

Ethics of Enterprise and Exchange

PHIL 120

1. Course Description

The recent financial crisis has brought additional evidence not merely of the weaknesses of our capitalist system, but more importantly for the ineffectiveness of the ethical standards that are supposed to govern the international business world. Moreover, the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico strongly suggests that notions such as *acceptable risk* are devoid of any ethical content. In a free market world, what are the limits that a society or government should impose on the corporate world? In the absence of universal ethical standards in business ethics, how should we hold individual entrepreneur players responsible? What is ethically problematic about Gordon Gecko's famous proclamation "greed is good"? Is self-interested behavior determined by an individual's character, or is it more the product of the capitalist system in which individuals operate? Are there moral obligations that go beyond legal restrictions?

This course aims to help students to better understand and evaluate the ethical challenges existing in the corporate world. The books we will read over this quarter take two different perspectives, proponents and critics, respectively, of capitalism and the role of business in the civil society. We will begin with Robert Audi's *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*. By approaching this topic in a systematic way, this book will give us a broad background in ethical theory and more specifically in business ethics, so that we can assess topics such as: the limitation of ownership rights, the environmental challenge with respect to future generations, questions related to product, target, and image and how advertising industry is creating desires, hiring policies and compensation standards, religion at the workplace, and ultimately, the significant challenges of globalization.

With this background in business ethics, we will then dive into Daniel Cohen's *Globalization and its Enemies* during the second half of the quarter. One of the questions we will emphasize is: why are poor countries so poor and rich countries so rich? The simple response, says Cohen, "attributes the disparity to exploitation of the former by the latter." Though this explanation deserves some credit, the economical intuition behind "is radically false." The economical bad news is that the West does not need the Third World. Moreover, understanding globalization within the confines of religion and exploitation can yield a distorted picture, and in particular can lead us to miss globalization's singularity. Never before have the means of communication created such a global consciousness. The global humanitarian response to the 2004 tsunami stands as evidence for this. The specific examples Cohen addresses in his book, from the clash of civilizations to economical development as source of freedom, and ultimately to the issue of AIDS in Africa, will give us a context to test our ethical concepts and moral obligations.

2. Class Meetings

Class will meet on **Tuesday** and **Thursday** from **10:00 to 11:20pm** in **240A MCK**.
Discussion sections will meet on **Friday**. Here is the schedule.

CRN	TIME	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR
35920	1000-1050	303 GER	Baines B
35921	1100-1150	112 WIL	Baines B
35922	1000-1050	204 CHA	LaRochelle J
35923	1100-1150	121 MCK	LaRochelle J

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Instructor: Nicolae Morar
Office: 250B SCH
Email: nmorar@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Wed, 10:30 am-12:30 pm

GTF: Brock Baines
Office: 161 SCH
Email: bbaines@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Wed, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

GTF: Jon LaRochelle
Office: 158A SCH
Email: jon@uoregon.edu
Office Hours: Friday, 12:00-2:00 pm

4. Course Requirements and Grading

Grades on papers & the final grade will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

100-93:	A
92-90:	A-
89-87:	B+
86-83:	B
82-80:	B-
79-77:	C+
76-73:	C
72-70:	C-
69-60:	D
59-0:	F

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Participation/ Attendance	10%
Homework (14)	20%
Three Quizzes	15% (5% each)
Midterm	25%
Final Exam	30%

Class Participation and Attendance. You are expected to participate actively in this class, which includes attending class, reading all assigned material prior to class, and participating productively and professionally in class discussions. Missing more than one discussion section FOR ANY REASON will result in a 1/3 of a full grade reduction (e.g. from A to A-). An additional full grade reduction will be made for each additional missed class after the second (e.g. from A to B). Three late arrivals for class will count as one absence. Discussion is crucial to this class, and all instructors will do their best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the class conversations. Please feel free to contribute any question, objection, or other thought about the topic at hand when such occurs to you. Although no relevant remark is out of bounds in this class, you will be expected to treat all members of the class respectfully and professionally. The quality and quantity of your participation in the class discussion will be evaluated in assigning 10% of your final grade. Obviously, failure to attend class will negatively affect your participation grade.

Homework – During the following weeks (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9), before each lecture meeting (on Tuesday and Thursday), you will have to submit your homework via Canvas. Your homework will consist of a series of questions (of various formats: multiple choice, short answers, etc.) on a philosophical issue related to the reading for that day or questions key to understanding that week's topic. The homework is an opportunity to think critically and to engage with the material.

