San José State University
Department of Philosophy
PHIL 186 – Professional and Business Ethics
Spring Semester 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Noah Friedman-Biglin
Office Location: Faculty Offices Building, Room 232
Email: noah.friedman-biglin@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: TBA
Classroom: https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1208461
Prerequisites: Upper Division Standing
GE/SJSU Studies Category: Area S: “Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.”
“Students are strongly encouraged to satisfy GE Areas R, S, and V with courses from departments other than the major department. Completion of, or co—registration in, a 100W course is strongly recommended. A minimum aggregate GPA of 2.0 in GE Areas R, S, & V shall be required of all students.”

Course Format

Technology Intensive, Hybrid, and Online Courses
This course is online only, which means that there are no in-person course meetings. No special technology is required aside from regular internet access, and the ability to interact with the Canvas learning management system.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging
All course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Since this course is online, you should contact me via email. I will do my best to answer any emails within 48 hours, or 24 hours in case of (clearly marked) emergencies. No emails will be answered on Saturdays.

You are also invited and encouraged to come to my office hours to meet with me in person. Office hours are on a drop-in basis, and no appointment is necessary.

Course Description
This course involves an interdisciplinary study of ethical and moral issues which arise within the contexts of business and the professions. It involves a study of major ethical theories, critique of economic justice, and
decision-making techniques. Our primary focus is on issues of justice and equality in the US facilitated by case studies and group discussion.

Course Goals Learning Outcomes and Course Goals

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Bus/Phil 186 meets SJSU Studies Area S, “Self, Society, and Equality in the U.S.” The course objectives for Area S courses will be pursued throughout the course.

A. Course Goals (GE)
Students will study the interrelationship of individuals, racial groups, and cultural groups to understand and appreciate issues of diversity, equality, and structured inequality in the U.S., its institutions, and its cultures as well as the economic social consequences of such inequalities.

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to recognize, analyze, and articulate solutions to ethical issues that arise in business. Specifically, you will be able to:

• Comprehend the major methods of ethical reasoning, apply these methods to specific business situations, and draw conclusions for action.

• Identify the major stakeholders of business and understand how they may be affected by ethical or unethical behavior.

• Demonstrate familiarity with various ethical issues that arise in business, such as insider trading, misuse of corporate resources, conflicts of interest, and sexual and racial harassment.

• Distinguish among societal, organizational, and individual-level causes of unethical behavior in business.

• Know how well managed companies structure their ethics and compliance function.

Students will also learn and develop,

1. an awareness that the moral dimension of life does not vanish but rather expands in the context of business,

2. an understanding of basic moral concepts as tools for assessing the moral realities of business and professional life,

3. the ability to participate constructively in collective discussion and decision making about the moral dimension of business and professional life.
Required Texts/Readings

Textbook
The main text for our course will be:

Wadsworth, Cengage Publishing
ISBN: 1285874323

Older editions of the book are not allowed (the case study numbering and content is different, which creates confusion). The current edition is available in the Spartan Bookstore; you can also buy or rent it at CengageBrain.com.

Other Readings (Recommended but not Required)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author/Creator</th>
<th>URL/Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Philosophical Writing</em></td>
<td>Basil Blackwell</td>
<td><a href="http://plato.stanford.edu">http://plato.stanford.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Martinich, A.P.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Stanford Online Encyclopedia of Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISBN: 0-631-20281-1</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html">http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html</a></td>
<td>Pryor, Jim</td>
<td><a href="https://prezi.com/z4h1_fwilbxi/a-sample-philosophy-paper/">https://prezi.com/z4h1_fwilbxi/a-sample-philosophy-paper/</a></td>
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<td>Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper</td>
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<td>Sample Philosophy Paper, Annotated</td>
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<td>Mendelovici, Angela</td>
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<td>A Peer-Reviewed, Scholarly Journal</td>
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<td>Research Help from MLK Library</td>
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Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination for the course will be an online essay-based exam. More information regarding this exam, and all the other assignments for this course, can be found below.

Grading Information

20 percent: Case Study Responses – you will be assigned to one of four groups. Each week, one group will be responsible for (individually) writing responses to specific case study questions (picked by me). Since there are four groups, the groups will be on a four-week rotation, and so each person will be obligated to write three responses during the course.

Each response should be between 500 and 1000 words in length. These responses will be graded on clarity of argumentation (yes, these responses should be argumentative!) as well as your usage of the moral theories we
have learned in the course. Merely mentioning a moral theory is not enough – so, for example, if you think that raising the minimum wage would be the correct course of action for utilitarian reasons, then you ought to proceed to give an argument why utilitarians in particular should agree with you. That is, you should argue not just that raising the minimum wage would be nice, or make people feel good, but that it would have the best consequences. Moreover you should be specific about what those consequences would be, and why they support the conclusion you claim they do.

15 percent: Test 1 – Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4. Test may include multiple choice and True/False type questions. It will definitely include at least one essay question; answers to this question will be in the form of an essay of about 500 words. This test covers: Morality, Normative Theories of Ethics, Justice, Economic Distribution, the Nature of Capitalism.

15 percent: Test 2 – Chapters 5, 6, 8, 10. Test may include multiple choice and True/False type questions, and at least one short essay of the same kind as Test 1. This test covers: Corporations, Consumers, The Workplace 1, and Moral Issues Facing Employees.

10 percent: Research Paper Proposal – a paper proposal of no less than 500 words. This will be a preliminary discussion of the topic for your research paper (see below). The proposal should give an overview of the problem (i.e. what's the moral issue?), and also give a sketch of your argument. Of course, since this is just the proposal, you do not need to have done all the research you intend to do yet – but there should be some indications that you have done at least some of it. More will be said about the proposal as the due date approaches.

