Ethical, Moral and Philosophical Foundations of Capitalism

Instructors Information
ECON 6470
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Office Hours
M/W 1:00 PM-5:00PM M/W 8:00PM-9:00PM or By Appointment

Tentative Course Schedule: The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and assigned readings in consultation with the students; however this outline and list of readings represents a good example of the scope of the readings that would be required from class participants.

Class Description: This course is designed to explore the moral, ethical, and economic foundations of the modern business environment. Topics include the role of the individual, business, and government in society. Students in the course are exposed to the writings of ethical and political thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke, Marx, Keynes, Rand and Friedman.

Learning Goals
1) Recognize the importance of ethical decision making
2) Ability to compare and contrast different ethical behaviors
3) Ability to apply ethical theory in practical and business settings
4) Communicate at a professional level in oral presentations and in writing

Course Outline

PART I: INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW

- What is morality and ethics
- Adam Smith, Theory of Moral Sentiment, ch1, Part 1 and 4.
- Yaron Brook, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CYU8KZz91OA
- http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/morality-definition/
- http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-virtue/

- Milton Friedman interview. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWsx1X8PV_A
- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part I Ch.1-2
PART II: FOUNDATIONS OF CAPITALISM

Section 1: Classical Economics

- Adam Smith. *The Wealth of Nations*. Book I, Ch 1-3; Book IV, Ch 2.
- (Heilbroner interview).
- Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, Part I Ch.3-4

Section 2: Government (The Big “G”)

- Hobbes, Leviathan, Ch 11 and 13
- Locke, Of Civil Government, Ch 2 and 9
- Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness*, Ch 14
- Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, Part I Ch.5-6

Section 4: Economic Views of the Government and Capitalism

- Brook Yaron, President of the Ayn Rand Foundation, Presentation:
  
  - [P1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoU_64zEiRE)
  - [P2](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCx_mRC92bk&feature=related)
  - [P3](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xwKTT6FKIM&feature=related)
  - [P4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmkMTIX4k8&feature=related)
  - [P5](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veryOu60uY&feature=related)
  - [P6](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=to4d8WD‐Ons&feature=related)
  - [P7](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWPVEJmygas&feature=related)
  - [P8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BlJ0Ex8‐5‐0&feature=related)
  - [P9](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8lTFYLInhQ&feature=related)
  - [P10](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Jn7SJGBAmw&feature=related)
  - Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged*, Part I Ch.7-8

Section 5: The Critics of and Defenders of Capitalism and of the Purely Free Market

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto*. (Chapters 1, 2, and 4)
- Noam Chomsky: [video link](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFxYyXGMfZM&NR=1)
- F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (selections from)
- David Henderson, *the Joy of Freedom*, Ch 1, 8
- Jagdish Bhagwati, *Why the Critics of Free Trade and Globalization are Mistaken*
Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part I Ch.9-10

PART III: CAPITALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

Section 7: Development

- Income convergence (Barrow, Solow)
- PBS *Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World Economy: Episode One: The Battle of Ideas*
- Paul Krugman – Income Inequality and the Middle Class
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kwA-CwFK5A&feature=related
- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part II Ch.4-6

Section 8: Economic Voting

- Voting with your feet http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YewL0BoL1Ik
- The Tiebout Hypothesis and Public Goods
- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part II Ch.7-8

Section 9

- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part II Ch.9-10
- Guest Speaker (TBA)

PART IV: THE WELFARE STATE

Section 10: Distribution and Inequality

- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part III Ch.1-3
Supplementary Readings and Discussion Papers:


Section 11: Labor, Leisure & Welfare

- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part III Ch.4-6

Section 12: “Can capitalism survive?”

- Paul Krugman – Income Inequality and the Middle Class http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kwA-CwFK5A&feature=related
- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part II Ch.7-8

Section 13: Bringing it all together for the final

- Ayn Rand, Atlas Shrugged, Part III Ch.9-10

Points

| Presentations (3-4 per person) | 40 |
| Response and Discussion | 10 |
| Paper | 20 |
| Exams (2): | 30 |
| | 100 points |

Academic Integrity: Academic dishonesty as described by the Honor Code (which you can find at http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/1762.htm) will not be tolerated. Any such actions will result in a score of zero on the associated assignment(s) and/or dismissal from the course with a grade of F. The
following actions will be considered violations of the honor code in this course:
Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to the following: -Talking to classmates during tests. -Looking at other students' exams. -Texting or emailing during tests. -Plagiarism -Working in groups for assignments intended for the individual.

Affirmative Action: University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you are a student who is disabled as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires assistance or support services, please seek assistance through the Center for Disability Services. A CDS Counselor will coordinate those services. See http://www.westga.edu/counseling/index_8884.php

Equal Opportunity: No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by UWG.

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus at any time during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class and by email. The ***Preliminary*** Class Schedule outlined is PRELIMINARY; however, every effort will be made to adhere to the schedule. Any changes will be announced and emailed to the class.