk to me after the next class or during a class break. If I agree that your absence was unavoidable, you will the chance to write a one-page paper summarizing your understanding of the material from the day you missed. I will give you a specific Canvas page to look at and write about. You will have 2 weeks from the day of your missed class to submit that assignment. Do not email it to me or give me a hard copy – there is a place on Canvas to submit it under "Assignments," "Make-Up." **Even if your absence was unavoidable, failure to do a make-up assignment will result in a 1 point deduction from your final grade.**

20% Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will cover roughly the first half of the material. It is given in class, and all you will have available to you is pen and paper. It will consist of 26 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each, and 3 essays worth 16 points each. **Please read the review guide posted on Canvas**

25% Final Exam: The final exam will cover roughly the second half of the material. It is given in class, and all you will have available to you is pen and paper. It will consist of 26 multiple-choice questions worth 2 points each, and 3 essays worth 16 points each. **Please read the review guide posted on Canvas**



15% Essay: Your final essay is 15% of your grade, although there are several steps to writing your essay. These steps are not graded individually, but your effort and promptness on these steps are considered as part of the final grade. The essay will be 1500-1650 words, which is approximately 5 pages. Your essay is due at the end of exam week, although the process will begin in week 6. Here is a breakdown:

Essay Prospectus (Week 6): You find sources and a topic and construct a general plan for your essay.

Source Analysis (Week 7): You will add some substance to your prospectus, as described in the instructions.

Source Analysis Peer Reviews (Week 8): You will be assigned 2 peers to review and comment on their sources analysis

Complete Rough Draft (Week 9): See instructions on Canvas for constructing the rough draft.

Final Essay (Final Exam week): Due Friday by midnight of exam week

Reflection on Essay Writing Process: When you turn in your final essay, you should also submit a separate essay of about one page (300 words) that is a sort of journal entry about your essay-writing process.

10% Case Analyses: You will do three case analyses, and the first two will include a peer review:

Case Analysis 1 (Week 6): You will analyze a business case according to the basic moral decision-making framework on video, and upload to Canvas.

Case Analysis 1 Peer Reviews (Week 7): You will view three other people's case analyses and comment on the strengths and weaknesses. Peer review groups will be assigned later.

Case Analysis 2 (Week 8): You will analyze a business case according to the basic moral decision-making framework on video, and upload to Canvas.

Case Analysis 2 Peer reviews (Week 9): You will view two other people's case analyses and comment on the strengths and weaknesses. Peer review groups will be assigned later.



V. GRADE BREAKDOWN

Grade Categories:	Online Discussions	10%
	Module Reflection Journals	10%
	Case Analyses	10%
	Essay	15%
	Midterm Exam	20%
	Final Exam	25%
	Professionalism	10%

Grading scale for Exam, Essay and Final Grade:	A	95-100
	A-	90-94
	B+	87-89
	B	83-86
	B-	80-82
	C+	77-79
	C	73-76
	C-	70-72
	D+	67-69
	D	63-66
	D-	60-62
	F	<60

Possible Deductions from Professionalism Grade:	Each Absence (unless absence is unavoidable and made-up)	-1
	Unprepared for class (i.e. haven't done the reading)	-1
	Minimal participation in group activities	-1
	30 minutes late (every two)	-1
	Failure or unwillingness to participate in classroom discussions at appropriate times	-1
	Distracting behavior (including text/internet browsing)	-1
	Disrespectful speech toward peers	-1
	Constant tardiness in general	-1
	Randomly leaving class	-1



VI. COURSE POLICIES

Late work: You may turn in your weekly assignments (Online Discussions, Module Reflection Journals) by the Thursday midnight after they are due for a maximum of half credit. Late elements of other aspects of the course will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Canvas: As indicated above, this course uses Canvas heavily and you will need constant access to this site. There is also a Canvas 'app' that you are encouraged to download. You will need to spend significant time on the Canvas site (or with the materials you download from Canvas) to be successful in this class.

