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BGEN 220E.50: Business Ethics and Social Responsibility

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The University of Montana
School of Business
Department of Management and Marketing

SYLLABUS: BGEN220E - AUTUMN 2017
BUSINESS ETHICS AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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SYLLABUS: BGEN220E - autumn 2017

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BASIC INFORMATION

- **Course Title:** Business Ethics and Social Responsibility
- **Credit hours:** 3 credits
- **Course designation:** BGEN220E
- **Professor:** Rob Walsh, Ph.D.
- **Semester:** fall 2017
- **Section/CRN#:** 50 / 73819
- **Office:** GBB 337
- **Office Hours:** M,T,W,TH 12:30 – 1:15 (and by appt./online)
- **Phone:** 243-6679 (office)
- **Email:** rob.walsh@business.umt.edu (Please specify your Section # when emailing)
- **Class meeting times/Room:** N/A

TEXTS

1. *BUSINESS ETHICS PRACTICE—Perspectives*, R.D. Walsh, Ph.D. (Available FREE on the Moodle website.)
2. *BUSINESS ETHICS PRACTICE—Topics*, R.D. Walsh, Ph.D. (Available FREE on the Moodle website.)

COURSE OVERVIEW

1. PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES

Since moral theory naturally informs moral judgment and consequent actions, we will begin our course of Business Ethics with an overview of various classical theories from the history of Moral Philosophy, including Virtue Ethics, Self-actualization theory, Duty Ethics, Utilitarianism, Social Contract theory, Distributive Justice theory, Existentialism, Phenomenology, Cosmopolitanism, Human Rights, etc., along with some objections to the very possibility of there being any genuine rational foundation for moral judgments at all, such as is found in Skepticism, Emotivism, Relativism, and Absolutism.

We will also investigate various moral perspectives derived from empirical research being done in Developmental, Social, and Cognitive Moral Psychology (e.g., the moral stage theory of Lawrence Kohlberg) as well as other sciences such as Paleontology and Neuroscience. In short, moral operations will be considered from cognitive, affective, rational and non-rational perspectives, and a phenomenological method for upgrading moral consciousness will be presented and practiced. Finally, you will see how these traditional moral philosophical and psychological theories provide an understanding for how you actually go about making moral judgments, how you can get better at this, and why you should.

You will be encouraged to distinguish, clarify, and develop your own personal ethical theoretical orientation—something that you already have in place right now and utilize every day, many times a day, often unconsciously. You will learn to see your own personal moral ‘system’ more clearly, to refine it as you see fit and as you choose based on our studies. You will come to understand how your theoretical moral orientation controls the everyday moral judgments you make and the actions you take—and what difference this makes to you ultimately insofar as you desire to be successful at living the best possible life personally and professionally.

2. CASE ANALYSIS/JUDGMENTS

We will study and evaluate numerous critical moral issues and/or issue contexts arising in the business world today, such as the true purpose of capitalistic business, whistleblowing, social media in the workplace, discrimination against women and other groups, advertising to children, sex on the job, sweatshops, etc., with a special emphasis this semester on moral issues arising in the global workplace. Issues will be presented generally in a pro and con format, using two or more texts drawn from recent literature, each presenting a different moral perspective on the issue. You will read, analyze, reflect upon, carefully evaluate, and judge a number of these moral issues and cases.

A conscious effort has been made to incorporate a multicultural, censorship-free and gender-sensitive ethical perspective into the structure of this course.

3. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

There is a special emphasis in this course on the relationship between the study of moral philosophical principles and moral psychological theories, on the one hand, and the actual practice of living an ethical life on the other, as this is reflected in your everyday, individual personal and professional growth and development. As Aristotle and other moralists have remarked: What good is it to study Ethics if you do not put this theoretical knowledge into practice in your life? Our power of moral judgment—what I think of as your personal moral power—is a kind of mental muscle, and, like

all muscles, it develops through exercise. Hence, the title of the text for this course: *Business Ethics Practice*. With an emphasis on *practice*.

