

The Wharton School
University of Pennsylvania
Intl. Business Ethics
LGST 220/820
Pt. I, ver. 4

Professor Alan Strudler
663 JMHH
strudler@wharton.upenn.edu
x8-1221
Office hours: M 1.30 & by appt.

TA: Kelsey Bomar
614 JMHH
kbomar@pennlaw.upenn.edu
Office hours: W 1.30 & by appt.

OVERVIEW: This course studies business ethics within a global economy. Its aims to sharpen your appreciation of the moral complexity business decision-makers confront when working across borders and to explore rival decision-making frameworks. The course encourages critical analysis of arguments concerning the right course of action for individuals and economic enterprises in a wide variety of cases. Among the ideas and issues discussed: relativism, competitive advantage, intellectual property rights and human rights, community, reparations, biopiracy, corruption, exploitation, international corporate governance, responsibilities to shareholders.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Students are expected to complete the reading before class and to actively participate in classroom discussion. Material is covered in each class that is not available in the readings. Much of the most important learning will come not directly from lectures or readings, but through reflection on your behavior and that of your classmates as you participate in simulations and discuss cases. Consequently, you should miss class only for an extraordinary reason. Absences will be reflected in grades. An attendance sheet will be circulated.

Assignments: There will be a graded midterm testing your understanding of readings and class discussion. There will be a pass/fail exercise near the end of term that serves to make sure you keep up with the reading. There will also be a final writing assignment, a paper, which must be submitted no later than the date of our final. In writing the paper, keep these dates in mind: Paper topics due: February 20. First draft due: March 20. Meetings with students to discuss revisions April 3-13

GROUP PROJECTS: For undergrads: After the midterm, the class will be divided into teams of 3-5 students each. Teams will participate in a debate. Each debate will focus

on an assigned topic and each team will defend a different view. Teams will prepare a 4-5 page paper describing its position and outlining its case for it. A copy of this paper should be provided to the opposing team at least twenty-four hours prior to the debate. Each team will make an argument for its position and a rebuttal of the opposing team's argument. This will be followed by questions from the audience. More details will follow. For MBA/law students: we will meet to discuss your final project.

GRADES: The midterm is worth 25%; the group project is worth 20 %; the writing assignment is worth 55%; students must pass the end-of-term exercise. Students may substantially improve their grades through informed class participation.

READINGS AND MATERIALS: Unless indicated otherwise, all readings are found on study.net.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: Students are expected to treat one another with respect, and students are expected to arrive on time. Cell phones, computers and other electronic devices must be turned off. No typing or texting is permitted in class. You may eat anything you want in class, but you may not leave class except in the case of a personal emergency.

Schedule (may change)

1-11 Introduction

Langewiesche, The shipbreakers.

1-18 Relativism

Sharkey, On a visit to Saudi Arabia, doing what the Saudis do.

Prinz, Morality is a culturally conditioned response.

Rachels, The challenge of cultural relativism.

1-23 Human Rights

Case, Rana Plaza: Workplace safety in Bangladesh

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United Nations
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Posner, The human rights charade.

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2014/dec/04/-sp-case-against-human-rights>

1-25 Human Rights: Foundations

Feinberg, The nature and value of rights.

Donaldson and Werhane. Introduction to ethical reasoning.

1-30 Reparations

Case, Multinational corporations in apartheid-era South Africa: The issue of reparations

2-6 Human Rights: Alternatives

Ihara, Are individual rights necessary? A Confucian perspective.

Gyekye, Person and community in Akan thought.

2-8 Intellectual Property Rights/ Obligations More Generally

Case: W.R. Grace & Co. and the Neemix patent

Chen, There's no such thing as biopiracy...and it's a good thing too.

Singer, Famine, affluence, and morality

2-13 Obligations

Dunfee, Do firms with unique competencies for rescuing victims of human catastrophes have special obligations?

Pogge, Eradicating systemic poverty: Brief for a global resources dividend.

Risse, Do we owe the poor assistance or rectification?

2-15 Vulnerability

HB Fuller in Honduras

2-20 The moral significance of national borders

TBA

2-22 In class review for midterm

2-27 MIDTERM