

**St. Edward's University**  
**New College**  
**PHIL 3313A-01 Business Ethics (60990)**  
**Spring 2017**

**SYLLABUS**

**COURSE MEETINGS**

Our course meets on Mondays, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> through March 6th (inclusive), 6:30-9:20 p.m. in South John Brooks Williams Bldg., Room 268.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

Office: No campus office  
Office hours: Directly after class or by appointment  
Email: [ellenb@stedwards.edu](mailto:ellenb@stedwards.edu)  
Phone: (512) 814-5148 for emergencies only. Please send a text messages only; please do not leave voicemail. In your text, include your name (first and last), the course you are taking with me, contact information, and whether you would like me to text or call you back.

*Communication policy*—Email is the best way to reach me. I respond to email in 1-2 business days or less. In emergency situations only, feel free to send me a text message for quickest response. When you send a text message, be sure to include your name (first and last), the course you are taking with me, contact information, and whether you would like me to text or call you back.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course students explore moral concerns and ethical decision making in business circumstances and the corporate environment. Topics include, but are not limited to, individual and corporate freedoms and responsibilities, the virtues and vices of corporate behavior, and individual and corporate rights, as well as case studies regarding equity and justice. Prerequisites: NCCT 2330A and PHIL 3327A.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, the student should be able to:

- Articulate and discuss moral questions, moral views, arguments and counterarguments;
- Develop cogent arguments and counterarguments;
- Identify counterarguments to his/her own views and respond to them;
- Identify the differences between individual and corporate moral choices and offer a method for analyzing each;
- Discuss the rights and responsibilities of individual workers and the relationship with the larger business unit and the community as a whole;
- Identify the duties and responsibilities of management toward employees and the community in which it operates;
- Differentiate between stakeholders, stockholders, and workers, identifying for each the connection to the other two and the consequent moral obligations;
- Discuss the duties of business generally toward the environment, people in other nations (in particular, developing nations), geographical neighbors, and future generations;
- Identify, and distinguish between, legal and moral obligations and be able to prioritize them in specific case studies.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Desjardins, Joseph. *An Introduction to Business Ethics*. 5th ed. Boston: McGraw Hill: 2014.

A number of additional short readings are required. They are listed in the schedule of readings below and are available for download in Canvas.

## **COURSE POLICIES (In alphabetical order)**

### Academic Integrity Policy

Per the Student Handbook, “St. Edward’s University expects academic honesty from all members of the community, and it is our policy that academic integrity be fostered to the highest degree possible. Consequently, all work submitted for grading in a course must be created as a result of your own thought and effort. Representing work as your own when it is not a result of such thought and effort is a violation of our code of academic integrity.

Whenever it is established that academic dishonesty has occurred, the course instructor shall impose a penalty on the offending individual(s). **The maximum penalty for a first offense is failure in the course, and if that penalty is imposed, the student does not have the option of withdrawing from the course.”**

<http://think.stedwards.edu/deanofstudents/studenthandbook/academicintegrity>

*Unintentional plagiarism*—Often, when students commit plagiarism, it is unintentional. But any form of plagiarism is a serious misstep; all acts of plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, will be penalized. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it. Students may wish to refer to a college writing guide, such as *The Little Seagull Handbook*, to familiarize themselves with what counts as plagiarism.

*Self-plagiarism*—Submitting work a student submitted for credit in another course or previously published is considered self-plagiarism. Work a student submitted for credit in another course or previously published may not be submitted, in whole or in part, for credit in this course.

*Feedback on work containing plagiarized content*—The instructor will not provide feedback on plagiarized content. The instructor will not provide feedback on a submission containing 30% or more plagiarized content.

*Revision of work containing plagiarized content*—No extra revisions, beyond paper revisions, if any, listed in the syllabus which all students are expected to write, will be granted for students to correct plagiarism in a submission.

