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PH 550 Tutorial in Philosophy of Religion - Christian Business Ethics

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Recommended Citation
Course: PH550 X1 (SP 2009)  
Title: Tutorial in Philosophy of Religion - Christian Business Ethics  
Hours: 3.00  
Published: Yes, on 10/15/2008  
Prerequisites: None  

Department: Philosophy  
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SPO:

Meetings:  
During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 Online via ExL.

Maximum Registration: 22  

Catalog Description: For students with specialized interests/needs in selected areas of introductory study in Philosophy of Religion. Consult syllabus for prerequisites and course requirements. See academic policy. May be repeated.

Objectives:

1. We will draw themes and principles from the Biblical account of God's priorities for our commercial interactions.
2. We will become familiar with the 5 or 6 common approaches to decision-making historically articulated by moral philosophers.
3. We will outline our own understanding of the goals a business should have, in keeping with Christian stewardship.
4. We will become familiar with recurring ethical issues that arise in modern business practice, including issues relating to marketing, accounting, technology, and employee rights.
5. We will gain an understanding of some of the complications that globalization causes for decision-making in business.
6. We will develop our own strategy (or strategies) as to how ethical change might be implemented within the workplace.
7. We will improve our ability to articulate to others the place and importance of ethics within the Christian and/or secular workplace.

Required Texts:

4. Good To Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't, Jim Collins, (Collins Business, 2001)
Course Requirements:

01 Module - Due Wed. Feb. 18*

The Biblical Paradigm for Commercial Interaction

- Exodus 20:22 - 23:19; Leviticus 25; Numbers 26; Deuteronomy 8; 14:22 - 15:18; 17:14-20; 24:19-22; 26; Joshua 18-19; 1 Samuel 8; 1 Kings 21; Isaiah 1:10-17; 5:8-10; 58:1-9; Ezekiel 45: 1-9; Matthew 25: 31-46
- Beyond Integrity, chpt. 5

02 Module - Due Fri. Feb. 27*

Principles of Decision-Making

- Summary articles (online) on ethical decision-making; utilitarianism; 'common good'; deontology; virtue; justice; rights.
- Beyond Integrity, chpt. 3

PAPER #1 - Due Mon. March 9

Which approach(es) to decision-making does scripture indicate we should adopt as we seek to act ethically in our financial dealings?

03 Module - Due Wed. March 18*

Ethical Issues in Modern Business

- Beyond Integrity, chpts. 1, 7-9, 11

04 Module - Due Mon. April 6*

The Goals a Business Should Have

- If Aristotle Ran General Motors
- Good To Great
- Beyond Integrity, chpt. 4

05 Module - Due Fri. April 17*

Strategies for Implementing Ethics

- Harvard Business Review on Corporate Ethics, pp. 1-112, 139-181
- Beyond Integrity, chpts. 2 & 12

PAPER #2 - Due Mon. April 27

What makes a person flourish in the workplace?
OR
How should a Christian balance the concern to 'stand against' the workplace culture with the concern to participate within the workplace so as to change it?

06 Module - Due Wed. May 6*

Complications from Globalization

- Beyond Integrity, chpt. 6

PAPER #3 - Due Wed. May 20

Evaluation:
Each module will carry the assignment of posting answers to several questions, and then responding to at least 2 other classmates' posted answers.

In addition to giving answers/responses for each of the 6 modules, you will be assigned three papers during the course of the semester. The length for each paper will be 2,000 - 3,000 words (though the last paper may run a bit longer).

How grades will be assigned:

As already mentioned, for each of the module assignments students will be expected to give answers to several questions, as well as responses to at least two other classmates' answers to these questions. My expectations are that the answers to each question will be thoughtful and be 1-2 paragraphs—as opposed to superficial, 1-2 short sentences. 25% of students' final grades for the class will stem from these posts, which constitute our online 'class discussion'. I won't assign a specific grade to your posts for each module; I'll simply make a note in my grade book that the posts either: (1) fulfilled class guidelines/expectations; (2) fell short in some way of class guidelines/expectations; or (3) surpassed class guidelines/expectations. Then, at the end of the semester I'll look through my marks for each module and assign a class participation grade for this portion of your final, overall grade.

The remaining 75% of a student's overall grade for the course will be determined by the three papers which will be assigned in the course. Each paper will constitute 25% of a student's final, overall grade.