

SUSTAINABILITY ETHICS
COURSE # SSM2020H
COURSE OUTLINE – PRELIMINARY ITEMS
Winter 2020

Instructors: Professors Len Brooks and Stephen Scharper
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Office Hours: Prof. Len Brooks, KN 231, Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and by appointment
Prof. Stephen Scharper, HSC 350, Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m.-2 p.m. and by appointment

Class Room: KN L1230

Course Objectives

Many students finish their Masters' degree, *but know little about* how business decisions are made, how they should be made, and how to have an optimal impact on corporation executives and their decisions. This course is designed to provide the background understanding of business and ethics to ensure that you can argue effectively and ensure that your master's level knowledge is able to make a favourable impact on your employer.

In this course, you will develop an understanding of: (1) the ethics of sustainability and innovation, (2) business governance and ethics, (3) how business views sustainability, (4) how to influence corporate strategy and decision making through business ethics, and (5) important current and future topics and issues in sustainability and innovation ethics. The focus of the course will be practical and will build upon a historical understanding of ethical developments to offer students a perspective on current practices as well as future prospects.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, course participants will be able to:

- Understand the linkage between sustainability, stakeholders, ethics, governance and success,
- Recognize ethical dilemmas related to sustainability,
- Appreciate the opportunities and risks inherent in sustainability problems,
- Make practical, defensible decisions about them,
- Influence corporate decision makers to take sustainability ethics into account effectively, and
- Apply ethical reasoning to sustainability dilemmas encountered in the future.

Course Material

Required textbook

Extracts from: Business & Professional Ethics for Directors, Executives & Accountants, L.J. Brooks & P. Dunn, Cengage Learning, 7e, Stamford CT, 2015.

Also, a photocopied readings packet for Prof. Scharper's section will be available for sale in class later in the course. Details on cost and date will be provided.

Weekly reading list

The weekly reading list is provided beginning on page 7 of the course outline. A few texts will require you to use the library website.

Instructional Approach

This course is taught primarily through the Socratic discussion of issues, and the use of readings, cases, and videos where appropriate. Class participation will be graded. Short exercises will also be used, and students will be required to demonstrate the application of business ethics to a sustainability issue or concern in an essay assignment. The course will end with an examination of all of the topics covered.

Grading

Learning in this course will be evaluated both on group as well as an individual basis as specified. In group coursework, group members will share the same grade adjusted by peer evaluation.

Components of Coursework and Weights

Written Analysis of Sustainability Issue	To be assigned (Individual) <i>Due: March 13, 2020</i>	20%
Application of Business Ethics Analysis	See below for details (Group) <i>Due: February 12, 2020</i>	20%
Class Participation	In-class Contribution (Individual)	20%
Examination		40%
Total		100%

Written Analysis of a Sustainability Issue (Individual Assignment)

Each group will submit a written report on a pre-assigned case that will be given in the class. A detailed discussion on case discussion, presentation and report writing will be held in the first week. A rubric for assessment will also be discussed.

Application of Business Ethics (Group Assignment)

Working in groups of 3, students will choose a sustainability-related issue that presents an ethical dilemma for a corporation (see February 12th list for ideas). They will prepare a report that will include their ethical analysis of the issue, and how they would attempt to influence the strategy, decision making and actions of the company to recognize the problem and implement your analysis and recommendations. The issue chosen must be approved in advance by Prof. Brooks. The real name of the company involved cannot be used unless authorized by Prof. Brooks. Students will make a brief PowerPoint presentation to our class on Feb. 12 as if they were presenting to the corporation decision makers.

Class Participation

Class participation requires you be present in the class each week, pre-read the cases, participate actively in lecture discussions as well as in class exercises. Class participation grades are based on quality of contribution in discussions during class sessions, class presentations and in-class exercises.

Academic Misconduct

Students should note that copying, plagiarizing, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be subject to academic discipline ranging from a mark of zero on the assignment, test or examination to dismissal from the university as outlined in the academic handbook. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Turnitin course ID number: 10444819

Any modifications to the course will be announced and explained in class.