MOODLE

There is a Moodle web site for this course. You are expected to have taken the Moodle tutorial and be able to log onto the class web site on a daily basis. This is an important course component.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will gain a working knowledge of various mainstream ethical theories including Virtue Ethics, Deontology, Utilitarianism, Existentialism, Phenomenology, Cosmopolitanism, Pragmatism, Distributive Justice, etc., focusing on applying the principles of these theories to real-world business situations.
2. Students will learn to see the connection between best business practices and the implementation of social responsibility through the study of alternative business models.
3. Students will learn to see and evaluate various aspects of the business world from an ethical and socially responsible perspective.
4. Students will learn how to effectively read, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate numerous specific issues involving Business Ethics questions.
5. Students will learn to see the connection between best business practices and the roots of social responsibility through the exploration of various case studies of national and international firms from an ethical perspective.
6. Students will learn to make better moral judgments in their personal and professional lives by successfully advancing from pre-conventional and conventional sources of moral judgment to making moral judgments based on moral principles in the service of maximizing both personal welfare and social responsibility.
7. Students will become more emotionally intelligent and will be able to perceive, reason, understand, and manage emotions better and will clearly recognize the connection between emotional reactions and moral judgment.

MY EXPECTATIONS

I have high goals and expectations for myself as a professor. I also have high expectations for you as a student in this course. I expect that you will read the text, attend all classes and do all the writing and research assignments by the due dates. I expect that you will spend a minimum of one hour of philosophical focus time outside of class—reading, writing, talking, thinking—for every hour of focused classroom time. I expect that you will participate in class by taking notes, asking questions, contributing to discussions, and participating in class interactive assignments. I expect that you will actively work with the Moodle online interactive feature of this course. Finally, I expect that your

efforts will pay off and that you will successfully achieve a real boost to your intellectual and moral musculature.

MY COMMITMENT TO YOU

I consider it an honor and privilege to be able to engage in philosophical inquiry with you this semester. I promise you that I will do my very best to make it worthwhile for you to come to every class. Regarding the necessity to grade your work, I promise you that I will evaluate your work fairly, impartially, and to the best of my professional ability without prejudice. I hope that you enjoy this course, that you do well, and that you benefit from it personally. I hope the same for myself. Ultimately, as I am sure you already realize, the benefit you get out of your philosophical study of Ethics—as with any endeavor—will be proportionate to the amount of effort you put into it. The same goes for me. I always have more to learn. I look forward to working with you in this collaborative educational effort.



I believe that what you learn in this course will be of real, practical value to you for the rest of your life and well-worth the investment of your time and effort now.

RDW



GRADING

POSSIBLE POINTS

Two (2) Exams (Mid-term and Final, 100 points each) = 200 points

See Volunteer Option for EXAM 3 below.

Please note: If you do not take an online EXAM during the allotted time period, you must make an appointment with me and take a hand-written or oral make-up exam within a week of the exam. Make-up exams will be different than regular exams. A penalty of 5 points will apply off the top without a bona fide excuse in writing.

Ten (10 Assignments (10 points each) = 100 points

N.B. Late posts <= 3 days -2 points; later -5 points

Ten (10) ASSESSMENT QUIZZES (10 points each) = 100 points

N.B. Late posts <= 3 days -2 points; later -5 points

Final Project = 100 points

Details forthcoming soon....

Total number of possible course points = 500 pts.

FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

Your final numerical grade, based on the 100 point scale below, will be determined by adding together all of the points you earn during the course and dividing by 5. Final grades with fractions .5 or less will be rounded down and .6 and over will be rounded up to next whole number; no exceptions. (See Rounding Scale below.)

COMPUTE YOUR GRADE ANYTIME

Here is how to compute your grade at any point in the course: 1. Add up the total points that have been offered so far. 2. Add up the total points you have earned so far. Divide the total number of points you have earned so far by the total number of points offered so far. 3. Multiply result by 100 and consult the scale below. E.g., 311 points earned / 350 points offered = 0.888 x 100 = 88.8 = B+ at that point.