### Attendance

Because we only have seven class meetings, full attendance and participation at each one is essential. If you miss two class sessions, or 340 minutes total over the seven-week course, the instructor will issue a WA (withdrawal due to absences). This is standard in New College and non-negotiable. Do not miss more than one class! If you miss one class session, be sure to attend, arrive on time, and stay for the full duration of all other class sessions. Note that the instructor observes a ten-minute grace period at the start of each class session before beginning to note tardies.

If you have disability accommodations that grant extra leniency regarding class attendance, you will be withdrawn if you miss two full class sessions. You may be given more leniency regarding arriving late and leaving early when necessary due to health conditions. Please communicate with the instructor when you must arrive late or leave early and bear in mind that missing class time, while it may be excusable for health reasons, will still impair your learning process.

Whenever you are absent, you should do the following before the next class session. The first three are required:

1. Notify the instructor by email of your absence and that you still intend to complete the course.
2. Complete any for-credit, in-class exercise you may have missed; submit it by its original due date to the appropriate drop box in Canvas.
3. Complete all assigned reading for the session.

The next two are optional but highly recommended:

4. Get class notes from a classmate and review those notes thoroughly.
5. Submit, by email to the instructor, five thoughtful and carefully-considered questions about the material covered in the session you missed.

### Computer Competencies

All Undergraduate and New College students are required to satisfy the Computer Competency Requirement. New College students will not be allowed to register for Moral Reasoning, a CGI class, or Capstone until all competencies are completed. For more information:

<http://academic.stedwards.edu/competency/>

### Disability Services/Special Circumstances

St. Edward's University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodation for qualified students with a disability. If you have an established disability as defined in the Americans with Disability Act and would like to request accommodation, please let me know early in the semester or as soon as you are eligible. Students will need to present documentation of their disability to the disability coordinator in Academic Planning and Support Services located in Moody Hall. Documentation guide:

<http://think.stedwards.edu/apss/requirementsproperdocumentation>

### Dropping/ Withdrawing Policy

- It is the student's responsibility to be aware of add/drop/withdraw and refund deadlines. See web link: <http://think.stedwards.edu/registrar/datesanddeadlines>
- Students should also communicate with their instructor, academic advisor, and financial aid advisor.
- If you miss two class sessions, or 340 minutes total over the seven-week course, the instructor will issue a WA (withdrawal due to absences). Unfortunately, this is non-negotiable. Note that the instructor observes a ten-minute grace period at the start of each class session before beginning to note tardies. Exceptions to the WA policy will only be made for students with disability accommodations that grant extra leniency regarding class attendance. Those students will still be withdrawn if they miss two full class sessions, but when they need to arrive late to class or leave early from class for legitimate reasons, may ultimately miss more than 340 minutes without being withdrawn.

### Grade Complaints

The instructor takes great care to calculate grades in a fair and consistent manner. However, students who wish to contest a grade awarded in the course are entitled to do so. They must first contact the instructor. Once the instructor receives a grade complaint, the original score for the assignment in question is no longer valid—the student forfeits any right to keep that score. The instructor will regrade the assignment, supply a detailed scoring rubric to explain the score, and double-check that rubric against other students' graded work. The goal is to ensure that the assignment in question has been graded in a manner consistent with submissions by other students. *The assignment will receive a new grade; the new grade may be higher, lower, or the same as the original grade.*

A student who wishes to contest her or his final grade is entitled to do so. In that case, any originally assigned score that contributes to the final course grade is no longer valid. All for-credit activities may be reviewed and regraded to ensure scores are in line with the standards applied to other students' work. *New scores may be higher, lower, or the same as the original scores.* New scores may result in a change to the final course grade. *The resulting final course grade may be higher than, lower than, or the same as the final course grade that was originally assigned.* When regrading of course activities results in a change to the final course grade, the instructor will supply a detailed scoring rubric to explain each new score and will double-check that rubric against other students' graded work.