3 Quizzes – during week 3, 6, & 9, you will receive a multiple-choice quiz either at the beginning or end of one of the course lectures or discussion section. The best way to prepare for quizzes is to read all assigned materials carefully (and, of course, when they are due in class). **No makeup quizzes will be given for any reason.**

One Midterm and One Final Paper Exam: Midterm and Final Papers will be 5 – 6 pages (double spaced, Times New Roman 12, standard margins) and paper topics will be posted 1 week before they are due. EMAILED AND ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Papers not turned in the day they are due are LATE, and will lose one letter grade for each calendar day that they are late. If you are absent on an exam day, you must (1) have contacted me in advance to tell me of the absence, and (2) return with a written excuse (i.e. medical), in order to be permitted to make up the exam.

Failure to complete any of the two exams will result in an automatic failure in the course (grade F).

Grading rubric for exam essays (midterm and final):

A = Excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B = Good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = Okay. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D = Poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = Failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

5. Learning Outcomes

This course has a number of learning outcomes. The instructors are interested in working with you to develop a series of more general skills that you will need during your college education and even after graduation. These include the ability to:

- Explain and summarize different approaches to business ethics.
- Articulate and evaluate philosophical arguments
- Develop reading skills (from philosophical texts to economics-oriented texts)
- Develop communication and argumentation skills (especially in your discussion sections)
- Develop writing skills and learn how to manage your thinking-process in a limited amount of time.

6. Course Policies

Incompletes and extensions will be given *only* in the event of documented emergencies.

Emergencies: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances.

Sexual Violence: The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that all UO employees are *required reporters*. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24h hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu

Accessibility: If you have a documented disability, please contact me in advance. If you need accommodations in this class, I will work with the Accessible Education Center to find a solution for you.

Academic Misconduct: With the advent of the Internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade.

In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both direct quotations and paraphrases or summaries of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me.

Plagiarism and cheating on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be given to the university authorities. For more on the University of Oregon policy on plagiarism, see the following website:

<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>

External Sources: Using sources not listed on the syllabus in researching and writing your papers is fine, as long as they are both to the point, and are properly cited. And at all times, when in doubt, cite your sources! It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

This is probably the best place to make this point, too: Wikipedia can be valuable for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it is very often horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online

resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy - <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

6. Website

All the information about this course and other comments or events related to the class will be posted on the course website, which can be reached via Professor Morar's homepage:

http://pages.uoregon.edu/nmorar/Nicolae_Morar/Phil120Spr15.html

7. Textbook

The following books will be **required** for this course (available at the Duck Store):

- Robert Audi, *Business Ethics and Ethical Business* (Oxford U Press, 2009)
- Daniel Cohen, *Globalization and Its Enemies*, (MIT Press, 2006)
- Additional required readings available on Canvas - [CAN]

Other *useful* but not required resources include the following:

- Tom Beauchamp, Norman Bowie, and Denis Arnold, *Ethical Theory and Business*, (Prentice Hall, 8th edition, 2008)
- Tom Beauchamp & George Brenkert, *The Oxford Handbook of Business Ethics*, (OUP, 2010)

Supplemental readings (only recommended) will be posted on the course website as the term progresses.

8. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative schedule of topics and readings. Amendments and alterations will be announced in class as we go, both in class and on the webpage. Since reminders and other information will frequently be posted on the course website, *make sure you check the website on a fairly regular basis*.

Part 1: The Role of Business in a Free Democracy

Week 1

Lecture 1 & 2. (No homework)

- Introduction and Background
- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapter 1&2
 - Audi, 3-7
 - Audi, 8-22

Week 2

Lecture 1. (Homework w2 #1)

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapters 3-5
 - Audi, 23-42
 - Online: Milton Friedman, “The Social Responsibility of Business” [CAN]
- Suggestions: R. De George, “Can Corporations have moral responsibility?” (recommended) [CAN]

Lecture 2. (Homework w2 #2)

- Audi, 43-48
 - Online: Holmes Rolston III, “Justifying a sustainable development” [CAN]
- Suggestions: R. De George, “The Environment, Rights, and Future Generations” (recommended) [CAN]

Week 3 (Quiz 1)

Lecture 1. (Homework w3 #3)

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapters 6-7
 - Audi, 48-59 (Marketing: Product, Target, Image)
 - Online: Roger Crisp, “Persuasive advertising, Autonomy, and the Creation of Desire” [CAN]
- Suggestions: John d. Bishop, “Is Self-Identity Image Advertising Ethical?” (recommended) [CAN]

