

PHI334-001: Business Ethics | Fall 2023

General Course Information

When: MWF 10am to 10:50am

Where: Don and Cathy Jacobs Science Building, Room 203

Credit Hours: 3

Instructor: Mykyta Storozhenko

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Office Location: 1402 Patterson Office Tower

Office Phone Number: 8592571862

Office Hours: 12pm to 1pm.

Course Description

This course is designed to explore the intricate relationship between business and ethical living. It centers on the crucial question of how to engage in business while maintaining a commitment to living a good life.

We begin by examining the fundamental concepts of business and ethics, and understanding why the intersection of these two realms is often complex. Students will be guided to recognize that business today is individualized, transcending traditional boundaries with commerce and labor. The course posits that in the modern world, individuals must see themselves as capital, utilizing all potential abilities towards revenue generation.

A key component of the course involves developing a framework to view ourselves as active agents within the network of business. This leads to an essential inquiry: why does participation in business necessitate an exploration of ethical life? What challenges do we face today as entrepreneurs of the self in striving for the good life?

The course emphasizes the communal aspect of commerce, where one becomes part of a network of diverse relationships. Such connections place one's actions within a moral framework. Through careful examination and guided discussions, students will explore how they can actively engage in business with others while adhering to ethical principles.

By the end of this course, participants should gain a comprehensive understanding of how to reconcile the demands of commerce with the aspirations for ethical living. It offers an in-depth exploration of contemporary theories and practical approaches, providing insights that are applicable to both business practice and personal development.

Weeks 1-2: We set the stage with an introduction to the course, followed by a foundational understanding of business, ranging from its basic definition to the transition from old commerce models to industrialization.

Weeks 3-4: These weeks explore the shift from industrial business to neoliberalism, culminating in an examination of how business and the self interact under neoliberal principles.

Weeks 5-6: The focus shifts to the basics of ethics, exploring major ethical frameworks such as utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics. Discussions will also include alternative perspectives from Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, aiming for a holistic understanding of ethics and morality.

Weeks 7-8: Mid-course, we delve into contemporary topics such as internet entrepreneurship (apps, drop shipping, content creation), connecting these with broader themes of employment and wage structures.

Weeks 9-11: These weeks cover various facets of employment, from job hopping to office community, followed by an intriguing exploration of what is for sale in the modern market, including organs, drugs, and bodies.

Weeks 12-13: We engage in a critical analysis of political commerce, discussing state-commerce collusion, overseas interests, domestic interests, and coups. This section culminates in the third examination.

Weeks 14-15: After a break, the course resumes with an exploration of artificial intelligence, discussing its definition, transitory commerce, and how it may shape new forms of commerce.

Week 16: The final week is devoted to a comprehensive review, leading up to the final exam.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Understand the evolution of business from traditional commerce to contemporary forms.
2. Analyze the role of the self in modern business practices.
3. Apply various ethical theories to real-world business scenarios.
4. Critically evaluate contemporary business trends, including internet entrepreneurship and political commerce.
5. Explore the impact of artificial intelligence on commerce and envision future trends.

This course offers a comprehensive and multifaceted examination of business and ethics, providing students with valuable insights and tools that are applicable to both their professional careers and personal lives.

Required Materials

All readings will be posted on canvas. They will be organized by weeks. To see what you need to read, check which readings are assigned for which week. While reading is important, you will fail this class if you do not come to lectures, since lectures are where you will learn most of the content, with reading as reference.

Technology Information and Requirements:

You will need an electronic device for this class. Please see below for minimum requirements.

Technology Requirements: minimum technical requirements for UK courses and suggested hardware, software, and internet connection are available at [http:// www.uky.edu/its/student-hardware-software-guidelines](http://www.uky.edu/its/student-hardware-software-guidelines) Technical Support: for account help, contact <http://www.uky.edu/UKIT> or send email 218help@uky.edu or call 859-218-HELP (4357).

