

Ethical Reasoning in Business

UCOR 2910 | 5 credit hours

Fall 2020

Instructor:

Dr. Nathan Colaner – colanern@seattleu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about moral theories and ethical reasoning in a business context. It is divided into eight modules, corresponding to the eight 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 final three weeks 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.

PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

TEXTS AND MATERIALS

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

- Goleman, Daniel. *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam, 2000.
- Mackey, John and Raj Sisodia. *Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic Spirit of Business*. Harvard Business Review Press, 2013.

SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPICS
1	Philosophy, Ethics, and Business Ethics
2	Utilitarianism: A Theory of Justice
3	Deontology: A Theory of Justice
4	Virtue Ethics: A Theory of Prudence
5	Contractarianism: A Theory of Prudence
6	Ethical Case Analysis
7	The Compliant Business
8	The Cooperative Business
9	The Virtuous Business
10	The Ethics of Approval and Power

Additional information on class schedule, readings, assignments, etc. available on Canvas.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS
Online Discussions (20x1pt each)	20
Reading Question Set (25x1pt each)	25
Essay	20
Midterm Exam	20
Case Analyses	15
TOTAL POINTS	100

POINT SCALE	LETTER GRADE
94% and higher	A
90% - 93%	A-
87% - 89%	B+
84% - 86%	B

80% - 83%	B-
77% - 79%	C+
74% - 76%	C
70% - 73%	C-
Below 70%	D or F

COURSE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

Attendance in an online course is evidenced by logging into, and being an active participant, in our asynchronous online course. Active participation is an essential and intrinsic element of the education process. Absence affects the learning experience and erodes the program's norms for quality. Inactivity in the course may result in a grade reduction at the discretion of the instructor(s).

You will need to collaborate with cohort members or study teams to cover any missed group work (i.e. discussions). Please contact your instructor(s) to discuss concerns.

INTERNET ACCESS

We will use a variety of online applications to communicate and collaborate. As such, you will need a reliable, high-speed Internet connection for the duration of this course. If you are traveling to countries such as China, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Burma, and others, some content in this course may be blocked. Please contact the instructor immediately if you will be traveling to a country that may block Internet access during any portion of this class.

LATE AND MAKE-UP WORK

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, assignments that are turned in late will lose 10% of the total points per day, starting at the time at which it was due (including weekends). Group assignments, such as discussions, will not be accepted after the due date. No make-up work will be assigned in this course.

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 policy is that I am unavailable to current undergraduate students on social media. The only exception to this policy is LinkedIn – if I am not already in your professional network, please add me.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES & POLICIES

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

- **Academic Integrity Policy**
- **Academic Grading Grievance Policy**
- **Professional Conduct Policy**

(only for those professional programs to which it applies)

<https://www.seattleu.edu/redhawk-axis/academic-policies/>

- **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.

- **Notice Regarding Religious Accommodations**

It is the policy of Seattle University to reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program. Please see, Policy on Religious Accommodations for Students (<https://www.seattleu.edu/media/policies/Policy-on-Religious-Accommodations-for-Students---FINAL.PDF>).

- **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: oi@seattleu.edu; phone: 206.296.2824) University Resources and Policies