



Core - Business Ethics B (F. Económicas)

Guía docente 2023-24

INTRODUCTION

Breve descripción: Business ethics almost always hits the headlines in the wake of scandals, but hardly ever when entrepreneurs and managers do good deeds. These are often met with a skepticism difficult to eradicate, for given the profit motive, such stories are just “too good to be true”. Why so? After a short introduction to the origins and development of business ethics, this course will present a more constructive approach based on the notion of “moral capital” or virtue. We shall also explain how the firm, through the proper ethical perspective, could actually be a potent force toward attaining the common good of society.

The course consists of two parts. The first deals with the sources for a virtue ethics approach to business, namely, Aristotle, Catholic Social Teaching, and Alasdair MacIntyre. The second explores virtuous practice in the different areas of business: finance, production, marketing, people (“human resource”) management, corporate legal practice, Confucian business ethics, and corporate governance.

- **Titulación:** Grados Ade Bilingüe, Ade + Derecho, Ade Bilingüe + Derecho
- **Módulo/Materia:** Módulo V. La Empresa y su Contexto Humanístico. Materia 2. Pensamiento Humanístico
- **ECTS:** 3
- **Curso, semestre:** 4th & 5th years/ 2nd semester
- **Carácter:** OB
- **Profesorado:** Alejo José G. Sison
- **Idioma:** English
- **Aula, Horario:** A06, Edificio de Amigos, Tuesdays, 8-9:30 am

- **Titulación:** Grados Eco Bilingüe, Eco Bilingüe + Derecho y Eco Bilingüe + Governance
- **Módulo/Materia:** Módulo III. La Economía y su Contexto Humanístico. Materia 2. Pensamiento Humanístico
- **ECTS:** 3
- **Curso, semestre:** 4th & 5th years/ 2nd semester
- **Carácter:** OB
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COMPETENCIES

Competencies for ADE



CB5	Que los estudiantes hayan desarrollado aquellas habilidades de aprendizaje necesarias para emprender estudios posteriores con un alto grado de autonomía	x
CG5	Razonar de forma autónoma y crítica en temas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial.	x
CG7	Conocer los diferentes entornos en los que desarrolla su trabajo: la coyuntura, los mercados, el contexto histórico, legal o humanístico.	x
CE13	Analizar los problemas éticos de las decisiones empresariales.	x

Competencias for Eco:

CB5	Que los estudiantes hayan desarrollado aquellas habilidades de aprendizaje necesarias para emprender estudios posteriores con un alto grado de autonomía	x
CG5	Desarrollar la capacidad de razonamiento autónomo y crítico en temas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial.	x



CG7	Conocer los diferentes entornos en los que desarrolla su trabajo: la coyuntura, los mercados, el contexto histórico, legal o humanístico.	x
CE8	Tener conciencia de la dimensión ética de la práctica profesional.	x
CE21	Razonar y exponer con coherencia las propias opiniones en contextos orales y/o en la redacción de textos .	x

PROGRAM

A. Sources for Virtue Ethics in Business

1. Introduction. Business ethics: History and Trends
2. Moral Capital and Leadership .
3. Aristotle
4. Catholic Social Teaching
5. Alasdair MacIntyre

B. Virtuous Practice in Different Business Areas

1. Finance
2. Production
3. Marketing
4. People ("human resource") management
5. Corporate legal practice
6. Confucian business ethics
7. Corporate governance

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES



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Welcome to the Business Ethics class! We meet **Tuesdays**, beginning **January 9**, in room **A06**, Amigos Bldg., from 8 to 9:30 am.

Before class, please go over the information in the ADI coursepage.

The classroom procedure is as follows. **Until February 6**, I shall take care of lecturing (accompanied by powerpoints) and leading the discussions in the more theoretical part of the course. **From February 13 onwards**, classes will be divided into two periods. **During the first 45 mins**, I shall lecture based on powerpoints and the corresponding pages from the textbook. **During the second half, a group will be assigned to lead the case discussion.** This entails making a short summary and indicating the most salient issues in decision making. You may find the accompanying guide questions useful. Discussion means moving forward or going beyond the text together with the other class members. Groups should also be open to some Q&A.