### Incomplete Grades Policy

The grade of I (Incomplete) is given at the sole discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the dean. A grade of I must always be requested by the student; it is not automatically earned. To qualify for an Incomplete, students must have completed no less than one-half of the work in a course and have attended no fewer than one-half of the scheduled class meetings. The student must be able to document that the situation qualifies as exceptional. Exceptional circumstances include but are not restricted to a death in the immediate family; the onset of a serious medical condition; or an unexpected change in job or family circumstances. Exceptional circumstances do not include situations that can be considered a normal part of living. Course work must be completed and a grade submitted by the instructor to the Office of the Registrar no later than October 1 for summer courses, March 1 for fall courses and July 1 for spring courses, or a grade of F will be entered on the transcript.

### Late Work

Because this is an accelerated course, it is very important that you not fall behind in your work. Handing in an assignment late puts you behind on the prep for the next class and on future assignments. However, adult learners often face scheduling challenges. The aim of my late policy is to help students navigate scheduling challenges while keeping them on track to succeed in the course.

Work will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. the day it is due without penalty. After that, it is considered late.

Late work without a documented medical excuse is handled according to the following policy:

1-2 days late	No penalty	Graded and returned with on-time work
3 days late	30% penalty	Graded and returned with the following regularly-scheduled assignment
4 days late	40% penalty	Graded and returned with the following regularly-scheduled assignment
5 days late	50 % penalty	Graded and returned with the following regularly-scheduled assignment

Work that is more than five days late will not be accepted except in rare circumstances and at the instructor's sole discretion.

If your work is late and you have a documented medical excuse, see the "Medical/Adverse Health Events" section of the syllabus.

### Medical/Adverse Health Events

Medical/adverse health events fall into three categories:

1. appointments/procedures scheduled in advance
2. unplanned adverse health events with adequate official documentation (which I'll refer to as a "doctor's note" though it may not be signed by an MD)
3. unplanned adverse health events without adequate official documentation

*Appointments/procedures scheduled in advance*—When a scheduled appointment or procedure falls on a class date, a test date, or a assignment deadline, the usual deadlines, attendance policies, and late policies still apply. Turn in assignments on time; you may need to turn them in early to get them in on time. Contact the instructor if you need to take a test early. You will be withdrawn from the course if you miss two class sessions or 340 minutes total even if some of your missed time was due to a medical appointment.

*Unplanned adverse health events with a doctor's note (i.e. with adequate official documentation)*—Your doctor's note must be written and signed by a healthcare professional on some form of official letterhead or note paper; it must state the dates you are unable to attend school any the due date of the test or assignment for which you are seeking an extension or exemption must fall in the window of dates when the doctor's note states you are unable to attend school. If you yourself were well but missed school in order to care for a family member, the doctor's note must have your name on it. Healthcare professionals are usually willing to write notes for care takers—just ask. Please email the following to the instructor within 7 days of the last date you were unable to attend school as stated on the doctor's note:

1. A scanned image of the doctor's note or a digital photo you took with your phone (please black out personal information first, such as diagnoses, social security number, and so on)
2. Your name (first and last) and the name of our course
3. The work you missed and the original deadline(s)
4. A proposed solution (i.e. how many days you need to complete the work or if you would like to be exempted from this assignment or test)

The instructor will discuss your situation with you and set a new deadline for your work that she finds appropriate. In some cases, you may be exempted from completing an assignment which means the item will be dropped from your final grade calculation.

*Unplanned adverse health events without a doctor's note*—We have all probably had many times we were sick but were not sick enough to warrant a trip to our healthcare provider. Unfortunately, without adequate documentation, I cannot really know students' health excuses are legitimate. While I find I am able to trust most of my students, unfortunately, it seems there are always those who will take advantage if I give extensions on work for health

reasons without adequate documentation. Therefore, if you do not have a doctor's note, the usual late work, late test, and attendance policies apply.

### Student Support Services

Links to all student services may be found on the New College advising page:

<http://think.stedwards.edu/newcollege/helpful-links>

### Submitting Work

Submit all work via Canvas. Work is due by 11:59 p.m. on the date listed. The following file formats are acceptable: .doc, .docx, .docm, .rtf, and .pdf. Unfortunately, no other file formats can be accepted; some cannot be read by the originality checker we use and others cannot be read by the instructor's computer. Work submitted in unacceptable file formats is still subject to regular deadlines; your work is not on-time unless it is submitted in an acceptable file format by the regular deadline.

