

**Tel Aviv University International  
Business Ethics – Fall 2019 Syllabus**



**Instructor: Dr. Sarit Smila-Sened**  
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**Office Hours: Freely available by appointment**

**Meeting Time and Place: TBD**

**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to examine central issues in business ethics. We will do that by exploring the most influential ethical schools and then by looking at some of the prevalent debates in the business world. This theoretical background provides the philosophical tools necessary for our investigation and reflection on those challenging moral issues.

The syllabus below provides an outline of the course and a list of corresponding readings. *Note that the syllabus is subject to change and supplementation, and that it is the responsibility of each participant to follow these changes.*

**Texts:** *The Elements of Moral Philosophy / Rachels*  
*Business in Ethical Focus: An Anthology*

**Course Work:** Midterm Exam (20%), Final take-home exam (60%) attendance and participation (20%)

**Course Requirements and Policies:**

Preparation and participation – students are expected to have carefully read the assigned readings prior to the class meeting in which they are to be discussed, and are expected to participate in discussions regarding the materials. An essential part of this course is critical thought and discussion of philosophical issues – that is, doing philosophy, not just reading about it. Note that a crucial part of participation involves respecting other people in the class as persons and for their views.

Attendance – it is the school policy that attendance would be mandatory in all courses. Each student can have up to 3 absences each semester. That includes both excused and unexcused absences. If you come in late to class, it is your responsibility to make sure that your attendance is recorded. This will only be done at the end of the class and not in subsequent classes.

Exams – we will have a final, take-home exam and an in-class midterm exam. Specific details will be provided closer to the exams dates.

Plagiarism – plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course. Please see me if you have any questions about proper citation or incorporation of other texts into your work.

### **Course Outline:**

#### **Week 1:** Introduction to Ethics and Business Ethics

Amartya Sen “Does Business Ethics makes Economic Sense?”  
Utilitarianism: Chapters 6&7 in Rachels

#### **Week 2:** Ethical Theories

Kantian Ethics: Chapter 8&9 in Rachels

#### **Week 3:** Ethical Theories

Care and Virtue Ethics: Chapters 11&12 in Rachels  
Robert C. Solomon “Business Ethics and Virtue”

#### **Week 4:** Review and Midterm exam

#### **Week 5:** Corporate Social Responsibility

Milton Friedman “The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profit”  
Edward Freeman “A Stakeholder Theory of the Modern Corporation”  
George Brenkert “Private Corporations and Public Welfare”  
Joseph Heath “Business Ethics Without Stakeholders”

#### **Week 6:** Environmental Responsibility

Michael Sagoff “At The Monument to General Meade, or On the Difference Between Beliefs and Benefits”  
Kristin Shrader-Frechtt “A Defense of Risk-Cost-Benefit Analysis”  
Deborah C. Poff “Reconciling the Irreconcilable: The Global Economy and the Environment”  
Tibor R. Machan “Environmentalism Humanized”

#### **Week 7:** Globalization and Its Ethical Significance

Thomas Donaldson “The Ethics of Risk in the Global Economy”  
Manuel Velasquez “International Business, Morality and the Common Good”  
Thomas Donaldson “Values in Tension: Ethics Away From Home”

### **Week 8:** Rights and Obligations of Employers and Employees

Richard T. De George “Whistleblowing”

Robert A. Larmer “Whistleblowing and Employee Loyalty”

Jeffery Pfeffer Introduction from “Dying for a Paycheck”

Tibor R. Machan, “Human Rights, Workers’ Rights, and the Right to Occupational Safety”

### **Week 9:** Distributive Justice

Classical Theories of Contracts, Property, and Capitalism

Excerpts from Hobbes, Locke, Smith and Marx

Contemporary Theories of Distributive Justice

Excerpts from Rawls and Nozick

### **Week 10:** Justice and Fair Practice

Edwin C. Hettinger “What is Wrong with Reverse Discrimination?”

Louis P. Pojman “The Moral Status of Affirmative Action”

Anita M. Superson “A Feminist Definition of Sexual Harassment”

Stephen Griffith “Sexual Harassment and the Rights of the Accused”

### **Week 11:** Advertising and Marketing

Tibor R. Machan “Advertising: The Whole Truth or Only Some of the Truth?”

Roger Crisp “Persuasive Advertising, Autonomy, and the Creation of Desire”

Robert L. Arrington “Advertising as Behavior Control”

Lynn Sharp Paine “Children as Consumers: An Ethical Evaluation of Children’s Television Advertising”

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## **TAU International Course Guidelines**

### **Rules and Respectful Behavior**

- No cell phones or laptops permitted in class unless approved by instructor for use
- Tardiness to class is not permitted
- As our courses bring together students from many different styles of learning and from a wide variety of home institutions, we ask that students remain respectful to and patient with fellow classmates at all time as some students may be more familiar with certain course material or procedures than others.

### **Learning Accommodations**

In accordance to University guidelines, students with learning disabilities or accommodation requests must submit official documentation from their home country / university (translated into English by notary if not already in English) to TAU

International ([tauiacademic@tauex.tau.ac.il](mailto:tauiacademic@tauex.tau.ac.il)) in advance of arrival describing in detail any specific needs they have. Students must also bring a copy of this documentation with them on-site and give it to their faculty on the first day of class while introducing themselves so that the faculty know who they are and what sorts of needs they may have. TAU International and its faculty cannot guarantee that all accommodations received at the home school can be similarly met at TAU but certainly does the best it can to make any suitable accommodations possible that are needed.

### **In-class Exams**

TAU does not permit, under any circumstances, taking any in-class (including mid or final) exams early or later than the scheduled exam day. When selecting courses, it is thus very important to note below if there is an in-class midterm or final exam as this date/exam cannot be changed. Early departures from the program are not approved, nor are early or exception in-class exams.

### **TAU International Absence Policy**

Attendance is **mandatory** in all of the courses. Missing classes will be reflected in the final grade of the course. Up to three justified absences from classes will be accepted (for example: emergency matter or illness, both of which will require an official doctor's note sent to the faculty **on the day of the absence**). Such cases of absence should be reported to your lecturer immediately and again, a doctor's note is required. Students are required to arrive on time for classes. Teachers are entitled to treat any single case of lateness and/or repeated lateness as an unjustified absence. Please note that according to TAU Academic Policy, if a student's behavior or attendance during the semester is disagreeable his/her course participation may be cancelled at the discretion of TAU.

**Students are responsible for reading and adhering to the policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook [posted here](#) at all times.**