GRADING SCALES

	100 Point Scale	Rounding 100 pt. Scale	500 pt. Scale
A	100-93	100-92.6	500 - 463
A-	92-90	92.5-89.6	462 - 448
B+	89-87	89.5-86.6	447 - 433
B	86-83	86.5-82.6	432 - 413
B-	82-80	82.5 - 79.6	412 - 398
C+	79-77	79.5 - 76.6	397 - 383
C	76-73	76.5 - 72.6	382 - 363
C-	72-70	72.5 - 69.6	362 - 348
D+	69-67	69.5 - 66.6	347 - 333
D	66-63	66.5 - 62.6	332 - 313
D-	62-60	62.5 - 59.6	312 - 298
F	59	59.5	297

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

All students tacitly agree—by virtue of their participation—to practice academic honesty as stated in the Honor Code for this course. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University, including expulsion from the course. All students need to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The [Student Code of Conduct](http://www.umt.edu/vpesa/Dean) is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/vpesa/Dean>. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

CLASS PROTOCOL

Leaving classroom during class: Students leaving or coming into the classroom while class is in session may be disturbing to the learning environment of the whole class. Out of fairness to everyone, therefore, please adhere to the following protocol: arrive early and be prepared to remain in the classroom for the entire class period once class has started. If you know in advance that you must leave the classroom during class for a bona fide reason, please notify me before class that you will be doing so. Thank you.

PC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM

Computers, pads, smartphones, etc. are permitted in class for the sole purpose of taking notes, connecting with the Moodle website for the course, or researching material clearly connected with class. Connecting to the internet during class for any reason beyond the immediate scope of the course (or legitimate emergency) is strictly prohibited.

GENERAL COMPORTMENT

Side-remarks, private jokes, guffawing, side-conversations, cell phones ringing, etc. in class can disturb the classroom learning environment that *every student has a right to*. Please be respectful.

HONOR CODE

The Honor Code is a centrally important feature of this course. Please read it, and, if you agree with the terms and conditions, do nothing further. If you do not agree with the terms, please see me before continuing with the course. Thank you for your cooperation and collaboration in creating a successful learning environment for all.

DAILY CLASS TOPICS, ASSIGNMENTS & EXAM/QUIZ SCHEDULE

The daily topic and exam schedule—as well as all texts to be read—are available in the most up-to-date mode on the Moodle website for this course. Please check Moodle as the final arbiter of any discrepancies.

READING AND EXAM SCHEDULE

August 28 - September 3

Thursday August 31 ... First scheduled class meeting

September 4 - September 10

Monday, September 4 - Labor Day holiday - NO CLASS

Tuesday, September 5 - NO CLASS

W-TH: Course introduction; syllabus; course text

September 11 - September 17

M-T: BEP, INTRODUCTION & CHAPTER 1. MORAL PHILOSOPHY

W-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 2. MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

September 18 - September 24

M-T: BEP, CHAPTER 3. MORAL SUBJECTIVITY

W-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 4. PERSONAL MORAL DEVELOPMENT

September 25 - October 1

M-T: BEP, CHAPTER 5. RATIONAL MORAL DECISION MAKING

W-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 6. THE GOOD SOCIETY

October 2 - October 8

M-T: BEP, CHAPTER 7. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE OTHER

W-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 8. STOICISM AND PERSONAL MORAL POWER

October 9 - October 15

M-T: BEP, CHAPTER 9. THE LIMITS OF PERSONAL MORAL POWER

W-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 10. CAPITALISM, SOCIALISM, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

October 16 - October 22

M-W: BEP, CHAPTER 11. CREATING SHARED VALUE

T-TH: BEP, CHAPTER 12. CONSCIOUS CAPITALISM AND CAPITALISTS

October 23 - October 29

M-T: IN-CLASS REVIEW FOR MID-TERM EXAM

W-TH: **MID-TERM EXAM** ('TAKE-HOME' online) ***NO CLASS***

October 30 - November 5

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 1. GENDER DIVERSITY & BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE. WHERE ARE WE?

W-TH: BEP, TOPIC 3. SHOULD QUOTAS FOR WOMEN ON BOARDS BE MANDATED BY LAW?

November 6 - November 12

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 6. TARGETING CHILDREN AS CONSUMERS: IS IT ETHICAL?

W-TH: No Classes!! Happy Thanksgiving!

November 13 - November 19

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 4. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ETHICS: WHO IS IN CHARGE?

W-TH: BEP, TOPIC 5. IS BIG DATA UNDERMINING PERSONAL MORAL POWER?