## **REQUIRED WORK AND EVALUATION**

Class attendance & participation	Required
Exercises	5% (5 @ 1% each)
Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Research Paper Proposal	5%
Research Paper	30%

*Class attendance, preparation, and participation*—You are required to attend all class sessions and to do all assigned reading before the class in which we will be discussing it. You are encouraged to give yourself enough time to read the material thoroughly, actively, and more than once. Bring to each class session:

- All readings assigned for that session
- Materials, such as pen and notebook, for taking notes
- A laptop or tablet with internet access, if possible
- Optionally, snacks and beverages
- Optionally, a recording device for recording lectures

*Exercises*—In these five short assignments, you will practice skills that will be necessary for the Research Paper and may be assessed on exams. Exercises are started in class and may often need to be completed at home.

*Midterm Exam and Final Exam*—Both these exams are cumulative and may include multiple-choice and written-answer questions.

*Research Paper Proposal and Research Paper*—These are described in a document attached at the end of the syllabus.

## **READING AND CLASS SCHEDULE**

### **1<sup>ST</sup> Session—Jan. 23rd:**

#### **Topics:**

- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) theories and applications
- Walmart, social responsibility
- Moral questions and moral views

#### **Reading and other assignments due:**

- Desjardins, Chapter 3
- Fishman, Charles. "The Walmart You Don't Know." FastCompany, 19. Dec. 2007. At <https://www.fastcompany.com/47593/wal-mart-you-dont-know>
- "Declaration of Interdependence" by Whole Food Market at <http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/mission-values/core-values/declaration-interdependence>

**Class activities:**

- Introduction and review of the syllabus and assignments
- Corporate social responsibility lecture and discussion
- Identifying moral questions and moral views
- Exercise 1 (E1): Write four moral questions inspired by today's readings. **E1 is due through Canvas by the Wednesday after class.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Session—Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>:****Topics:**

- Corporate culture and codes of ethics
- Theory X, Theory Y
- Philosophical arguments

**Reading and other assignments due:**

- Desjardins, Chapters 4
- McGregor, Douglass. "The Human Side of Enterprise." *Reflections* 2.1 (2000): 6-15.
- Hill, Andrew. "The management revolution." *Financial Times*. 13 June 2013.
- Denning, Steve. "The new management paradigm and John Mackey's Whole Foods." *Forbes*. Forbes, 5 Jan. 2015.

**Optional reading:**

- Mourdoukoutas, Panos. "Walmart's outdated management style is failing customers." *Forbes*. Forbes, 30 Jan. 2016.
- Wahba, Phil. "Wal-mart to shed some in-store management in bid to improve shopper service." *Fortune*. Fortune, 17 April 2015.

**Class activities:**

- Discuss corporate culture and codes of ethics
- Browse corporate codes of ethics online—search for Walmart, Whole Foods, and other companies
- Theories X and Y and the "management revolution"
- Lecture on philosophical arguments, identifying premises and conclusions
- Exercise 2 (E2): Identify one moral question addressed in today's readings. Identify two opposing answers to this question. Write an argument for each side. **E2 is due through Canvas by the Wednesday after class.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Session—Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>:****Topics:**

- Meaning and value of work
- Strong philosophical arguments

**Reading and other assignments due:**

- Desjardins, Chapters 5
- "Why We're a Great Place to Work" by Whole Foods Market at <http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/careers/why-were-great-place-work>

**Class activities:**

- Discuss meaning and value of work, three models of work
- Lecture/discussion on Research Paper Proposal format and requirements
- Finding sources for the Research Paper (lecture and in-class work session)
- Arguments: how to develop a strong argument
- Research Paper Proposal lecture and work session. *Bring a laptop or tablet if possible.*
- Exercise 3 (E3): Identify one moral question addressed by today's readings. Identify two opposing answers to this question. Write the strongest argument you can for each side. **E3 is due through Canvas by the Wednesday after class.**

