

PHIL 0210 - ETHICAL STUDIES IN BUSINESS

Catalog Description

Also known as BUS 210

Advisory: Completion of ENGL C1000 with grade of "C" or better

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Explore critical moral issues in the business realm, including diversity, equity, and inclusion, corporate responsibility, global economic impacts, environmental concerns, the distribution of wealth, advertising ethics, and digital privacy. This course analyzes these topics emphasizing fundamental moral philosophical theories and principles essential for understanding and resolving ethical challenges in today's business environment. (C-ID PHIL 120) (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Explain and apply moral theories and perspectives to real-world business scenarios.
- CSLO #2: Compare and contrast different moral theories and perspectives related to their implications in business practices.
- CSLO #3: Develop and support one's own ethical viewpoint on issues pertinent to business practices.

Effective Term

Fall 2025

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Describe and apply the Foundations of Business Ethics.
2. Describe the aims, methods, and historical evolution of business ethics, recognizing its significance in the modern business environment.
3. Examine and apply Moral and Political Philosophical Theories.
4. Discuss and describe moral and political philosophical theories, including moral relativism, moral subjectivism, ethical egoism, justice theories, rights theories, teleological ethics, deontology, and virtue ethics, and their application in business ethics.
5. Demonstrate and apply major Ethical Theories in the context of Business (Kantianism, Utilitarianism, deontology, teleological ethics, and virtue ethics).

6. Discuss Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Governance.

7. Describe the principles of CSR and the role of corporate governance in promoting ethical business practices, including how businesses can act responsibly towards stakeholders and the environment.

8. Describe Ethical Leadership and Corporate Culture and explain the impact of ethical leadership on corporate culture and the ways ethical leaders can promote ethical behavior within organizations.

9. Identify Ethical Challenges in the Global Business Environment.

10. Analyze ethical challenges that arise in the global business environment, including cultural differences, international business ethics standards, and global corporate responsibility.

11. Explain Environmental Ethics, Regulations, and Compliance.

12. Apply environmental ethics and discuss the regulatory landscape affecting businesses, understanding the importance of compliance and the ethical implications of business decisions on the environment.

13. Discuss the ethical considerations and challenges presented by emerging technologies, such as AI, data privacy, and cybersecurity, and their impact on stakeholders.

14. Describe the ethical significance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace, and apply strategies to promote an inclusive and equitable corporate culture.

15. Identify, analyze, and develop effective solutions for ethical dilemmas in business, utilizing a structured ethical decision-making process.

16. Compare and contrast competing ethical theories and subject them to critical analysis.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Behavioral Sciences
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
 - Cal-GETC 3B - Humanities
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)

Articulation Information

- CSU Transferable
- UC Transferable

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: 1. In a classroom discussion, students will develop and support their own ethical viewpoint on the practice of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace.
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: 1. Compare and contrast Kantian ethics and Utilitarianism in the context of a business's decision to provide healthcare to its employees. This task will enhance your understanding of how different moral theories can influence business practices and guide ethical decision-making. This will be evaluated by the instructor using a grading rubric for the paper and the presentation.

- Objective Examinations
 - Example: 1. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and scenario-based questions, all aimed at evaluating the students' ability to apply ethical concepts to a business context. Using multiple choice questions, the student will demonstrate understanding and application of various moral theories and perspectives in analyzing and addressing real-world business scenarios. Kant introduces his moral theory with a scenario in which a shopkeeper has an opportunity to shortchange a customer but decides against because he worries that if he shortchanged the customer word might get out and he would lose customers. Which of the following best characterizes Kant's moral evaluation of the shopkeepers actions? a) The actions are morally praiseworthy because it maintained good customer relations. b) The actions are immoral because it was not done out of respect for the moral law. c) The actions are morally praiseworthy because the shopkeeper was honest when giving the correct change. d) The actions lack moral value because the shopkeeper was not honest out of a sense of duty but because of the negative consequences that might arise from being dishonest.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will introduce John Stuart Mill's "Principle of Utility," and Kant's moral theory by reading an excerpt from "The Groundwork on the Metaphysics of Morals." In small groups, students will discuss the following prompt and reach individual answers to (a) what a utilitarian ethicist would say about the moral worth of the store owner's actions, and (b) what Kant would say about the moral worth of the store owner's actions. Discussion prompt: A store owner sells some groceries to a child (apparently shopping for his mother who is home sick). The shop owner knows that he could short-change the child without the child knowing it. The shop owner decides not to short-change the child because word could get out and negatively impact his business. What would a Utilitarian say about the moral worth of the store owner's actions? What would Kant say about the moral worth of the store owner's actions? Responses will count as a formative assessment of student's ability to compare and contrast ethical theories of utilitarianism and Kantian ethics. Responses will count as a formative assessment of student's ability to compare and contrast ethical theories of utilitarianism and Kantian ethics.

Distance Learning

1. Instructor will present during an in-person or online lecture case studies or scenarios that involve some type of deception or dishonesty. In small group in-person discussions or an online discussion forum students will be divided into groups according to utilitarian, Kantian, and Aristotelian ethicists, and debate whether the form of dishonesty was morally justified and give reasons for their position.

Typical Out of Class Assignments Reading Assignments

1. Read Chapter 1 on "Business in Ancient Athens," and be prepared to explain how for the Greeks ethics was a function of being and, therefore, naturally applied to the areas of money and commerce.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Discuss in a discussion forum the various ethical dilemmas related to remote work and develop and defend potential solutions.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.) Required Materials

- Business Ethics: A Philosophical Introduction
 - Author: Wim Dubbink, Willem van der Deijl
 - Publisher: Springer Cham
 - Publication Date: 2023
 - Text Edition: 1
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Business Ethics
 - Author: Stephen M. Byars, and Kurt Stanberry
 - Publisher: OpenStax
 - Publication Date: Mar. 31, 2023
 - Text Edition: 1
 - Classic Textbook?: No
 - OER Link:
 - OER: <https://openstax.org/details/books/business-ethics?Book%20details>

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.