

The Wharton School
University of Pennsylvania

Responsibility in Global Management
LGST 611

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S 2022
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ALERT: THIS VERY TENTATIVE SYLLABUS WILL CHANGE!

Course description:

This course asks the question: what is the morally right thing to do in business? We will include substantial discussion of ethics in international contexts.

Other courses at Penn explore the causes of wrongdoing and the institutions that regulate conduct in business. Our focus is on the normative. It is designed to raise difficult moral issues, and to provide plausible frameworks for dealing with those issues. It is not intended to convert sinners into saints, preach absolute truths, convey the wisdom of philosophers, or deter the morally vulnerable.

Course objectives:

- To investigate the ethical responsibilities assumed in becoming business leaders.
- To sharpen skills in identifying, analyzing and resolving ethical issues faced by managers in the content in which they arise.
- To understand the role values play in managerial decision-making.
- To develop action plans that might help to resolve moral conflicts that arise in both the domestic and global environments.

Four course requirements:

1) **Reaction papers** (15% of course grade):

Please submit three short reaction papers (between 150 and 250 words). Each paper should address readings for one of these three class sessions: Jan 26, Feb 9, and Feb 23. Papers should be submitted on Canvas no later than noon the day after the relevant class session. If the class session involved an exercise, explain its significance to you. If it involved a reading, identify one argument from the reading, summarize it, and persuasively explain why you agree or disagree with it.

I'll generally mark reaction papers with a 1, but in some exceptional circumstances a 2. Missed assignments get a 0, completed assignments get a 1, half-hearted efforts get a 0.5. Each paper gets equal weight.

2) **Quiz** (20% of course grade). Online, open book, TBA

3) **Discussion/Participation:**

Students may substantially raise a course grade through excellent class participation. No matter what you say in class, it will not lower your grade. Class participation can only work to your benefit.

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 on the complex issues with which we'll grapple. For discussion to be productive 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, except in special circumstances. You are permitted one unexcused absence. Any other absences should be excused for medical reasons, family emergencies. In these difficult times, I expect that there will be many excused absences. Still, excessive unexcused absences may result in a failing or low grade for the course. I aim to meet with individuals on an individual basis who face difficulties attend live classes at the regular time. Let me know if you face such difficulties.

4) **Final Paper** (65% of course grade):

The paper should be approximately 1500 words. The paper may be either (a) a reflection on a concrete moral problem in business or (b) an analytical treatment of a class reading:

- (a) You may focus on a hard moral problem faced by either an individual business decision-maker or a business organization. Explain how the individual or organization responded to the moral problem, and whether you agree or disagree with the approach taken. You may, but need not, discuss a problem that you experienced personally. Papers will be graded based on the clarity and rigor of analysis, and the thoughtful use of class materials. Please make sure that you clearly state a thesis in your first paragraph. Do not plagiarize. Make it clear when you quote or paraphrase someone. Citation style is unimportant, but citations should be informative.
- (b) Critically assess the argument presented in a paper we discussed in class. You should summarize the argument, explain its strengths and weakness, consider objections against the argument, and explore answers to those objections.

Schedule

Jan 19 Intro. No reading.

Jan 24 MORAL IDEAS

Sandbu, Dicing with death.
Moriarty, Crash course in ethics

Jan 26 Exercise

Jan 31 TBA

Feb 2 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits
Stout, The problem of corporate purpose
Freeman, Stakeholder theory of the modern corporation
American Law Institute, Principles of corporate governance

Feb 7 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Karnanai, Doing well by doing good
Case: Merck

Feb 9 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ETHICS

Moriarty, Business ethics across borders
Thomas, Why don't we learn from the survivors of the Rana Plaza disaster?

Feb 14 INTERNATIONAL BIOPIRACY

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

Feb 16 GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Shue, Face reality? After you!—A call for leadership on climate change
Wallace-Wells, The uninhabitable earth

Feb 21 JUSTICE AND REPARATIONS

Coates, The case for reparations

Feb 23 INTERNET DISORDER

Bhargava and Velasquez, Ethics of the attention economy
Weiman, the McDonald's coffee cup case

Feb 28 EFFECTIVE ALTRUISM

MacAskill, Replaceability, career choice, and making a difference
Srinivasan, Stop the robot apocalypse

1 Moral ideas

Sandbu, Dicing with death

Then either the Donaldson & Werhane or the Alexander & Moore.
Either article is fine. The Donaldson & Werhane is more accessible but the Alexander & Moore is more thorough.

Donaldson & Werhane, Intro to ethical reasoning

Alexander and Moore, Deontological ethics

2.

Ultimatum Game

Car sale

3) When is it legal to lie.

4 The purpose of the firm

Case: Merck

Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits
Freeman, A stakeholder theory of the modern corporation
ALI, Principles of corporate governance

5 Exploitation

Rana Plaza

Moriarty

6. Singer famine affluence

7 Corporate responsibility

Weiman, McDonalds coffee cup case

Bhargava & Velasquez

8 Borders

Thompson, Google's China problem

Donaldson, Values in tension

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9 Intellectual Property Rights

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

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

10 Animals

11 Exit Interview

12)

Crary, Against effective altruism

Macaskill, Replaceability and career choice

Vanguard

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1. Ultimatum Game

2. Car Sale

3. When is it legal to lie

4. Dicing with Death

Dentological ethics

Stanford encyclopedia

5. Exit Interview

6. The purpose of the firm

Friedman, The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits Freeman, A

stakeholder theory of the modern corporation

ALI, Principles of corporate governance

7, Case: Merck

8. Moriarty

9. Singer famine affluence

10) Borders

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Donaldson, Values in tension

11) Weiman, McDonalds coffee cup case

Bhargava & Velasquez

12) Crary, Against effective altruism

Macaskill, Replaceability and career choice

1. Intro. No reading.

2. Dicing with death.
Moriarty, ch. 2., Crash course in ethics
3. Exercise
4. TBA
5. Friedman
Stout
Freeman
ALI
- 6 Doing well by doing good
Merck
7. Moriarty, Ch 10, Business Ethics Across Borders
Rana Plaza
9. Singer, Famine, Affluence, morality
10. Coates,
- 11 Bhargava
Coffee cup case
- 12 Effective altruism