You can do the Harvard Management Mentor Presentation Skills Course on your own, following this link: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/899640>

#	Date	Topic	Activity
1	1/9	Syllabus	Course presentation. Read syllabus. Group assignments.



2	1/16	A. Theory 1. Introduction. Business ethics: History and Trends 2. Moral Capital and Leadership	Guide questions: 1. What is "corporate social responsibility"? 2. According to Friedman, the only responsibility of the firm is to maximize shareholder value. Do you agree? Why? 3. What are the main elements of an integral corporate ethics program? 4. What is moral capital? How is it measured? 5. What is rhetoric? What are the means rhetoric employs?
3	1/23	3. Aristotle	Guide questions: 1. According to Aristotle, what is the object of politics? 2. According to Aristotle, what is the object of economy? 3. According to Aristotle, what is the object of ethics? 4. What are the different lifestyles in the Nicomachean Ethics and how do they compare with each other?



4	1/30	4. Catholic Social Teaching	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is CST? Is it only for Catholics?2. What are the main principles of CST and how are they related?3. What are the objective and the subjective dimensions of work?
5	2/6	5. Alasdair MacIntyre	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How does MacIntyre distinguish between practices and institutions?2. Explain the different levels in which the virtues are practiced.



6	2/13	B. Practices 1. Finance	Guide questions: 1. What is the practice in finance? How does the Stelac case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions? 2. Do you think Antonio Padula should keep Stelac as a small, boutique MFO or should he expand to change the corporate culture of financial firms more effectively? Identify the risks and opportunities.
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7	2/20	2. Production	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the practice in production? How does the Adelante case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions?2. Carry out a SWOT analysis of artisanry and mass-production as different models for Adelante.
8	2/27	3. Marketing	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the practice in marketing? How does the Primark case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions?2. Analyze the elements of Primark's marketing strategy. What are the dangers and opportunities associated with fast-fashion and outsourcing?



9	3/5	4. Human Resource Management	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the practice in human resource management? How does the Innobe case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions?2. Will you hire Mary as the new HR manager? Why or why not?
10	3/12	5. Corporate Legal Practice	<p>Guide questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the practice in corporate legal office? How does the Ethniki case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions?2. Should Mike Eze pay the bribe? Why or why not? How could he convince his superiors of his plan?



11	3/19	6. Confucian Business Ethics	Guide questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the major differences between Confucian and Aristotelian virtue ethics?2. Within the Confucian framework, could gambling be virtuous? Explain.
12	4/9	7. Corporate Governance	Guide questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the practice in corporate governance? How does the Ben & Jerry's case illustrate the virtues at the level of individual biographies and community traditions?2. Do you think Ben & Jerry did the right thing by selling their company to Unilever or was it turning their back to its original values?
13	4/16	Obligatory Pre-finals	



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The final exam accounts for 40% of the grade, the group presentation, 30%, and participation in class discussions, 30%. But first, you have to at least get a 5 in the final exam.

If the special June exam is the only basis for the final grade, a result of 8/10 is needed to pass (i.e., a 5 as a final grade).

Laptops and tablets are not allowed in class as they do more harm than good (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/students-are-better-off-without-a-laptop-in-the-classroom/>). Should you need to use them, ask for the professor's permission.

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays, from 9-10 am in room 2040. Otherwise, write me an e-mail (ajsison@unav.es) to request for an appointment.

E-mail policy: Queries should be brief and ideally, answerable by a "yes" or "no". Beyond that, request for an appointment. Do not expect responses outside office hours, during week-ends or holidays. Questions about class schedules, exam dates and venues should be clarified by visiting the corresponding webpages. The professor reserves the right to answer these and other requests for information that have already been explained in class.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

The textbook is:

Sison, Alejo José G. et al. Business Ethics. A Virtue Ethics and Common Good Approach, London/ New York, Routledge, 2018. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

Further references may be found in:

Sison, Alejo José G. The Moral Capital of Leaders. Why Virtue Matters, Cheltenham, UK /Northampton, MA, USA, Edward Elgar, 2003. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

Sison, Alejo José G. Corporate Governance and Ethics. An Aristotelian Perspective, Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA, USA, Edward Elgar, 2008. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

Sison, Alejo José G. (2015): Happiness and Virtue Ethics in Business. The Ultimate Value Proposition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 301 pp. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

Other materials may also be provided ("Contenidos" folder) as the course progresses.

@X@buscador_unika.obtener@X@