

# Business Ethics

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 2:30 – 4:30, and by appointment.

## I. Text

William Shaw and Vincent Barry, *Moral Issues in Business* (9<sup>th</sup> Edition)

## II. Class Goals

Ethics or moral philosophy covers a broad range of questions and issues. We might say, however, that two questions are central: “What is right and wrong?” and “How does one lead a good life?” Business ethics is a subset of ethics concerned with these questions in the context of business. Thus, it is concerned broadly with questions of right and wrong concerning particular business practices and it is concerned with the fundamental question, “How does one lead a good life as a business person?” The purpose of this class is to provide you with information, skills and an environment that will help you answer these questions.

## III. Grading

Basic concepts exam:	10%
Paper	30%
Community Service Project	30%
Final Exam:	30%

Basic concepts Exam: There will be a true/false exam over the first three chapters of *Moral Issues in Business* to test your understanding of basic concepts in ethical theory.

Paper: I will give you a prompt, and additional directions, later in the term. The paper will be two to three single-spaced pages.

Community Service: In short, your community service project requires 24 hours of community service and a weekly journal. You will be provided a list of agencies that you may choose from. Consider practical issues as well as your service preferences (e.g., can you get to the agency easily, do the hours they have available for service fit into your schedule?) Community service will be graded as follows: 60% attendance, 10% agency’s student evaluation, 30% journal. The journal will be graded by a very simple procedure. You should make a journal after each occasion you serve. Each journal entry will be graded out of three points. You will receive one point if you record verbatim what happened. You will receive two points if you record what happened and your feelings about what happened. You will receive three points if you record what happened, your feelings about it, and link your experiences back to a topic covered in the classroom.

Final Exam: The final exam will be 50% essay and 50% true/false. The essay questions will be provided before the test to encourage you to focus your study on the central issues and to encourage you to study with other students. I encourage group studying because students often learn philosophical ideas best through dialogue.

Participation: You are expected to come to class and participate in classroom discussion. Excellent participation may raise your final grade and poor participation (including excessive absences and a failure to participate in discussion) may lower your final grade. (Hint: not coming to class is far less insulting than using class as nap time).

## IV. Schedule:

- Sept 21: Introduction
- Sept 23: The Nature of Morality, pp. 1-35.
- Sept 26: pp. 35-54.
- Sept 28: Normative Theories of Ethics, pp. 55-90.
- Sept 30: Normative Theories of Ethics continued. **Turn in Partnership Agreement Form.**
- Oct 3: pp. 90-100.
- Oct 5: Justice and Economic Distribution, pp. 101-131.
- Oct 7: continued
- Oct 10: pp. 131-147.
- Oct 12: **Basic Concepts Exam**
- Oct 14: The Nature of Capitalism, 150-180.
- Oct 17: pp. 181-185. **Turn in first set of journal entries, and a photocopy of your Project Log.**
- Oct 19: pp. 186-203
- Oct 21: Corporations, pp. 204-244.
- Oct 24: pp. 244-263.
- Oct 26: pp. 263-274
- Oct 28: The Workplace (1): Basic Issues, pp. 275-307.
- Oct 31: pp. 308-324.
- Nov 2: The Workplace (2): Today's Issues, pp. 325-357.
- Nov 4: *Reading Period*
- Nov 7: pp. 358-386.
- Nov 9: Moral Choices Facing Employees, pp. 387-416.
- Nov 11: pp. 417-452.
- Nov 14: Job Discrimination, pp. 453-483.
- Nov 16: pp. 483-504.
- Nov 18: Consumers, pp. 506-545.
- Nov 21: pp. 546-566, **Paper Due.**
- Nov 23: *Thanksgiving*
- Nov 25: *Thanksgiving*
- Nov 28: The Environment, pp. 567-598.
- Nov 30: pp. 598-603.
- Dec 2: pp. 604-615. **Turn in completed set of journal entries, your completed Project Log, and your Agency Evaluation Form.**

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, Dec 6, 8:30 am.