20 percent: Paper: Research/Argument paper – no more than 1,500 words of writing (not counting words in the Works Cited page). At least three scholarly (i.e. peer-reviewed) articles required as a minimum for the final paper. The quality of your research will be evaluated as well as the content and argumentation final in your paper. You should pick a topic relevant to the course material – that is, not only should you choose an issue that arises in the world of economics or business, but it should be such that it can be evaluated morally. Specifically, what I will be looking for are the following two things: (1) how well you argue for your position – I do not want to read a paper that either fails to take a stand on the issue, or simply asserts some view or other, you ought to present an argument with your stand on the issue as conclusion; and (2) that you make use of one (and no more than that!) of the moral theories we cover in the first portion of the course. The most important phrase in (2) was 'make use of' – that is, I do not want to read papers which merely mention some theory, but neither explain the theory or why and how it is being used in this case. More will be said about the paper as the time approaches.

20 percent: Final – This final will be delivered online, through the Canvas learning management system. It will consist of a series of essay prompts, of which students will be able to choose two that they wish to answer. Answers will be in the form of a short essay of approximately 500 – 1000 words. Of utmost importance will be the quality of your argumentation; other factors in determining a grade on the final will include whether the prompt is addressed directly, and the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of, and makes use of, the course material. In particular, I will be looking for how well you use the moral theories; just as in the research paper, merely mentioning them is not enough. Beyond this, please make sure to observe the cannons of good academic writing in your essays – use correct punctuation, separate paragraphs for separate ideas, and correct spelling.

**Determination of Grades**

- Grades will be determined according to the rubric above. Intermediate grades will be used (that is, grades using + and –) according to the following formula:
  1. 100 – 98: A+

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No extra credit will be offered. Make sure to factor this in – if you want to get a good grade in this course, put effort into your work from the very beginning of the semester.

All work is due when it's due. Any work submitted after the deadline will not be accepted, and if there are extenuating circumstances which prevent you from submitting your work on time, you are responsible for contacting the professor (i.e. me) as soon as you know about them.

If you believe that there has been a mistake in calculating your grade, please contact me. However, any emails sent where you either (1) simply disagree with a mark I have given you, or (2) are asking me to round or otherwise alter your grade will not be dignified with an answer.

Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C- not accepted), and completion of Core General Education are prerequisite to all SJSU Studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended. A minimum aggregate GPA of 2.0 in GE Areas R, S, & V shall be required of all students.

Classroom Protocol
Since this course is online, many of the traditional classroom issues do not arise. However, as most of us know, discussions hosted on the internet can often be heated and full of discriminatory or offensive language. This will not be tolerated in my course. Comments of a racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory nature will be grounds for disciplinary action; the determination of which comments violate this policy will be mine alone.

University policies
Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/
PHIL 186- , Spring 2017, Course Schedule

List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week Begins</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>Introduction (lectures 1 and 2) Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>The Nature of Morality (lecture 3) Read: Shaw, Chapter 1 Discussion: Case 1.3 (Shaw, pp. 35 – 37)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Normative Theories of Ethics: Utilitarianism (lecture 4) Read: Shaw, Chapter 2, pp. 54 – 66 and 77 – 79 Discussion: Case 2.2 (Shaw, 85 – 87)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>Normative Theories of Ethics: Deontology (Kant's Ethics) (lecture 6) Read: Shaw, Chapter 2, pp. 66 – 77 Discussion: Case 2.3 (Shaw, 88 – 89)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/27</td>
<td>The Nature of Justice (lecture 8) Read: Shaw, Chapter 3, pp. 105 – 120 Discussion: Case 3.1 (Shaw, 129 – 131)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>The Nature of Justice: Rawls (lecture 5) Read: Shaw, Chapter 3, pp. 120 – 128 Discussion: Case 3.3 (Shaw, pp. 133 – 135)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>Capitalism (lecture 9) Read: Shaw, Chapter 4, pp. 150 – 173 Discussion: Case 4.5 (Shaw, pp. 182 – 184) Test 1 Available on Canvas (8:00 AM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/19</td>
<td>Class Test 1 Closes 11:59 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>Paper Proposals Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/27</td>
<td>No Class – Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>Consumers (lecture 12) Read: Shaw, Chapter 6, pp. 262 – 296</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Week Begins</td>
<td>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</td>
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<td>Discussion: Case 6.5 (Shaw, pp. 304 – 305)</td>
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| 11   | 4/10        | The Workplace (lecture 14)  
Read: Shaw, Chapter 8, pp. 379 – 408  
**Discussion: Case 8.3 (Shaw 412 – 413)** |
| 12   | 4/17        | The Workplace Part 2 (lecture 13)  
Read: Shaw, Chapter 9, pp. 434 – 457  
Discussion: Case 9.3 (Shaw, p. 462) |
| 13   | 4/24        | Moral Choices Facing Employees (lecture 17)  
Read: Shaw, Chapter 10, pp. 493 – 520  
Discussion: Case 10.1 (Shaw, p. 521) |
| 14   | 5/1         | Job Discrimination (lecture 16)  
Read: Shaw, Chapter 11, pp. 558 – 580  
Discussion: Case 11.3 (Shaw, pp. 584 – 585)  
**Test 2 Available on Canvas** |
| 14   | 5/6         | Test 2 Closes on Canvas 11:59 PM |
| 15   | 5/8         | Special Topic: Readings and lectures TBA |
| 15   | 5/8         | **Final Papers Due** |
| 16   | 5/15        | Final Exam Review – open discussion |
| **FINAL EXAM** | **5/18 – 5/23** | Exam will be online. **Exam available: 5/18 8:00 AM – 5/23 11:59 PM** |