Ethical Reasoning in Business
UCOR-2910-03 Fall 2021

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Course Information:
Class Hours: Online Class weeks start Mondays and end Sundays
Office Hours: by Appointment on Zoom
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Course Objective:
The purpose of this course is to open awareness to the complexity of ethical decision-making and prepare students to make choices from a standpoint of ethical consciousness. Students will learn to identify ethical problems in business, assess the obligations of businesses and their stakeholders, formulate arguments for those obligations, and propose feasible solutions to ethical problems. Diversity competence will also be stressed. Assignments, activities, and exams will cultivate reflection, analysis, creativity, and empowerment. Success in this course will mean that students can apply these ethics skills to business, whether as managers, employees, consumers, investors, suppliers, or citizens.

Course Description:
This course will provide an introduction to ethical decision making in business. We begin by articulating a theoretical framework for business ethics in Aristotelian virtue ethics, utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, and select economic theories. We proceed by considering the conditions that support or degrade ethics in the context of business organizations, focusing on business purpose, social responsibility, organizational leadership and culture, diversity, affirmative action, and social psychology. All theories will be applied to real world problems.

Required Reading:
The Ethical Executive: Becoming Aware of the Root Causes of Unethical Behavior,

Additional Readings will be available for free download online or on Canvas.
Student Assessment: Grades will be assigned using the following scale: 80-83% = B-, 84-86% = B, 87-89% = B+. All grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number. Apply this scale to grades in the A, C, and D ranges. Scores of less than 60% and / or failure in the final paper will result in an F for the course.

Participation (20%) – Large class and small group discussions

Group Conceptual Maps (15%) – Coggle diagrams of key chapters from Justice

Quizzes (15%) – Interactive Canvas quizzes on key chapters from Justice

Midterm Project (25%) – Individual papers (20%) and compiled group papers (5%)

Group Work (5%) – Contributions and self-evaluations for group work

Final Product (20%) – One 7-page paper (blog or paper format)

Teaching Methodology: This course is a fully online, asynchronous course. Weeks are divided into modules, each containing pages with course content and instructions. Interactive quizzes, discussions, and Coggle mappings will provide ample opportunities for active student engagement. I will actively engage you in group and class discussions and will also provide opportunities for synchronous Zoom consults. You are encouraged to arrange some synchronous meeting times in your groups.

Expectations of Students: The following criteria describe the performance of A, B, C, and D work in this class:

A Superior Performance: The student demonstrates exceptional understanding of all required readings, evaluates readings by introducing unique perspectives and rigorous critiques, synthesizes knowledge from diverse sources, and approaches all problems at a high level of abstraction. Their case analyses identify the most significant details, apply relevant theories in a nuanced fashion, and use critical inductive methods to derive engaging insights. The student attends every class, and leads class discussions and group work with creative, analytic thinking and social awareness.

B Good Performance: The student demonstrates a solid grasp of the majority of required readings. They explain core concepts in a clear, well organized fashion and apply ideas compellingly to cases. They begin to synthesize some of the ideas learned in the course into an integrated understanding. The student attends class regularly, and actively participates in both large class discussions and group work.

C Adequate Performance: The student demonstrates working knowledge of core concepts, applies important concepts to cases, attends class regularly, participates in all group activities, and conducts detailed reviews of relevant factual information.

D Poor Performance: The student demonstrates partial knowledge of some core concepts, provides rudimentary case applications, attends class most of the time, participates minimally in group activities, and conducts reviews of somewhat relevant factual information.
Note: If a student fails to contribute to group assignments like Coggles, their final grade will be downgraded accordingly.

Improvement can shift a student’s performance to a higher grade-level.

Attendance, Deadlines and Participation: Attendance in this course will strongly enhance your capacity to perform at the highest possible level. Therefore, attendance is required. Since this is an online class, attendance will take a different form than usual. You will need to be checking the Canvas page almost daily. Late papers will receive a 10% penalty for every day they are late. Exceptions will be made in the event of a documented emergency, such as in illness.