**4<sup>th</sup> Session—Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>:****Topics:**

- Workplace rights and privacy

**Reading and other assignments due:**

- Desjardins, Chapters 6

- Holley, Peter. “Daycare worker fired for Facebook post saying she hates ‘being around a lot of kids’.” *Washington Post*. Washington Post, 4 May 2015. At [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/05/04/day-care-employee-fired-for-facebook-post-noting-she-hates-being-around-a-lot-of-kids/?utm\\_term=.3a701290341c](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2015/05/04/day-care-employee-fired-for-facebook-post-noting-she-hates-being-around-a-lot-of-kids/?utm_term=.3a701290341c)
- “How Walmart keeps an eye on its massive workforce,” Bloomberg Businessweek, Nov. 2015

**Class activities:**

- **Midterm Exam**
- Discuss rights in the workplace
- Discuss privacy issues and social media use
- NO EXERCISE TODAY

**5<sup>th</sup> Session—Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>:**

**Topics:**

- Autonomy
- Advertising
- Counterarguments

**Reading and other assignments due:**

- **Research Paper Proposal due via Canvas**
- Desjardins, Chapter 9
- Phillips, Barbara J. "In Defense of Advertising: A Social Perspective." *Journal of Business Ethics* 16.2 (1997): 109-118.
- Carr, Albert Z. "Is Business Bluffing Ethical?" *Harvard Business Review* 46.1 (1968): 143-153.

**Class activities:**

- Define “autonomy”
- Discuss issues in advertising: exploitation, manipulation and persuasion, target populations, vulnerable populations
- Discuss advertising and consumerism
- Discuss Albert Carr’s argument about deceptive business practices
- Exercise 4 (E4): Partner with someone who shares your view on the question “Is Apple responsible for working conditions at Foxconn factories?” Write a counterargument to an argument for the view you two disagree with (target arguments will be provided in class.) **E4 is due through Canvas by the Wednesday after class.**

**6<sup>th</sup> Session—Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>:**

**Topics:**

- Sustainability

**Reading and other assignments due:**

- Desjardins, Chapter 10
- PriceWaterhouse Coopers. “Integral Business: Integrating sustainability and business strategy.” 2010.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Preamble and Articles 22-25, available at <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- Walmart. “2016 Global Responsibility Report: Executive Summary” at <http://cdn.corporate.walmart.com/83/bf/f042060f46d3b0e806289563c086/2016-grr-exectuive-summary.pdf>

**Class activities:**

- Discuss sustainability
- Discuss rights and duties
- Browse corporate sustainability statements online
- Discuss international business practices; obligations to developing nations; and human rights.
- Exercise 5 (E5): Identify what is, in your opinion, the strongest argument found in today’s readings. Write a counterargument. **E5 is due through Canvas by the Wednesday after class.**

**7<sup>th</sup> Session—March 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Topics:**

- Final paper

**Class activities:**

- Final Exam
- Lecture: Appropriate, effective writing
- Research Paper workshop. *Bring a laptop or tablet if possible.*
- End-of-course Q&A

**RESEARCH PAPER DUE: Saturday, March 11th by 11:59 p.m. Must be submitted via Canvas in an acceptable file format (.doc, .docx, .docm, .rtf, or .pdf only).**

**FINAL COURSE GRADES will be posted in Canvas by Weds. March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11: 59 p.m.**

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**EXPECTED NUMBER OF HOURS**

<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>	<b>HOURS EXPECTED</b>
Reading for Session 1	7
Attending Class Session 1	3
Exercise 1	1
Reading for Session 2	7
Attending Class Session 2	3
Exercise 2	1
Reading for Session 3	7
Attending Class Session 3	3
Exercise 3	1
Studying for Midterm Exam	15
Reading for Session 4	5
Attending Class Session 4	3
Reading for Session 5	9
Attending Class Session 5	3
Exercise 4	1
Reading for Session 6	7
Attending Class Session 6	3
Exercise 5	1
Studying for Final Exam	15
Attending Class Session 7	3
Writing Research Paper Proposal	8
Writing Research Paper	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>

