

WILLIAM RAINEY HARPER COLLEGE
LIBERAL ARTS DIVISION
GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE

PHI	150	Business Ethics	3-0	3
Course Prefix	Course Number	Course Title	(Lec-Lab)	Semester Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduces philosophical ethical theory and its application to business decisions. Consider theories of economic justice, social responsibility, hiring practices and rights of employees and employers.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

- I. Ethical Theory and its Application of Business
 - A. Ethical Relativism
 1. Advocacy
 2. Criticisms
 - B. Utilitarian Theories
 1. Types and essential features
 2. Applications to business
 3. Criticisms
 - C. Deontological Theories
 1. Types and essential features
 2. Applications to business
 3. Limitations
- II. Economics, Values, and Justice
 - A. The Profit Motive
 1. Classical free market justification
 2. Marxist critique
 - B. Private Ownership and Public Interest
 1. Private Property
 - a. Justification
 - b. Challenge
 2. Corporations as public institutions
 - C. Individual Liberties and Social Justice
 1. Egalitarian Theories
 2. Libertarian theories
 3. Utilitarian Theories
- III. Rights, Liability, and the State
 - A. Business and the Employee: Rights and Obligations
 1. Affirmative Action
 2. Preferential Hiring
 3. Reverse Discrimination
 4. Conflicts of Interest
 - B. Business and the Consumer: Responsibility and Liability
 1. Ethics of Advertising
 2. Product Quality and Safety
 3. Moral Response to Consumerism Pressures
 - C. Business and the Government
 1. Self-regulation
 - a. Codes of Ethics
 - b. Corporate Social Audit

- 2. Government Regulation
- IV. Business in Modern Society
 - A. Corporate Social Responsibility
 - 1. Classical Theories
 - 2. Emerging Theories
 - B. Environmental/Ecological Issues
 - 1. Pollution
 - 2. Scarcity of Resources

METHODS OF PRESENTATION

- 1. Lectures
- 2. Guest lectures by members of the business community
- 3. Class discussion of case material
- 4. Simulation exercises
- 5. Debates

STUDENT OUTCOMES: (*The student should . . .*)

- 1. Compare major normative ethical approaches to business.
- 2. Examine understandings of business ethics and corporate social responsibility as expressed in different societies, cultures, and eras.
- 3. Identify ethical issues in business.
- 4. Apply ethics rules to specific business situations.
- 5. Evaluate resolutions to ethical dilemmas in business.
- 6. Write a total of at least ten pages (of approximately 300 words each) of college level writing in the service of the above outcomes.

SOME METHODS OF EVALUATION

- 1. Quizzes
- 2. Exams (may be oral)
- 3. Written reading responses
- 4. Debates
- 5. Homework
- 6. Class activities
- 7. Participation

SOME TEXTBOOKS/INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Shaw & Barry, *Moral Issues in Business*, 13th ed., Cengage, 2015
Shaw, *Business Ethics: A Textbook with Cases*, 8th ed., Cengage, 2013

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