

PHL 2230 08/ Spring 2010
Gavin Hall / Room 9

Dr. Michael Rende
Thurs. Eve 6:00 – 10:15

ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Course description

This course is open only to students admitted to the Intensive Evening Degree Program. It examines major ethical theories and explores the application of those theories to current business, moral, and social issues. Illustrative case studies are used as well as other group exercises to enable the student to identify justice issues involved in specific problem areas of the work environment.

Text

Fritz Allhoff and Anand J. Vaidya (eds.) Business in an Ethical Focus: An Anthology. Broadview Press; Toronto, Ontario. 2008.

Various handouts

Requirements

Attendance and participation (20%)
Oral presentations (20%)
Papers (60%)

Absence and Make-up Policy

Intensive courses have a maximum of 28 contact hours, as opposed to the traditional 45-48 contact hours in a 15-week course. Therefore, all in-class time is utilized. Program guidelines stipulate that missing more than one full class (or the equivalent) will result in an automatic drop from the course. If you miss a class, you should contact me immediately so that you can make up missed work.

Office Hours

My office is Campus Center 8. I will be available to students before and after class, and by appointment. You can contact me at mrende@ndnu.edu.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Plagiarism: Make sure you are familiar with the definition of plagiarism in NDNU's Code of Student Conduct. Plagiarized work will received an automatic F and may result in an F for the course.

Session One: Introduction to the course and to ethical theory

Readings: Anthology: Vaidya and Allhoff, "Volume Introduction", pp. 11-13; Vaidya, "Ill-founded Criticisms of Business Ethics", pp. 15-20; A. Sen, "Does Business Ethics Make Economic Sense?", pp. 20-28.

"A Free Market Economy", a selection from Business Ethics by G. Ahner - a handout

Writing Assignment: How do we choose a career path? "Should you pursue a remunerative career filled with the promise of wealth as a 24/7 workaholic in a global economy? Or, should you do something you might enjoy even though it seemed to imply dismal economic prospects?" (quoted by Ahner). What is the best job you've ever had; what's the worst; in your opinion what makes a job worthwhile? (3-4 page paper due session two)

Session Two: The End of Business

Readings: Anthology: A. Vaidya "Corporate Social Responsibility" pp. 63-65. Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits." pp 65-69. R. Edward Freeman, "A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation." pp. 69-78.

"A Better Way To Think About Business", by G. Ahner – a handout. (3-4 page paper due session three)

Writing Assignment: Why do we work so hard? Is it to simply make a living, or is it to make a life? What is the difference? What do we really want out of our professional and working lives?

Session Three: Natural Law and the objectivity of ethics

Readings: Excerpts from Aquinas' "Treatise on Law" - a handout.

Writing Assignment: Explain St. Thomas Aquinas' definition of law and the principles by which he classifies and divides the various types of laws. (3-4 pages due session four)

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Session Four: Kantian Ethics

Readings: Anthology: H. Salazar, “Kantian Business Ethics” pp.29- 34; Excerpts from Kant’s “Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals” - a handout.

Writing Assignment: What does Kant mean by the “categorical imperative”? Discuss his three distinct ways of formulating it. Give examples of the relevance of these formulations of Kant’s principle in your own life. (3-4 pages due session five)

Session Five: Virtue Ethics

Readings: Anthology: R. Glatz, “Aristotelian Virtue Ethics and the Recommendations of Morality” pp. 46 – 53; Excerpts from Aristotle’s “Nicomachean Ethics” - a handout

Writing Assignment: How does Aristotle define virtue? Give some examples of what he means by virtue and vice. How would you apply his analysis to an area of your own life; e.g. work, school, family, relationships? (3-4 pages due session six)

Session Six: Feminist Ethics

Readings: Anthology: R. Manning , “Caring as an Ethical Perspective” pp. 35-42; Wall, “The Definition of Sexual Harassment”; A. Superson, “A Feminist Definition of Sexual Harassment”, pp. 356 – 380. D. Doll, Case Study 5: “Sexual Harassment in the Workplace” , pp.458 - 59 (3-4 pages due session seven)

Writing Assignment: On issues and ideas relating to sex and gender. Discuss some of the issues facing women and men in the workplace and in their professional lives. (3-4 pages dues session seven)

Session Seven: The Human Good

Reading: The Structure of the Human Good