Attendance, Class Format, Exams, Technology, AI, and Privacy Policies

Attendance: attendance will be taken every week as it is part of your grade (20% of final grade is based on attendance). If you miss class due to an excused reason as defined by the university (see Academic Policy Statements part of this syllabus) you will not be penalized. However, for every class you miss otherwise, a fifth of your attendance grade will be deducted. This means that after five missed classes, you will lack 20% of your final grade, meaning that at best you could get an 80% or a B in this class. As such, I highly recommend not missing class unless you have an excused reason.

Class Format: this is an in person class, and there is no zoom or online component. You have to be here for the class in person. There will be no recordings of the class available to you either.

Exams: the exams are in person. Unless you have a note from the DRC, I expect you to be there in person to take the exam. If you miss the exam, you get a zero, unless you have a university approved excuse as to why you missed the exam. See the relevant syllabus section for excused absences.

Technology Policy: you are expected to have a device with you in class as per minimum tech requirements UK outlines, and you are expected to have it with you in class every time.

AI: you may use AI to assist you in this course, and on exams. I work on artificial intelligence in the course of my research and I understand the value it provides. This does not mean you can just put your questions in and get responses that you copy and paste—this I forbid in this class. But for general back and forth, and getting help on ideas, you are more than welcome to use an LLM of your choice. If you need advice on how to make best use of LLMs, please consult me. **You are not permitted to copy and paste the responses the AI generates for you. Rather, you can use it to help you think through issues.**

Privacy Policy: Video and audio recordings are not permitted during the class unless the student has received prior permission from the Professors. If permission is granted, recording of other students is prohibited. Any distribution of recordings is also prohibited. Students with specific recording accommodations approved by the Disability Resource Center should present their official documentation to the professor. All content for this course, including handouts, assignments, and powerpoint lectures are the intellectual property of the instructors and cannot be reproduced, sold, or used for any purpose other than educational work in this class without prior permission from the professor.

Assignments and Grading

A:100-90; B:89-80; C:79-70; D:69-60; F:59-0

You will have three exams, a final exam, and of course your attendance score as components of your final grade.

Attendance (20 points, 20%): you are required to attend the class. If you miss class, and the excuse is covered under university policy for excused absences, then you will not be penalized. However, as per university policies, you have to notify me ahead of time or, if it is an emergency, notify me after the fact, along with appropriate documentation. Otherwise, for every unexcused absence, I will deduct 4 points from your total attendance score. If you miss class five times, your attendance score will become 0 or 0% of your final grade. I highly recommend that you do not miss class.

Exam One (20 points, 20%): your first exam will be focused on our philosophical analysis of business from antiquity to today. It will be in class and in an essay format. There will be several questions that I expect you to answer. The exam will be due at the end of the day, meaning that you begin in class, ask questions if you have any, and then, if you are not done, you are permitted to finish at home. All exams, including this one, will be submitted on canvas.

Exam Two (20 points, 20%): your second exam will focus on ethics as a field. It will take place after we cover major ethical theories and some criticisms of them from other philosophers. Much like the first exam, this exam will be in person and follow the same format.

Exam Three (20 points, 20%): your third exam is on varied topics that we will cover when combining the history of business and commerce with ethical theories. Similarly to exams one and two, it will be an essay, but it will be more open ended, and more of your own thoughts will be requested. Aside from that, the format is the same.

Final Exam (20 points, 20%): your final exam will be a holistic cumulative exam where you will be asked to reflect on the entirety of the content covered in class. Unlike other exams, it will not be in person. Rather, it will be an essay that you will submit on canvas by **1pm Wednesday, December 13.**

Any exams, including the final, that are submitted late will count as a zero, unless you have an excused reason in accordance with university policy.

Midterm: for undergraduates, midterm grades will be posted in myUK by the deadline established by the University Senate and published in the Academic Calendar, which can be found here: <http://www.uky.edu/registrar/content/academic-calendar>

Late and Missing Assignments: late or missing work, including exams, will not be accepted, unless it is due to an excused absence or any other sanctioned reason as defined under Academic Policy Statements.

