

**Philosophy 305: Business Ethics
Exam 2**

Select three ethical case studies or areas of ethical concern in business and then apply the decision making protocol we developed earlier in the semester. Be sure to select areas that will allow you to apply this protocol fairly widely (more rather than fewer applications of principles and related political/economic/legal issues to a variety of cases). Two of the cases must come from our course and one may be selected outside this. In each case study you will use the protocol as a basis to see to what extent and why there was moral culpability as well as negative impact on profits and sustainability by seeing what could and should have been done with better judgment and action. Do not try to avoid difficult and messy cases/issues by making things too tidy. Philosophy thrives on the hard cases.
(3-4 pages each case study)

Tips for application of Protocol: Critique each case by identifying areas of ethical concern and applying the following where relevant:

- A. Morris's Aristotelian conceptions:
 1. Society as a "partnership for living well" and business as a subset of this that provides a larger and wiser perspective for decision making that is not specific to any particular business decisions but should guide them all.
 2. Moral strength or integrity and character, *Moral Imagination that engenders Empathy, Vision, and Perspective* that provide a basis for ethically wise decision making.
 3. Four universal spiritual needs that decision making should never lose sight of:
 - a) Uniqueness as individuals.
 - b) Union with something greater than the self.
 - c) Usefulness to others
 - d) Understanding about our lives and work.
 4. Long term economic consequences for business of ethically unwise decisions.
 5. Decisions are not merely a choice between alternatives. Good decisions depend on the wise and creative formulation of alternatives. Current problems are usually a result of past decisions. Start with recognizing how your beliefs and values shape your decisions. What was lacking in past decisions that we may now recognize and improve upon? Are your decisions universalizable?
- B. Take account of the underlying tension between the two basic political traditions of liberalism and egalitarianism and use Rawls's principles of justice as a kind of mediation between these to see a reasonable ideal to shoot for in providing limitations to free market capitalism. Use this in accessing your case studies. You can then comment on what you take to be a pragmatic assessment of how and how far this ideal can be implemented and to what extent government regulation and /or intervention should be exercised. Include in this to what extent you think the ethical obligations recognized through the protocol can be supported or encouraged by legal and political means.
- C. Identify and argue for the stakeholders or interested parties in each case (those affected by the decisions) and their priority/pecking order.
- D. Take particular note of moral conundrums that may be inherent in conflicting interests in item C and different moral assessments based on reasonable differences particularly related to the Libertarian and Egalitarian traditions in B.
- E. Apply Audi's Prima Facie Principles (based on W.D. Ross) aimed at upholding **Justice, Liberty, and Happiness**
 1. Classification: ask whether each of the 10 prima facie obligations are present due to circumstances, contracts, promises, relationships, etc..
 - A) Justice
 - B) Non-injury
 - C) Fidelity
 - D) Veracity
 - E) Reparation
 - F) Beneficence
 - G) Self-improvement
 - H) Gratitude
 - I) Liberty
 - J) Respectfulness
 2. See if there are any conflicts within an obligation or between obligations. If there are, we must creatively meet as many obligations as possible with the best possible outcomes. If there are no conflicts of ethical obligations, then our task is how best to meet our obligations.
 3. Ethical Assessment of the Obligations: Weigh the various obligations
 4. Selection of *Ethically Viable* Options
 5. Universalization: Decisions set precedents. Extend each potential decision to all other possible cases
 6. Final: Decide on an option and how to realize it