Course Schedule and Readings: Readings must be completed by the dates assigned. If this schedule is revised, readings must be completed by the new dates posted. Students are responsible for reading the entirety of the articles, unless directed otherwise.

Please consult the Module Landing pages on Canvas for a To-Do list for the Week. All due dates in Canvas are updated under Assignments. A brief summary of weekly topics may be found below:

Week 1: Course Overview, Introductions, Technology Orientation

Unit I: Weeks 2-5
Week 2: Virtue Ethics
Week 3: Utilitarianism
Week 4: Kantian Deontology
Week 5: Justice and the Market

Unit II: Weeks 6-8
Week 6: The Purpose of Business and The Nature of Capitalism
Week 7: Organizational Culture and Social Psychology
Week 8: Organizational Behavior and Diversity
Week 9: Leadership Reinvented
Week 10: Course Wrap-Up

Course Policies: Students are encouraged to write drafts of all papers and to work with the Writing Center. In-class peer reviews will be utilized. The professor is available to conduct one draft review for each paper assigned. If a student wants the professor to review their draft, they must submit the draft at least 5 days prior to the due date. So, if the paper is due Wednesday at noon, the draft must be submitted by the prior Friday at noon. After that deadline has elapsed, students can still make appointments to discuss the paper and/or email with questions.
Citation of Sources: Students are responsible for providing correct citation of sources for all exams and papers. Paraphrases and synopses of readings, lectures, and outside sources must be footnoted with complete bibliographic references (author, title, publishing company and city, date, and page numbers). Phrases and sentences excerpted from any source must be placed in quotation marks and the bibliographic reference must also be footnoted. Failure to cite sources correctly will result in a deduction of a whole letter grade (10%) for the assignment or essay in question. Failure to cite sources whether or not actual wording is copied without the use of quotation marks constitutes plagiarism and will be handled as a case of Academic Dishonesty. Citation guidelines can be found at: http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/

Academic Honesty: Academic Honesty is crucial to the success of the University system as a whole. Academic Dishonesty of any form harms honest students in this class, in this university, and in all other universities. There will therefore be a zero-tolerance policy on Academic Dishonesty in this course. Students caught plagiarizing, cheating, or helping others to cheat will receive zero points for the assignment or exam in question. All cases of Academic Dishonesty will be forwarded to the Office of the Dean in the Albers School of Business and Economics for careful review and further disciplinary action. In the event that the Office finds the student in violation of the university’s policy on Academic Honesty, the student will be assigned an F for the course. In some cases of Academic Dishonesty, students get placed on probation, lose privileges, are excluded from activities, suspended or even dismissed from the university. Please maintain integrity in this course, and in all other courses. For more information on Academic Honesty at Seattle University see: http://www.seattleu.edu/registrar/page.aspx?ID=87

Disability Notice:
Seattle University values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded an equal opportunity to participate in learning experiences. Disability Services (DS) works with students with disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations to support their learning experiences. Disabilities include “invisible disabilities,” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition. This could include any long-term effects of Covid, even after recovery (“long-Covid”), if a health care provider determines it is a chronic health problem. If you have, or suspect you may have, a disability that may interfere with your performance as a student in this course and have not yet been assessed by DS, please contact DS staff at DS@seattleu.edu or (206) 296-5740. Disability-based accommodations to course expectations can be made only through this process and must be approved by DS before implemented in a course. I am committed to working with you, so please consider meeting with me to discuss the logistics of implementing any accommodations approved by DS.

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/)
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: oie@seattleu.edu; phone: 206.296.2824) University Resources and Policies.

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).

Optional information regarding the Course Description and Learning Objectives for all UCOR 2xxx Ethical Reasoning Courses is available at the following link. The Course Description and Learning Objectives are on pages 7 and 8 of the SU application for creating such courses, which can be found here:


A summary of Learning Objectives for all SU UCOR Courses may be found here:
https://www.seattleu.edu/media/university-core/files/facultyandstaff/faculty/Learning-objectives-for-syllabi.pdf