November 20 - November 26

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 7. DOES BLOWING THE WHISTLE VIOLATE COMPANY LOYALTY?

W-TH: BEP, TOPIC 9. ARE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS FREE OF MORAL DUTY?

November 27 - December 3

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 10. GLOBAL JUSTICE: DO MULTINATIONALS HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY?

W-TH: BEP, TOPIC 11. FOOD FIGHT: AGRIBUSINESS AND ARTISANAL FARMING. COMMON GROUND?

December 4 - December 10

M-T: BEP, TOPIC 12. LACK OF GLOBAL EXTRACTION ETHICS. WHO WINS? WHO LOSES? WHO CARES?

W-TH: REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM; VOLUNTEER PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS DUE

December 11 - December 17

M-T: **FINAL EXAM** (Take-home online) DUE FRIDAY DECEMBER 15th @ 11 PM ***No Classes***

Disability Services: This course is accessible to and usable by students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the modification process. For more information, contact Disability Services at 406-243-2243 in Lommasson Center 154.

HONOR CODE

Here is the “3R” Honor Code for this course

RESPECT, REASONABLENESS, RESPONSIBILITY

*The 3-R Pledge**

I accept this Honor Code and all of the terms, requirements, and conditions for achieving success in this course as stated in the Syllabus.

I agree to work to the best of my ability in this class and realize that the benefit I get from this class will be proportionate to the effort that I put into it.

I agree to honestly do the work that is assigned; to complete assignments by the due date; to cooperate with other students in group activities; to actively participate in and contribute to the class; and to act honorably at all times.

I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of this Honor Code and understand that it is an integral part of this course *Business Ethics & Social Responsibility*.

*Your signature is tacitly inscribed on this document by virtue of your continued participation in the course. Thank you!

Signature

Date

SERVICE LEARNING OPTION FOR EXAM 3

WANT TO SKIP EXAM 3? HERE'S HOW...

Many would agree that donating some portion of your income, wealth, or time to help those in need (equal to about 1-10% of your annual gross income), is a moral duty for every capable member of society. Therefore, in conjunction with our study of philanthropy and other forms of charitable giving as an integral part of living the best possible life, you may choose to engage in a voluntary service learning project in lieu of taking EXAM 3. Here is how it works:

1. Locate a bona fide Missoula organization that is in need of volunteers. There are many in the Missoula community. Missoula has a greater number of non-profit organizations per capita than any other city in the U.S., so there are plenty of volunteer possibilities. Some local organizations looking for volunteers are listed below. UM's Office of Civic Engagement can help you with this. Call 243-5531
2. Engage in a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer service with a local civic organization of your choice. Your volunteer position may extend beyond the semester, but a minimum of 20 hours must be completed starting now and before the last day of class.
3. Write up a 3-5 page report or produce a creative video of your volunteer experience to be posted on Moodle. At a minimum, your written report or video will include brief descriptions or clear depictions of the following points:
 - the nature of the volunteer activity, name of organization, contact person;
 - people that you met and worked with including those who benefitted from your volunteer work;
 - why you think your volunteer work was worthwhile (or not);
 - what your feelings were about the experience, before, during, and afterward;
 - whether you would recommend this to others;
 - how this was a moral benefit (or burden) for you;
 - anything else you think would be pertinent and interesting
4. Students may volunteer individually, with a partner, or in small groups. Partners and groups may submit a single report.
5. Grading: If you complete all aspects of this assignment as described above, you will be guaranteed a grade of A as your EXAM 3 score (with a guaranteed point value between 100-93).

DEADLINE TO APPLY

6. Deadline to apply: October 1, 2017! You must apply for the Volunteer alternative. Inform me by email that you wish to do this assignment, whether individually, with a partner, or as a small group, and with which organization you have made plans to volunteer, etc. Thanks!

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

University of Montana Office of Civic Engagement

VolunteerMatch.org
VolunteerMissoula.org
Missoulaunitedway.org
YMCAMissoula.org
volunteerLinkedin.com
MissoulaFoodBank.org
Habitat for humanity
BuddhaGarden.org
Humane Society
Missoula County Public schools
Etc.