

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE: PH 385: ETHICAL THEORY AND BUSINESS
COURSE OUTLINE: WINTER 91

INSTRUCTOR: John O. Langenbach
PHONE: Office: 539-2992, Room #D327
Home: 532-8413

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A philosophical approach to questions of business ethics. Topics covered include economic justice; social and environmental responsibility of corporations; conflict of interest; conflicts between rights and profits.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Introduce students to the rudiments of ethical theory;
2. Introduce students to the major arguments surrounding selected contemporary ethical issues in business;
3. Improve student's ability to apply moral reasoning to virtually any business issue of moral concern;
4. Improve student's ability to read and write analytically;
5. Improve student's ability to present strong argument; and
6. Encourage student's interest in original and creative thought.

TEXT:

Poff and Walucho (ed), Business Ethics in Canada, Prentice-Hall
(Students will find a number of texts in the library to supplement lectures on basic ethical theory.)

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Three essays of about 1200-1500 words each. Each essay is worth 20% of the final course grade.
2. A three-hour final essay examination worth 30% of the final course grade.
3. Non-scheduled quizzes will account for 10% of the course grade.

GRADING CRITERIA:

1. Though marks on essays are based primarily on philosophical merit, an essay will be penalized for errors in composition. It is conceivable that an essay could receive a failing mark if it contains copious grammatical errors.
2. Rewrite Policy: The first essay that you write may be rewritten as often as you wish in order to improve both your ability to write a philosophy essay and your mark. The rewrite privilege will be suspended if the essay is handed in late.
3. Essays are due in class on the date assigned. Late essays will be penalized one stanine per day of lateness.
4. Students who show steady improvement throughout the course will receive the benefit of the doubt in the calculation of the final course grade.

SCHEDULE:

The following topics will be covered in the order presented:

1. Basic ethical theory.
2. Corporations as Moral Agents.
3. Health and Safety in the Workplace.
4. Employee Loyalty and Moral Independence.
5. Employee Equity.
6. Environmental Effects of Business Activities.
7. Advertising Ethics.
8. Ethical Challenges to the Capitalist System.