

Phil 330 Professional and Business Ethics A01
Fall 2024

Instructor: Peter Dietsch, PhD
Lectures: MR 2:30-3:50
Office hours: tbd
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Course description

Building on an overview of common approaches to ethics, this course explores the professional codes of ethics and their ethical foundations in four domains: medicine, law, politics, and business. A special emphasis is accorded to business ethics. In this context, the distinction between approaches that focus on the actions of individuals versus approaches that analyse the institutional structure in which individuals act will be a recurring theme in the course.

Course Website

Online materials will be made available via Uvic Brightspace. Access your customized Brightspace page by signing in to Uvic and clicking on Online Tools. You should see Brightspace as an option.

Texts

Core readings will be available as a course pack for sale at the UVic Bookstore.

Grading System

Percentage	Letter	Grade	Grade Definition
90-100	A+	9	An A+ is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
85-89	A	8	An A is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
80-84	A-	7	An A- is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A- offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
75-79	B+	6	A B+ is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a B+ offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
70-74	B	5	A B is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a B offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
65-69	B-	4	A B- is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a B- offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
60-64	C+	3	A C+ is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a C+ offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
55-59	C	2	A C is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a C offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
50-54	C-	1	A C- is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a C- offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
45-49	D+	0	A D+ is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a D+ offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
40-44	D	0	A D is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a D offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
35-39	D-	0	A D- is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of a D- offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
30-34	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
25-29	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
20-24	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
15-19	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
10-14	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
5-9	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.
0-4	F	0	An F is awarded to work which shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an F offers original insight and/or beyond conventional coverage of the topic. Normally achieved by a student who has demonstrated exceptional performance.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is up to the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade during the course that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the TA in a respectful, open-minded manner. If you are still not satisfied

Technology in Classroom

Some students require laptops or voice recognition apps for their learning strategies, so I do not prohibit their use in the classroom. However, studies demonstrate that multi-tasking reduces the performance of other nearby students. Therefore, I strongly discourage the use of computers in the classroom. Anyone caught on social media, internet surfing, etc. will be asked to leave and potentially subject to disciplinary action. Chat GPT is not permitted for this course.

Uvic Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response

Learn more about preventing sexualized violence by visiting www.uvic.ca/svo or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs advice, and/or support, please contact the Sexualized Violence Resource Office in EQHR, Sedgewick C119; email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca

Territory Acknowledgment

The University of Victoria is committed to acknowledging and respecting the Lekwungen peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and 6 É 1 (û SHRSOHV ZKRVH KLVWRULFDO UHODWLRQVKLSV. For information about support for indigenous students and efforts to foster reconciliation, visit the Uvic [Office of Indigenous Academic & Community Engagement](#)

Detailed course plan

PART I: Key concepts and professional ethics in different contexts

Week 1 (Sept 5): introduction

Week 2 (Sept 9 and 12) Three approaches to ethics

Compulsory reading

- f* James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 3rd edition, McGrawHill, 1999, chapters 7 and 13.
- f* Onora O'Neill, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics", in: Steven M. Cahn, *Exploring Ethics*, 6th edition, Oxford University Press, chapter 13.

Complementary literature

- f* Robert E. Goodin, "Utilitarianism as a public philosophy", in: Robert E. Goodin, *Utilitarianism as a public philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, pp. 3-27.
- f* James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 3rd edition, McGrawHill, 1999, chapter 9.
- f* Julia Driver, "Virtue ethics", in: Steven M. Cahn, *Exploring Ethics*, 6th edition, Oxford University Press, chapter 17.

Week 3 (Sept 16 and 19): Professional ethics in the medical context

Compulsory reading

- f* Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, excerpts from "Respect for Autonomy" (chapter 4), in: *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 6th edition, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp.99-121.

Complementary literature

- f* Anita Allen, "Privacy in health care", in: Bruce Jennings (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*, 4th edition, New York: MacMillan, pp.2064-73

- f Robert Young, "Informed consent and patient autonomy", in: H. Kuhse and P. Singer (eds.), *A Companion to Bioethics*, Blackwell Publishing, 2001, pp.441-51.
- f Canadian Medical Association's Code of Ethics and Professionalism, <https://policybase.cma.ca/media/PolicyPDF/POB39.pdf>

Week 4 (Sept 23 and 26): Business ethics as an instance of adversarial ethics

Compulsory reading

- f Joseph Heath, "An adversarial ethic for business: Or when to summit the stakeholder" *Journal of Business Ethics* 72/4 (2007): 359-74.

