

# Moral Issues in Business

## – PHIL 3314, Fall 2012 –

**Instructor**

Denise Vigani

**Email**

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**Office hours**

MW 12:20-12:50pm  
Rm. 4141 Boylan Hall  
or by appointment

**Classroom & Meeting time**

Boylan Hall 4141  
MW 12:50-2:05pm

**GRADING BREAKDOWN & SCHEDULE**

Good Life Essay	20%	24-Sep
Midterm Exam	20%	24-Oct
Prospectus	10%	14-Nov
Peer Review	5%	28-Nov
Case Study Essay	25%	5-Dec
Final Exam	20%	19-Dec

**HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE!****1. Attend all classes.**

Be sure to take good notes. The slide shows displayed in class will not be made available at any other time. Need help with taking notes? See the PDF entitled 'Taking Notes' posted on Blackboard.

Class participation will not be formally part of your grade. However, your class participation will be noted, and may make the difference between, say, a C+ and a B-, if your average is otherwise borderline. Need help with class participation? There is a lot of useful information here:  
<http://www.studygs.net/classrm.htm>.

I am also available to discuss note taking and class participation strategies with you, so please do not hesitate to ask!

**2. Do the readings.**

The required text for this course is: Ciulla, Joanne B. et al (eds.), *Honest Work: A Business Ethics Reader*. 2nd edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Please note that this is the second edition. The book is available on Amazon new for \$67.00; used copies are available for less.

Additional materials will be made available via Blackboard. Please make sure that you have access to Blackboard and have registered a working email address that you check often in order to receive announcements about the course.

### 3. Study for and take the midterm and final exams.

The midterm and final (non-cumulative) exams will each count for 20% of your semester grade.

The midterm exam will be administered in class—see the date on the schedule below. Arrangements for a make-up midterm must be made before the exam, and taken within one week of the exam. The final will be 19 December, 1:00-3:00pm. Please note that make-up finals will not be given.

Please be aware of the NY State Education Law, which provides that:

- i. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence on the particular day or days, be excused from any examination or any study or work requirements.
- ii. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to make up any examination, study or work requirements which they may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days
- iii. Any student who is aggrieved by the alleged failure of any faculty or administrative officials to comply in good faith shall be entitled to maintain an action or proceeding in the supreme court of the county in which such institution of higher education is located for the enforcement of their rights.

If you cannot attend a class or exam due to religious beliefs, please make alternate arrangements with me well in advance.

### 4. Thoughtfully and carefully write your essays and prospectus, and submit them on time.

The 'Good Life' essay counts for 20% of your semester grade. The 'Case Study' essay counts for 25% of your semester grade. You are required to submit a prospectus, worth 10% of your semester grade, for your Case Study essay, and to participate in the peer review of drafts, worth 5% of your semester grade. Separate handouts detailing the essay and prospectus assignments will be distributed in class and posted on Blackboard. Please note that late work will not be accepted for any of these assignments.

### 5. Ask!

Ask for help, ask for clarification, ask me to repeat something—don't hesitate to ask! Ask questions in class, see me in my office hours (feel free to bring a friend!), or drop me an email.

## CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

It is important that we create a classroom environment that is conducive to doing philosophy. To that end:

Please get to class on time and keep absences to a minimum. A large number of absences may adversely affect your grade. If lateness becomes an issue, I may cease to allow latecomers into class.

All questions and comments should be made with respect for me and your fellow students. Hurtful or disparaging comments or behavior will not be tolerated. Speaking informally but respectfully about potentially sensitive subjects is one of the important skills this course aims to develop.

The use of cell phones is not permitted. Cell phones should not be seen or heard in class. If you must take a call, please exit the room quickly and quietly. Disruption from a cell phone will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom.

Eating and drinking in class is permissible, so long as it is not disruptive to others. Please avoid foods with strong odors or that cannot be eaten neatly and quietly. Please make sure that all beverages have lids. If you make a mess, it is your responsibility to clean it up. If you leave trash in the classroom, your eating/drinking privileges will be revoked.

Laptops/iPads will be allowed in class for the purpose of taking notes. If it becomes apparent that you are using your computer for other purposes (e.g., games), then your computer privileges will be revoked.

## **POLICY FOR GRADE CHALLENGES & DISCUSSION**

There are no extra credit assignments in this course. Please keep copies of all returned work.

If you do not understand why you received a particular grade, you should definitely seek clarification from me. *Under no circumstances will this result in your grade being lowered.*

If you think you did not receive proper credit for your work, you must first email me to explain why you believe the grade is unfair, providing textual evidence supporting your claim. If you still have concerns after I have reviewed and responded to your email, we can then meet to discuss those concerns. Please note that I will not discuss possible grade changes until you have submitted something in writing.

## **CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site:

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits that violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

## **CUNY POLICY ON DISABILITY SERVICES**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations, students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services, please provide me with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with me immediately.

## SCHEDULE

### *The Good Life*

- 27 Aug – Welcome & Introduction
- 29 Aug – Aristotle’s “On the Good Life” p76
- 3 Sep – NO CLASS
- 5 Sep – Ciulla’s “Work and Life” p81; Case Study 3.3, Miller’s “A Life Badly Lived”
- 10 Sep – Ciulla’s “Leisure and Consumption” p92

### *Who Gets What and Why? Fairness and Justice*

- 12 Sep – Plato’s “Ring of Gyges” p165
- 17 Sep – NO CLASS
- 19 Sep – Smith’s “On Human Exchange and Human Differences” p167
- 24 Sep** – Ciulla’s “Exploitation of Need” p171; Rawl’s “Justice as Fairness” p174; **Good Life Essay Due**
- 26 Sep – NO CLASS
- 1 Oct – Kristol’s “A Capitalist Conception of Justice” p190
- 3 Oct – Case Studies 5.3, 5.4, 5.7, 5.8
- 8 Oct – NO CLASS

### *Is “The Social Responsibility of Business...to Increase Its Profits”?*

- 10 Oct – Friedman’s “The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits” p218
- 15 Oct – Stone’s “Why Shouldn’t Corporations Be Socially Responsible?” p223
- 17 Oct – Arrow’s “Social Responsibility and Economic Efficiency” p238
- 22 Oct – Midterm review

## **24 Oct – MIDTERM**

### *Is Everything for Sale? The Future of the Free Market*

- 29 Oct – Marx’s “Commodity Fetishism” p625
- 31 Oct – Mill’s “Laissez-faire and Education” p631
- 5 Nov – Bell’s “The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism” p643
- 7 Nov – Case Studies 6.4, 6.6, 16.1, 16.3

### *“The Check is in the Mail”: Honesty and Trust in Business*

- 12 Nov – Bok’s “Defining Secrecy—Some Crucial Distinctions” p45
- 14 Nov** – Frankfurt’s “On Bullshit” p53; **Prospectus Due**
- 19 Nov – Solomon & Flores’ “Building Trust” p61

### *Giving Voice to Values*

- 21 Nov – Finding My Voice p135-146 (PDF on Blackboard)
- 26 Nov – Finding My Voice p147-152 (PDF on Blackboard)
- 28 Nov** – **In-class peer review of Case Study Essays; bring typed, complete draft to class**
- 3 Dec – Finding My Voice p153-169 (PDF on Blackboard)
- 5 Dec** – Case Studies 2.3, 2.5, 14.1, 14.4, 14.5; **Case Study Essay Due**
- 10 Dec – Exam Review
- 12 Dec – Exam Review

## **19 Dec – FINAL EXAM 1:00-3:00pm**