Mp4: You will need to learn how to deliver a presentation (screen shot + your voice) and save and upload it as an mp4 file

Discipline: The first time you violate one of the classroom policies, I will send you a polite, firm, discreet email asking you to change your behavior. If the behavior does not change, I will have to involve the university in formal discipline. In my 14 years of teaching, I have had to take this first step several times. I am happy to report that I have never had to take the second step, and I would appreciate your cooperation in keeping my streak going.

Email: You must have an active Seattle University email account that you check at least once a day. I will frequently make announcements in the Canvas site which automatically notifies you via email.

Check Canvas preferences to make sure you receive the correct information promptly. For security reasons, you cannot use a non-SU account as a replacement for the account assigned to you. You are also responsible to make sure your inbox does not get full. I may not re-send documents to you that bounce back because your inbox is full. Check to make sure you send SU emails from your smartphone. You can also 'message' through Canvas or the Canvas app.

Academic Misconduct: Any acts of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic 0 on the assigned work and could result in expulsion from the class if the act of dishonesty is egregious. All forms of academic dishonesty or misconduct are prohibited. Academic dishonesty includes any of the following: A) the use of the ideas or words of another as one's own for an academic assignment, B) cheating during an examination by copying from another student or by using information in the form of unauthorized aids, or C) submission as one's own work, an assignment, or a test, prepared by another.

Extra Credit: There is no extra credit of any kind available in this course. This means it is extremely important you stay on top of due dates and do your best the first time around.

Social Media: Seattle U does not have a social media policy, but my informal policy is that I am unavailable to *current* undergraduate students on social media. The exception to this policy is LinkedIn – if I am not already in your professional network, please add me now!



VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Counseling Center: Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is committed to helping students meet the challenges of life during college, graduate and professional school by encouraging healthy personal choices and balanced perspectives. Students seek counseling and psychological services for a wide variety of reasons, including depression and anxiety; life crises; identity issues; relationship concerns; difficulty with loss or other life transitions; sexual choices and concerns; problems related to alcohol or drug use, as well as many other issues of concern. Our professional team of licensed social workers, psychologists, and graduate trainees, provide time-limited group, couples and individual psychotherapy for students and referral services for those requiring specialized or longer term care. These services are provided free of charge to students enrolled in classes. All clinical services are confidential: no information is released without the student's consent, unless required by law.

Academic Resources:

- Library and Learning Commons (<http://www.seattleu.edu/learningcommons/>)
(This includes: Learning Assistance Programs, Research [Library] Services, Writing Center, Math Lab)
- Academic Integrity Tutorial (found on Canvas and SU Online)

Academic Policies on Registrar website

- (<https://www.seattleu.edu/redhawk-axis/academic-policies/>)
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Grading Grievance Policy
- Professional Conduct Policy (only for those professional programs to which it applies)

Notice for students concerning Disabilities: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff located in **Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740**. Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

Office of Institutional Equity: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This prohibition includes sexual misconduct, which encompasses sexual harassment and sexual violence. Seattle U remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning, living, and working environment. Seattle U offers emergency, medical, and other support resources, as well as assistance with safety and support measures, to community members who have experienced or been impacted by sexual misconduct. Seattle U requires all faculty and staff to notify the University's Title IX Coordinator if they become aware of any incident of sexual misconduct experienced by a student. For more information, please visit <https://www.seattleu.edu/equity/>. If you have any questions or concerns, you may also directly contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Equity (**email:** oiie@seattleu.edu; **phone:** 206.296.2824) University Resources and Policies



VIII. LEARNING OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES

Outcomes: On successful completion of this course (i.e. by *passing* this course), you will be able...

1. to engage in structured moral decision-making in an organizational setting
2. to understand the importance of balancing stakeholder interests
3. to understand the importance of creating a healthy organizational culture
4. to compare and contrast the classic rival moral theories
5. to use classic moral theories to assess business practices

Objectives: This course helps students...

1. understand key philosophical foundations of the Jesuit intellectual tradition, particularly insofar as that tradition has addressed issues of ethics.
2. understand, use, and assess the strengths and weaknesses of ethical theories.
3. become effective writers, including writers of high quality academic prose.
4. learn to use ethical theories to analyze situations and inform judgments about actions.

