

BMGT 650

Business Ethics

Content

BMGT 650 is a class designed to acquaint students with the ethical implications of business decisions, policy, strategy and operations. It will be an interactive discussion class that will rely heavily on the ideas and participation of students. The learning goals for this class include:

1. Developing a system of ethics that will form the foundation for future ethical practices in business.
2. Analyzing specific contemporary issues in business for their ethical implications and content.
3. Challenging conventional thinking about ethics by introducing broad-based ethical principles and systems to enlighten and inform ethical thinking.

Required Material

Sandel, Michael J (2009). Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Thornton, Linda Fisher (2013) 7 Lenses: Learning the Principles and Practices of Ethical Leadership, Richmond, VA: Leading in Context LLC

Supplemental Materials

Michael Sandel Justice Course: <http://justiceharvard.org/justicecourse/>

Kane, Robert H. (1999) The Quest for Meaning: Value, Ethics and the Modern Experience. Great Courses. PDF on Moodle.

The Wall Street Journal. Students are required to have a subscription or access to the WSJ to use during the class.

The books have not been ordered for the class through the UC Bookstore since they are a trade publication. They are available to order through many other outlets online.

Course Process and Delivery

The course meetings will consist of reading specific chapters in *Justice*, *7 Lenses* and in discussing contemporary issues through WSJ articles that have ethical implications.

Week 1 (Nov. 5): Overview of Ethics and Moral Theory

Initial Assignment due in class the first day. Write a paragraph describing a major issue in business ethics that you would like to resolve during class. I will ask you to read yours the first class meeting. Here is mine: A recent WSJ article reported on recently published research done at the University of Nevada that showed that university students learned better from professors they thought were attractive. They just did not like them better; they actually learn more from these perceived more attractive professors. Question: Should we start using perceived attractiveness as a criterion for hiring new professors? Here is the link to the article: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/yes-students-do-learn-more-from-attractive-teachers-1472223974>

Reading: Chapter 1 in Sandel (Watch the Sandel Video on chapter 1.)
Reading: Chapters 1-3 of the Quest for Meaning
Reading: Skim through the 7-Lenses Book so you know what they are.

NOVEMBER 12: University Observance of Veteran's Day

Week 2 (Nov. 19): Justice Chapter 2: The Greatest Happiness Principle/Utilitarianism and Welfare Theories of Ethics
Watch Lectures 2 and 3

**I KNOW, MBA CLASSES DO NOT MEET DURING THANKSGIVING WEEK.
BUT, I AM NOT GOING TO LOSE 20% OF OUR CLASS TIME BECAUSE
OF A MONDAY HOLLIDAY. IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND IN PERSON OR
SYNCHRONOUSLY ON ZOOM, YOU CAN WATCH THE RECORDING.**

Assignment Due: Write a 1-page paper on the case What Should Mary Do?

Week 3 (Nov. 26): Justice Chapter 3: Do We Own Ourselves, Libertarianism and Freedom Theories of Ethics.
Justice Chapter 4: Hired Help/Markets and Morals
Watch Lectures 5 and 6

Week 4 (Dec. 3): Justice Chapter 5: What Matters is the Motive/Immanuel Kant and Virtue Theories of Ethics.
Watch Lectures 11, 12, and 13

Week 5 (Dec. 10): Justice Chapter 6: The Case for Equality/John Rawls and the Ethical Construction of Societal Rules.
Read the Evans and Evans article noting how similar this approach is to the 7-Lenses book.
Watch Lectures 14, 15, and 16

Second Paper Due: Ethical analysis of a contemporary issue.

Course Assessment

In addition to the initial assignment, students will write a paragraph on a significant ethical issue and two short papers (two word-processed double-spaced pages maximum) due in week two and in week five. The first paper will be an analysis of the case What Should Mary Do? The second paper will be an analysis of a recent WSJ article or other contemporary business issues in the light of the readings. The paper must take a clear position on the issue as enlightened by the reading and class discussion. These papers are to be short and to the point and actually say something coherent. I will look for analysis from the perspective of the Sandel and Thornton books.

Students who are attending the face-to-face sessions are to hand their papers in hard copy with their names on them. Students who are connecting through Zoom, either synchronously or asynchronously, are to email me their papers using the following conventions: The assignment description (e.g. Ethical Issue, What Should Mary Do, Final Ethics Paper) should be in the subject line of the email. The actual file attachment should be named with your last name and the assignment (e.g. Evans Ethical Issue, Evans What Should Mary Do, Evans Final Ethics Paper). Your name should also be on the actual paper.