

PRE-TERM DRAFT
GET UPDATED VERSION ONCE COURSE BEGINS

PHIL 3510

Business Ethics: Property, Profit, and Justice

MWF 9:40-10:30 – BU C 305

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:00-12:00; and by appointment

*When contacting me, especially before a test, be sure to allow sufficient time for a reply. If, for example, you e-mail me the night before a test, it's likely that I won't get your message or that I won't have time to reply until it's too late.

Also, to ensure that your e-mail messages don't get lost in a pile of spam, always use the subject heading "PHIL 3510" when you e-mail me. To avoid having your message blocked out by the college's spam filter, use your University of Utah e-mail address.

Course Description:

In this course, we will consider some important philosophical issues regarding property, profit, and justice, including the following:

What justifications have been proposed regarding 'living' property?

What is the proper role of the government in relation to the distribution of goods?

What is the connection between justice and the protection of private property?

What is the connection between justice and a free market economy in which profit plays a central role?

We will approach these questions by reading and thinking about several prominent works in the history of philosophy, including works by Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Mill, Rawls, and Nozick.

Course Objectives:

The aim of the course is to get you thinking and communicating about some important philosophical issues in a careful, critical, and creative manner. Successful completion of the course requires that you be able to:

- (1) identify and describe the main elements of the philosophical positions studied;
- (2) compare and contrast the different philosophical positions studied;
- (3) analyze and critically evaluate the philosophical arguments studied;

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- (4) demonstrate an awareness of some of the subtleties of the philosophical works studied;
- (5) effectively convey philosophical insights, orally and in writing.

Course Requirements:

In-Class Test 1: 28% (Tentative Date: October 6)
Essay and Essay Prep Assignment(s): 25% (Tentative Essay Due Date: November 29)
In-Class Test 2: 28% (Tentative Date: December 6)
Participation, Participation Assignments, and Reading Journal: 19%

Details and guidelines will be provided during the term. Your participation grade will depend on your completing announced participation assignments (including your reading reaction pieces), on your coming to any announced discussion sessions prepared to raise and discuss critical points about the readings, and on your involvement during the rest of the class meetings. If an emergency forces you to miss a class, please let me know as soon as you can and I can help you make sure you get completely caught up. Don't forget to find out if any assignments or handouts were provided.

There is no final exam during the final exam period, but you should keep the slot designated for our final exam open in case there is an unanticipated school closure on the last day of our class.

Reading Assignments:

The assigned readings will all be available on Marriott Library's electronic reserve system. **(Search: "Andreou 3510" in the *Course Reserves* tab on the library's home page).** Be sure to bring an electronic or hard copy of the assigned reading with you to each class.

Tentative Reading List and Schedule of Reaction Piece Due Dates:

- August 23: Plato – PDF on e-reserve labeled "*Republic* section 1"
[optional: PDF on e-reserve labeled "*Republic* selection 2, and *Phaedrus* selection"]
- August 28: Aristotle – TWO PDFs on e-reserve (selections from *Generation of Animals* and *Politics*)
- September 6: Thomas Hobbes – one PDF on e-reserve (selection from *Leviathan*)
- September 25: John Locke – one PDF on e-reserve (selection from *Second Treatise of Government*)
- TBA (no earlier than September 29): Jean-Jacques Rousseau – one PDF on e-reserve (*Discourse on the Origins and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men*)
- October 23: Karl Marx – one PDF on e-reserve (selection from *Capital*)
- October 27: Adam Smith – one PDF on e-reserve (selection from *The Wealth of Nations*)

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AND Milton Friedman - one PDF on e-reserve (*The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits*)

November 1: Galbraith - one PDF on e-reserve (selection from *The Affluent Society*)
AND Friedrich von Hayek - one PDF on e-reserve ("The *Non Sequitur* of the 'Dependence Effect'")

November 8: John Stuart Mill – one PDF on e-reserve (*On Liberty*)

November 20: John Rawls – one PDF on e-reserve (selections from *A Theory of Justice*)

November 27: Robert Nozick – one PDF on e-reserve (selections from *Anarchy, State and Utopia*)

TBA

Instructions for reaction pieces:

Each reaction piece should be about ½ a page double-spaced. You should think of your reaction pieces as constituting a running journal. The point is for you to engage with the reading before we discuss it in class, so (except for when there are special circumstances that warrant special accommodations) late assignments will receive little or no credit. (Actually, there's one more exception: once during the term, you can hand in a reaction piece late, no questions asked.) You can use your ½ a page to identify the premises and conclusion of a main argument in the paper, to add to the case for the author's position, or to raise a potential objection to the author's reasoning. I will collect your reaction pieces and add them to the running journal that I will create for each of you. So long as you've made a reasonable effort at engaging with the assigned reading, you will get full credit for each reaction piece you submit. It's no problem if your reaction pieces do not display a refined understanding of the assigned readings. The idea is for your reaction pieces to prepare you for the in-class discussion and debate that will help you improve your understanding of the readings. Of course, even initially unrefined ideas may serve as the inspiration for a subtle paper, so you are more than welcome to use some of your reaction pieces as the basis for your paper.

Note:

I may use the class e-mail list to send out announcements, so you should check your university e-mail account regularly.

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement :

“The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the **Center for Disability Services**, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you

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and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.”
(<http://www.oeo.utah.edu/ada/guide/faculty/>)

Faculty and student responsibilities:

“All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee.”

(http://www.humis.utah.edu/humis/docs/organization_269_1233080547.pdf)

Grading:

Grades will be assigned in accordance with the letter grade system (A-E) described in the student handbook (<http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/grading.php>). For precision and ease with respect to the task of combining grades and applying late penalties (when late work has been explicitly permitted), corresponding number grades will be determined and recorded according to the following range scale: A <94-100>; A-<90-93.9>; B+<87-89.9>; B<84-86.9>; B-<80-83.9>; C+<77-79.9>; C<74-76.9>; C-<70-73.9>; D+<67-69.9>; D<64-66.9>; D-<60-63.9>; E<0-59.9>.

Plagiarism Software Policy:

A plagiarism detection service is routinely used in this course; when it is used, you will be required to submit your paper to such a service as part of your assignment.