Lecture 2. (Homework w3 #4)

- Audi, 59-69 (The Ethics of Financial Representation)
 - Online: Thomas Frecka, “Ethics Issues in Financial Reporting” [CAN]
- Suggestions: The Enron Case – see movie/documentary “The Smartest Guys in the Room” on reserve at Knight Library

Part 2: The Ethics of Internal Management

Week 4

Lecture 1. (Homework w4 #5)

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapters 8-9
- Audi, 69-79
- Online: B. Reskin, “Bringing the Men back in: Sex Differentiation and the Devaluation of Women’s Work” [CAN]

Lecture 2. (Homework w4 #6)

- Audi, 82-91
 - Online: J. Sterba, “Defending Affirmative Action, Defending Preferences” [CAN]
- Suggestions: JJ Thompson, “Preferential Hiring” (recommended) [CAN]

Midterm Questions will be posted on Canvas - **Friday April 24th**.

Week 5

Lecture 1. (No homework)

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapter 11 & Case Scenarios
 - Audi, 98-109 (Leadership and Character)
- Suggestions: John Doris, *Lack of Character* (“Fragmentation of Character”) [CAN]

Lecture 2. (No homework)

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*
 - Audi, 123-124 (Intellectual Property, Technology Transfer, and Porous Borders)
 - Online: R. De George, “Business Ethics and the Challenge of the Information Age” [CAN]
- Suggestions: Audi, 133-144 Case Scenarios

Midterm Papers are **DUE - Friday, May 1st before 4:00pm** in the Main Office of the Department of Philosophy (SCH Hall).

Part 3: Ethical Problems of Global Business/ Globalization

Week 6 (Quiz 2)

Lecture 1. (Homework w6 #7) - Topic: Sweatshops

- *Business Ethics and Ethical Business*, Chapter 12
 - Audi, 109-115
 - Online: Arnold & Bowie, “Sweatshops and Respect for Persons” [CAN] and Powell, “In Defense of Sweatshops” [CAN]
- Suggestions: Maitland, “The Great Non-Debate over International Sweatshops” [CAN]

Lecture 2. (Homework w6 #8) - Topic: Child Labor

- Audi, 110-112
- Online: Case Adidas: Application of Standards of Engagement to Child Labor Dilemma [CAN] and Cam Simpson, “Victoria’s Secret Revealed in Child Picking Burkina Faso Cotton” [CAN]

Part 4: Globalization and Its Enemies

Week 7

Lecture 1. (Homework w7 #9)

- Audi, Conclusion (129-133)
- *Globalization and Its Enemies*, Chapter 1 & 2 - Cohen, 9-23
- Suggestions: Engels, Selection from “Great Towns” (in *The Condition of Working Class in England in 1844*) [CAN]

Lecture 2. (Homework w7 #10)

- *Globalization and Its Enemies* - Cohen, 24-47
- Online: A. Jaggar, “Is Globalization Good for Women?” [CAN]

Week 8

Lecture 1. (Homework w8 #11)

- *Globalization and Its Enemies*, Chapter 3 & 4 - Cohen, 48-79

Lecture 2. (Homework w8 #12)

- *Globalization and Its Enemies* - Cohen, 79-97
- Suggestions: Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order*, Ch. 3 A Universal Civilization? Modernization and Westernization [CAN]

Week 9 (Quiz 3)

Lecture 1. (Homework w9 #13)

- *Globalization and Its Enemies*, Chapter 5 & 6 - Cohen, 97-123

Lecture 2. (Homework w9 #14)

- Online: Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" [CAN]
- Suggestions: T. Pogge, "The Human Rights of the Global Poor" in *Politics as Usual* [CAN] and Movie Documentary – The End of Poverty? (Available on YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pktOXJr1vOQ>)

Week 10

Lecture 1

- *Globalization and Its Enemies*, - Cohen, 123-142
 - Online: D. Arnold, "The Human Rights Obligations of Multinational Corporations" [CAN]

Lecture 2

- *Globalization and Its Enemies*, Chapter 7 & Conclusion - Cohen, 143-166
- Suggestions (additional reading): Carol G Gould, "Moral Issues in Globalization" in *The Oxford Handbook of Business Ethics* [CAN]

Final Papers are due during the finals week - **the day when the Registrar office schedules our final exam - before 4:00pm** in the Main Office of the Department of Philosophy (SCH Hall). Final Exam questions will be posted a week prior to the day when your final exams are due.