

Ethics and Social Responsibility  
LGST 100  
Part I

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663 JMHH  
x 81221  
Office hours: Monday noon & by appt

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course asks the question: what is the morally right thing to do in business? Other courses at Penn explore the causes of wrongdoing and the institutions that regulate conduct in business; we, too, will consider these topics, but as background.

We begin by considering skepticism about morality in business and elements of normative moral theory. We then consider possible connections between moral theory and moral problems in business, including tactics in negotiation; VW and other recent business scandals; insider trading; sweatshops and outsourcing; corporate responsibility to people other than shareholders; workplace ethics; executive compensation. Readings are from Canvas and handouts. This is the first part of the syllabus. The remainder will be distributed after the midterm, when I have a better idea about student interests and developments in the news. It will include a focus on international issues.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected to complete the reading before class and to actively participate in classroom discussion. You should miss class only for an extraordinary reason. Absences will be reflected in grades. An attendance sheet will be circulated after enrollment settles down. Students should bring name tents.

**ELECTRONICS:** Please do not use computers, tablets, cell phones, or other electronic devices in class. Their mere presence messes with your mind, leading cognitive scientists say. (If special circumstances apply to you, let me know.)

**GRADES:** There will be a midterm and a final writing assignment. The midterm is worth 35%; the final writing assignment is worth 65%. Students may substantially improve their grades through informed class participation. There are two alternative ways to complete the final writing assignment. The first way is to take an in-class written exam at the time and place assigned to us by the Penn Registrar. The second way is to write a 7-8 page paper defending a normative thesis in business ethics. If you choose the second way, then you must submit for my approval a one paragraph paper proposal on March 12 and an outline of your paper on April 16. The complete paper is due on the date of the final for our class. The paper should

include a discussion of at least two scholarly articles from academic journals. Details will follow.

## SCHEDULE (may very well change!)

### 1-10 INTRODUCTION

What to do with money (no reading)

### 1-17 RELATIVISM

Changmai Corporation

Boghossian, The maze of moral relativism

Prinz, Morality is a culturally conditioned response

### 1-22 EGOISM

Feinberg, Psychological egoism

### 1-24 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase profits

Stout, The problem of corporate purpose

Freeman, Stakeholder theory of the modern corporation

### 1-29 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Merck & Co., Inc.

ALI, Principles of corporate governance

### 1-31 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Pettit, Responsibility, Inc

Ewing, Inside VW's campaign of trickery

### 2-05 NORMATIVE MORAL THEORY

Sandhu, Dicing with death

Pettit, Consequentialism

### 2-07 NORMATIVE MORAL THEORY

Material on Kant (handout)

### 2-12

Exercise

### 2-14 BUSINESS HONESTY

Strudler, Deception unraveled

### 2-19 JUSTICE

Moriarty, Do CEO's get paid too much?

Rawls, Distributive justice

2-21 JUSTICE

Nozick, Distributive justice

2-26

Review and catchup

2-28

Midterm

3-12

Exercise