Complementary literature

- f Joseph Heath, Jeffrey Moriarty and Wayne Norman, "Business ethics and (or as) political philosophy", *Business Ethics Quarterly* 10/3 (2010): 427-52.
- f PierreYves Néron and Wayne Norman, "Citizenship, Inc. Do We Really Want Businesses to Be Good Corporate Citizens?" *Business Ethics Quarterly* (2008): 1-26.

PART II: Understanding markets and the construct of the firm

Week 5 (Oct 3 and 7) Markets and the market failure approach to business ethics

Compulsory reading

- f Joseph Heath, "A Market Failures Approach to Business Ethics", in: Bernard Hodgson (ed.), *The Invisible Hand and the Common Good*, Heidelberg: Springer, 2004, pp. 69-89.

Complementary literature

- f Allen E. Buchanan, *Ethics, Efficiency, and the Market*, Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Allanheld, 1985.
- f Ronald H. Coase, "The problem of social cost", *Journal of Law and Economics* 3 (1960): 1-44.

Oct 10: mid-term exam

Week 6 (Oct 17 and 21): The firm, its purpose, rights and duties

Compulsory reading

- f David Ciepley, "Beyond Public and Private: Toward a Political Theory of the Corporation", *American Political Science Review* 107/1 (2013): 139-58.

Complementary literature

- f Ronald H. Coase, "The nature of the firm", *Economica* 4/16 (1937): 386-405.
- f Oliver E. Williamson, "The Economics of Organization: The Transaction Cost Approach", *American Journal of Sociology* 87/3 (1981): 548-77.
- f Nien-Hê Hsieh, Marco Meyer, David Rodin, and Jens Van 't Klooster, "The social purpose of corporations", *Journal of the British Academy* 11 (2011), 49-73.

Week 7 (Oct 24): Shareholder primacy versus the stakeholder approach

Compulsory reading

- f R. Edward Freeman, "A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation", in: Fritz Allhoff and Anand Vaidya (eds.), *Business in Ethical Focus: An Anthology*, Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2008, pp.69-78.
- f Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits," *New York Times Magazine* (Sept. 13, 1970).

Complementary literature

- f* Oliver Hart and Luigi Zingales, "Companies Should Maximize Shareholder Welfare Not Market Value", *Journal of Law, Finance, and Accounting* 2 (2017): 247-74.
- f* Joseph Heath, "Business Ethics without Stakeholders", *Business Ethics Quarterly* 16/4 (2006): 533-57.
- f* David Rodin, "What's Wrong with Business Ethics?", *International Social Science Journal*, vol. 57, issue 185 (2005): 561-71.

Week 8 (Oct 28 and 31): The firm and the state

Compulsory reading

- f* Mary Lyn Stoll, "Corporate Rights to Free Speech?", *Journal of Business Ethics* vol.58, no.1/3 (2005): 269-79.
- f* J. Brooke Hamilton and David Hoff, "Ethical Standards for Business Lobbying: Some Practical Suggestions", *Business Ethics Quarterly* 7/1 (1997): 117-29.

Complementary literature

- f* Daniel T. Ostas, "The Law and Ethics of K Street: Lobbying, the First Amendment, and the Duty to Create Just Laws", *Business Ethics Quarterly* (2007): 336-63.
- f* Leonard J. Weber, "Citizenship and Democracy: The Ethics of Corporate Lobbying", *Business Ethics Quarterly* 6/2 (1996) 253-259.

PART III: Financial aspects of the firm

Week 9 (Nov 4 and 7): Corporate social responsibility and tax avoidance

Compulsory reading

- f* Peter Dietsch, "Asking the Fox to Guard the Henhouse: The Tax Planning Industry and Corporate Social Responsibility", *Ethical Perspectives* 11/3 (2011): 341-54.
- f* Peter Dietsch, "The case for regulating tax competition" in: Conrad Heilmann & Julian Reiss (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Economics*, Routledge, 494-503.

Complementary literature

- f* Allison Christians, "Avoidance, Evasion, and Taxpayer Morality", *Washington University Journal of Law and Policy* 44 (2014): 39ff.
- f* Liam Murphy and Thomas Nagel, *The Myth of Ownership: Taxes and Justice* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, chapter 2.
- f* Adam Kern, "Illusions of Justice in International Taxation", *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 48/2 (2020): 151-84.

Week 10 (14 and 18): Socially and environmentally responsible investment

Compulsory reading

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f Avery Kolers, "Ethical investing: the permissibility of participation," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 9 (2001), 435-52.

PART IV: Firms and workers