Course description: This course asks the question: what is the morally right thing to do in business? Among topics we consider: tactics in negotiation; sweatshops and outsourcing; corporate responsibility to people other than shareholders; insider trading; ethics across borders; workplace ethics; autonomous cars; normative moral theory; skepticism about morality in business. Readings will be available on CANVAS.

The aims of this course are 1) to survey a range of important ethical and legal issues that arise for business leaders; 2) to analyze the ways in which these issues ought to figure in decision-making by responsible business leaders; 3) to aid in the critical understanding of your own values and the values of others; 4) to refine your ability to engage in reasonable discussion with people whose moral views differ from your own.

Requirements:
Quizzes (40%): There will be four quizzes administered through CANVAS, each worth 10 points. Quiz dates are 2-8; 3-1; 3-24; 4-21.

Final paper proposal (10%): Due 3-17.

Final paper (50%): 6-8 page paper. Due 5-7. You choose a topic in consultation with your TA. (Fabulous work on final paper may lessen the weight of deficient quiz scores.)

Discussion/Participation. (May improve your grade.)

Consistent attendance is required, except for medical issues or pressing covid problems. Unexcused attendance beyond three classes will affect your grade. Students in distant locations attending through Zoom must write weekly response papers and Zoom with TA or instructor four times during the semester.
SCHEDULE (subject to change):

Jan 20: Introduction

Jan 25: Morality and practice
Crockett, The trolley problem
Lin, Why ethics matters for autonomous cars

Jan 27: Corporate social responsibility
Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase profits
Paine, Does ethics pay?

Feb 1: Corporate social responsibility
Freeman, Stakeholder theory of the modern corporation
Stout, The problem of corporate purpose

Feb 3: Corporate social responsibility
Weiss, Merck & Co.
ALI, Principle of corporate governance

Feb 8: Normative ethics
Moriarty, Crash course (tbd)

Feb 10: Skepticism about normative ethics
Moriarty, Skepticism (tbd)

Feb 15: A practical problem
Sandbu, Dicing with death

Feb 17: Information
Shell, When is it legal to lie in negotiations?

Feb 22: Distributive justice
Rawls, A theory of justice

Feb 24: Distributive justice
Nozick, Distributive justice

Mar 1: Reparations
Coates, Reparations
CNN, Slavery reparations

Mar 3: Corporate Duties
tba
Mar 8: Insider trading
US v. Texas Gulf Sulphur

Mar 15 Insider trading
US v. O'Hagan

Mar 17 International business ethics
Thompson, Google’s China problem

Mar 22 International business ethics
Donaldson, Moral minimums for multinationals

Mar 24 How much should we do?
Singer, Famine, affluence, and morality

Mar 29 Exploitation
Zwolinski, Sweatshops, choice, and exploitation
Krugman, In praise of cheap labor

Mar 31 Exploitation
Meyers, Wrongful beneficence

Apr 5 Organizational ethics
Anderson, Liberty, equality, and private government

Apr 7 Organizational ethics
Ihara, Are individual rights necessary? A Confucian perspective

Apr 14 Neuroethics
Greene, From neural “is” to moral “ought”
Berker, The normative insignificance of neuroscience
Shaw, The psychologists take power (optional)

Apr 19
tba

Apr 21
tba

Apr 26: You
Wolf, Moral Saints

Apr 28: You
Macaskill, Replaceability and career choice