Business and Economic Ethics
Dr. Stephen Hicks

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In-office times: M, T, R 1-3 p.m. and by appointment.

Of the endeavors that contribute to the quality of human life, business ranks with art, science, and education. Yet business also raises its share of ethical challenges.

In this course we will cover seven issues, including debates over egoism, altruism, and predation; rights, justice, profits, and competition; and business-consumer relations. We will discuss theoretical readings and real-life cases.

Goals
My goals are to assist you in improving your Knowledge, Skills, and Habits.
Knowledge: Major issues and major thinkers.
Skills: Listening, Note-taking, Reading, Interpretation, Argument, Speaking, Writing, Technology-use, Sociability.
Habits: Commitment, Self-reliance, Resourcefulness, Perseverance, Timeliness.

Topics and Assignments
In this course, we will cover seven topics in business and economic ethics. We will devote about two weeks to each topic.

* Midterm Test: 600 words in response to questions based on the course materials to date. Weighting: 10% of your final grade. The questions will be based directly on the course reading and viewing materials: I will take quotations from them and ask you to explain their meaning and significance.

* Final Exam: 1,400 words in response to questions based on the whole semester's course materials. Weighting: 20-80% of your final grade, depending on how many optional essays you choose to write. The questions will be based directly on the course reading and viewing materials: I will take quotations from them and ask you to explain their meaning and significance.
* Optional Essays: For each of the seven topics, you may write an optional 600-word essay. Weighting: Each essay will be worth 10% of your final grade and will reduce by that amount the weighting of your final exam.

On the Optional Essays
Each of our topics will be about a controversial issue in business ethics.
Your essay should (a) demonstrate good understanding of the course texts and videos and our class discussion for that topic, (b) present the arguments of both/all sides of the controversy, and (c) develop your own informed opinion on the topic in direct response to those arguments.
In grading your optional essays, I will use this template:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading template</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Your score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argument for one side</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argument for other side</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Your informed opinion</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of course materials</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proofreading</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
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Due: Optional essays on each topic are due before the date we start the next topic.

Evaluation
90-100% is the excellent A range, 80-89 is the good B range, 70-79 is the average C range, 60-69 is the poor D range, and below 60 is failing.

Course Materials
All texts and videos for the course are available at this web page: http://www.stephenhicks.org/courses-2/business-and-economic-ethics-modules/.

Schedule (subject to change)
Jan 24-31: Topic 1: Are You Rich or Are You Poor?
Feb 7-14: Topic 2: Should One Be an Egoist, Predator, or Altruist?
Feb 21-28: Topic 3: Market Prices and Price Controls. Case: Are Rent Controls Good or Bad?
Mar 7: Midterm test.
Mar 14: Spring Break.
Mar 21-28: Topic 4: Prices and Controls. Case: Are Minimum Wages Good or Bad?
Apr 4-11: Topic 5: Competition, Property Rights, and Regulation. Case: How Best to Solve the Tragedy of the Commons?
Apr 18-25: Topic 6: Personal Responsibility, Paternalism. Case: Should Experimental Cancer Drugs (e.g., Laetrile) be Legal?
May 2-9: Topic 7: Resources and Fairness. Case: Is the FCC’s “Fairness Doctrine” Fair?
May 16: Final exam

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Syllabus Statements Mandated by Administrators and Accreditation Agency

**Accommodations Statement:** If you believe you are eligible to receive any type of academic accommodation, through such federal laws as the ADA, please contact the Lang Center for Health, Wellness, Counseling and Disabilities Services at 815-226-4083. The Lang staff manages disability services for Rockford University.

**Academic Honor Code Statement:** In this course, the policies and procedures concerning the Honor Code, including the definitions of cheating and plagiarism as they appear in the current Rockford University Handbook, will be applicable.

**Senior Day Policy Statement:** All students are excused from class for “senior day.”

**Academic Concern with this Course:** From the Provost’s office: “Meet with the course professor to discuss your concern. If the issue is not resolved, then you may follow the chain-of-command: Department Chair, the Dean of your College, and the University Provost, in that order. To appeal a final course grade, complete the grade appeal form (located on the Portal under forms/undergraduate student documents or graduate student documents). A description of the grade appeal process is included on p. 55 of the Academic Catalog.”

**Workload Expectations:** This 3-credit course will meet for 50 minutes per session three times a week throughout the semester. A minimum of 2-3 hours of student preparation time outside of class is expected for each credit hour. Thus, please be prepared to devote 9-12 hours per week to this course (range includes in- and outside-class time).

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