**St. Edward's University**  
**New College**  
**PHIL 3313A Business Ethics**

**Research Paper and Research Paper Proposal Instructions**

**The Research Paper** Your research paper must meet the following requirements.

- Addresses a business ethics topic
- Includes all sections indicated in the outline provided below. Adding additional sections is fine.
- 8-10 pages long, not counting Works Cited page and Title page. Penalties may apply for going under the minimum or over the maximum by more than two pages.
- Typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and in proper MLA format. (If you are unfamiliar with MLA, consult a style manual such as Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*, the SEU Library Home Page, the Writing Center, or some other resource.)
- No section headings
- Includes a cover page with the paper's title, your name, the date, the course code and name, and "New College, St. Edward's University."
- Proofread and free of typos and errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and usage
- Employs an academic writing style free of contractions (like "don't"), slang, and other informal or casual elements
- Uses content at least four scholarly sources in significant ways
- Includes a Works Cited page in MLA format

Frequently asked question: What is a scholarly source?

- Peer-reviewed academic journals
- Books by scholars (PhDs, professors, scientists, other credentialed researchers) published by academic publishers (such as "University of \_\_\_\_\_ Press")
- Will have bibliography, footnotes, or endnotes
- The following are not considered scholarly: newspaper and magazine articles, government publications, articles in research guides (such as CQ Researcher), digests, articles published by think-tanks (such as CATO Institute, Heritage Foundation, etc.)
- See the St. Edward's Munday Library video "Finding and Recognizing Scholarly Articles" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m996taPj7vs>

In this paper, you are required to address a morally complex issue in business. Your topic might be about how to balance the rights of one party, such as the public or employees, with the rights of another, such as employers. Alternatively, you may want to discuss how the laudable moral guidelines (such as those which might protect the consumer) can be applied in "real life." Or you might consider some aspect of working life and investigate the various ways in which it can be better or worse (strong recognition of employee rights, flexible work arrangements, room for creativity, etc.).

Basic outline for the Research Paper

I. Introduction

- a. Describe the project to be carried out in your paper by stating your moral question and briefly explaining how you plan to address it.
- b. Provide any background information (such as statistics, historical facts, research findings) that are necessary for an intelligent reader to understand your moral question.
- c. Briefly state the two moral views on which you will focus.

II. Opponent's view

- a. State your opponent's view.
- b. Present, in your own words, your opponent's argument(s) in support of his/her view.

III. Counterargument against opponent

- a. Provide your own original counterargument to your opponent's argument.

IV. Your view

- a. State your view.
- b. Provide an argument or arguments in support of your view.

V. Counterargument(s) to your view

- a. Present at least one counterargument to your argument.

VI. Response

- a. Respond to the counterargument to your argument.

VII. Conclusion

**The Research Paper Proposal** is to be 1-2 pages in length using 12 pt. Times New Roman font and double-spacing. A penalty may apply for going well under the minimum or well over the maximum length. It is a written essay that: 1.) states the moral question you plan to address in your Research Paper, 2.) explains why this question is significant, and 3.) briefly sketches the two views (two opposing answers to the question) you will present in your paper. Your Research Paper Proposal must incorporate two scholarly resources. These resources must be cited properly in the text of your essay and listed in a works cited page attached to the end of your proposal.

**Recommendation** You are strongly encouraged to make use of the SEU resources available to you. In particular, if you are unable to come to campus frequently, the Online Writing Lab (OWL) is extremely helpful. Go to: [http://www.stedwards.edu/apss/aet/academic\\_enrichment/OWL.htm](http://www.stedwards.edu/apss/aet/academic_enrichment/OWL.htm) for further details. The Writing Center is also available to you and, again, very useful. For details and appointments go to: <http://www.stedwards.edu/writing/index.html>.