

**The Wharton School  
University of Pennsylvania  
Ethics and Social Responsibility  
LGST 100 301 (ver1.14)  
Spring 2020**

**Professor Alan Strudler**  
663 JMHH x 81221  
Office Hours: M 1.30 & by appt.

**Ms. Andrea Leelike, TA**

**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.

Among substantive topics we consider: normative moral theory; skepticism about morality in business; tactics in negotiation; VW and other recent business scandals; sweatshops and outsourcing; corporate responsibility to people other than shareholders; ethics across borders; biopiracy; workplace ethics; autonomous cars; climate change. Readings will be available electronically.

**Requirements:**

Discussion/Participation (may improve your grade)

Midterm (35%)

Final paper (65%)

**Discussion/Participation:** Our class is a cooperative enterprise. We can best arrive at well-justified views by working together to think through the arguments that might be made for different, competing views. The moral issues that we'll discuss are difficult and complex, and there will be disagreements. That's a good thing, since it will help all of us think more carefully about the range of plausible views about the complex questions that we'll be grappling with. For discussion to be productive in this way, it's essential that we all participate in a spirit of mutual respect. Respecting others is consistent with vigorously challenging their views and the arguments that they offer for them. What matters is that criticisms are presented in a way that interprets the arguments being challenged charitably, and that properly appreciates the status of those being challenged as cooperators in a joint intellectual endeavor.

Consistent attendance is required. You will be permitted three absences. Any other absences will be excused for documented medical reasons or family emergencies. I am willing to consider other extenuating circumstances. All absences should be reported through the official Course Absence Report on PennInTouch. If you miss more than three classes, we will need to meet to discuss your attendance. Excessive absences may result in a failing or very low grade for the course.

**Midterm:** A combination of multiple choice and short answers

**Final Paper:** Approximately 8 page paper on a topic to be chosen from a list to be provided. You must present an outline of your paper in advance. Details regarding this assignment are forthcoming.

**CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

**Electronics:** Laptops and tablets are not permitted (without documented need). Please shut off your cellphones through the duration of each class.

**Lateness:** Be timely.

**Food:** Eat freely.

**Readings:** All readings will be available electronically. I strongly suggest that you print them. In case you have trouble printing, let me know, and we can do it at my office. There may be additional readings.

**SCHEDULE** (subject to change):

**1-15 Introduction**

Money (no reading)

**1-27 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase profits

**1-29 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Freeman, Stakeholder theory of the modern corporation

Stout, The problem of corporate purpose

Merck & Co., Inc

**2-3 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Strudler, What to do with corporate wealth

ALI, Principles of corporate governance

**2-5 Corporate Action**

Ewing, Inside VW's campaign of trickery

Bjornsson and Hess, Corporate crocodile tears

Sepinwall, Blame, emotion, and the corporation

## **2-10 Corporate Tyranny**

Anderson, Liberty, equality, and private government

Ihara, Are individual rights necessary? A Confucian perspective

## **2-12 Exercise**

## **2-17 Negotiation**

Carson, Second thoughts on bluffing+

## **2-19 Moral Reasoning**

Sandhu, Dicing with Death

Feldman, Utilitarianism Material (TBD)

## **2-24 Catch-up and review**

## **2-26 Midterm**

## **3-2 Exercise**

## **3-4 Debrief**

## **3-16 Technological Challenges**

Lin, Why ethics matters for autonomous cars

## **3-18 Moral Reasoning**

Feldman, Kant material (TBD)

## **3-23 How Much Should We Do?**

Singer, Famine, affluence, and morality

## **3-25 International Business Ethics**

Thompson, Google's China problem

Donaldson, Moral minimums for multinationals

## **3-30 Climate Change**

Arnold and Bustos, Business, ethics, and global climate change

## **4-1 Moral Relativism and disagreement**

Feldman, Relativism

Boghossian, The maze of moral relativism

Prinz, Morality is a culturally conditioned response

## **4-6 Moral Relativism and Disagreement**

Appiah, Moral Disagreement

#### **4-13 Exploitation**

Zwolinski, Sweatshops, choice, and exploitation

Real cost of cheap shirts: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/21/opinion/sunday/the-real-cost-of-cheap-shirts.html?searchResultPosition=23>

#### **4-15 International biopiracy**

Shiva, Biopiracy

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

#### **4-20 Distributive Justice**

Rawls, Distributive justice

#### **4-22 Distributive Justice**

Nozick, Distributive justice

#### **4-27 You**

Wolf, Moral saints

Macaskill, Replaceability and career choice

#### **4-29 Review**