Policy on Return of Assignment: I will return your work within a week, sans the final exam.

A Note Concerning Assignment Modification: I reserve the right to modify, within reason and with reasonable notice, any of the assignments, or any component thereof, for this course.

Please see the table on the next page for a concise breakdown of the grading schema for this class.

Assignment	Percent / Point of Final
Attendance	20 points / 20%
Exam 1	20 points / 20%
Exam 2	20 points / 20%
Exam 3	20 points / 20%
Final Exam	20 points / 20%
TOTAL	100 points / 100%

As you can see, points and percentages align, making it easier for you and I both to understand.

A Note Concerning Plagiarism

Plagiarism, cheating, and misuse of academic records will not be tolerated. For definition of plagiarism, cheating, and misuse of academic records, see the **Academic Offenses Rules for Undergraduate and Graduate Students** section of the syllabus. The first offense will result in a grade of zero for the assignment though the instructor may allow for a resubmission. The second offense may result in a meeting with the instructor, which may involve the department chair, and which may result in a grade of 'F' for the course or other potential penalty. Depending on the circumstances, under the university wide rules, further consequences may

Academic Policy Statements

Please read over the whole of academic policy statements, which can be found here: <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/acadpolicy>

Academic Offenses Rules for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Please familiarize yourself with the definitions of plagiarism, cheating, and misuse of academic records here: <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/ao>

Syllabus Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Please view the university approved statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as how it affects you, here: <https://www.uky.edu/universitysenate/syllabus-dei>

Course Copyright: All original instructor-provided content for this course, which may include handouts, assignments, and lectures, is the intellectual property of the instructor(s). Students enrolled in the course this academic term may use the original instructor-provided content for their learning and completion of course requirements this term, but such content must not be reproduced or sold. Students enrolled in the course this academic term are hereby granted permission to use original instructor provided content for reasonable educational and professional purposes extending beyond this course and term, such as studying for a comprehensive or qualifying examination in a degree program, preparing for a professional or certification examination, or to assist in fulfilling responsibilities at a job or internship; other uses of original instructor-provided content require written permission from the instructor(s) in advance.

Schedule: A Brief Note Concerning Modification of Schedule: I reserve the right to modify the schedule, or any part thereof, within reason and with reasonable notice.

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1 – Aug 21	Syllabus	Introductions	Course Overview
2 – Aug 28	What is Business?	Old Model of Commerce	Transition to Industry
3 – Sep 4	Labor Day	Industrial Business	Transition to Neoliberalism
4 – Sep 11	Business and Self under Neoliberalism	Discussion of Business and Commerce	Exam 1
5 – Sep 18	Basics of Ethics	Utilitarianism / Deontology	Virtue Ethics
6 – Sep 25	Discussion of Major Ethical Frameworks	Alternative Perspectives to Ethics: Nietzsche and Schopenhauer	Discussion of Ethics and Morality as a Whole
7 – Oct 2	Exam 2	Internet Entrepreneurship: Apps	Internet Entrepreneurship: Drop Shipping
8 – Oct 9	Internet Entrepreneurship: Content Creation	Discussion of Internet Entrepreneurship	Employment: Wage
9 – Oct 16	Employment: Job Hopping	Employment: Office Community	No Class
10 – Oct 23	Fall Break	Fall Break	Discussion of Employment
11 – Oct 30	What is for Sale? : Organs	What is for Sale? : Drugs	What is for Sale? : Bodies
12 – Nov 6	Discussion of What is for Sale.	Political Commerce: State-Commerce Collusion	Political Commerce: Overseas Interests and Coups
13 – Nov 13	Political Commerce: Domestic Interests	Discussion of Political Commerce	Exam 3
14 – Nov 20	No Class	Thanksgiving Break	Thanksgiving Break
15 – Nov 27	Artificial Intelligence: What It Is	Artificial Intelligence: Transitory Commerce	Artificial Intelligence: Toward a New Commerce
16 – Dec 4	Final Exam Review	Classes End	