Course Drop Deadline

For information purposes, the School of Graduate Studies deadline to drop this course without academic penalty is **February 25, 2019**. Please note that MScSM Program students must have the written permission of the Program Director to drop a course. Please consult with the Program Registrar if you are considering dropping a course.

2020H Course Schedule

WEEK	DATE	CONTENT
1	Wednesday January 8	<p>Introduction – Len Brooks & Stephen Scharper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wisdom is knowledge that matters – useful frameworks ➤ Sustainability, business, business ethics, and risk management – an overview ➤ Objectives – tools and how to use them to influence management ➤ Ethics, sustainability ethics, innovation ethics and business ethics compared ➤ Ethical dilemmas and how to deal with them – ethical reasoning ➤ Business ethics development – drivers, milestones, relevance ➤ Reading: Brooks & Dunn, Ch. 1; various recent media articles – links posted ➤ Case Studies: <i>VW Cheats on Emission Tests (Handout)</i>; <i>Harry Potter & the Green Brigade</i>; <i>Merck & River Blindness</i>; <i>Angry Activists – President’s Choice Diapers</i>
2	January 15	<p>Corporate Governance, Strategy & Risk Management – Brooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Where do business & sustainability ethics fit into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Governance Strategy setting, implementation & monitoring Operational decisions Risk assessment & management? ➤ How can you argue successfully for ethical sustainability issue treatment? ➤ Reading: Brooks & Dunn, parts of Ch. 5 & 7 ➤ Cases: <i>Kardell Paper Co.</i>; <i>Brent Spar Decommissioning Disaster</i>; <i>The Exxon Valdez</i>; <i>Texaco: The Ecuador Issue</i>
3	January 22	<p>Creating an Organizational Culture Sensitive to Sustainability – Brooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Organizational culture – why it is important, what it is, how it works ➤ Cultural sensitivity to sustainability – what it means ➤ Control & monitoring mechanisms ➤ Whistleblowing mechanisms ➤ Crisis management ➤ Reading: Brooks & Dunn, Ch. 5 ➤ Cases: <i>BP’s Corporate Culture</i>; <i>BP’s Gulf Oil Spill Risk Management</i>; <i>Tylenol Recalls (2010): Its Still About Reputation, Crisis Management Case</i>
4	January 29	<p>Practical, Defensible Ethical Decision Making – Brooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rules of Thumb ➤ Stakeholder Theory & Stakeholder Decision Analysis ➤ Practical ethical decision techniques ➤ Comprehensive ethical decisions ➤ Reading: Brooks & Dunn, Ch. 4 ➤ Cases: <i>BetaSeron Decision (A)</i>; <i>Ford Pinto</i>

5	February 5	<p>Corporate Social Responsibility/Sustainability Activities & Reporting – Brooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CSR/Sustainability/GRI Measurement, reporting formats & challenges ➤ Integrated Reporting – the future ➤ UN Report – sustainability finance <p>Workplace Ethics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conflicts of interest, employee rights, testing, harassment, discrimination, fairness, civility, trust <p>Reading: Brooks & Dunn, Ch. 7 Cases: #MeToo, discrimination, Sexual Abuse at Penn State, Texaco’s Jelly Beans</p>
6	February 12	<p>Presentations on Influencing Management to “Do The Right Thing” when Confronted with Ethical Dilemmas such as: - Brooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Which cars are best – hybrid gas, plug in hybrids, electric, hydrogen? ➤ Pollute or install anti-pollution equipment ➤ Reputation Risks & Opportunities from Bad & Good Sustainability Management – select one instance of each ➤ Create a sustainability mindset and culture in an airline ➤ Convince a transport company to create and use a dashboard for innovative and environmentally sensitive culture. ➤ Other topics as agreed ➤ Group Assignment Due
7	February 26	<p>Worldviews: Environmental Ethics and Sustainability (EE) – Scharper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ethical Theory: Schools of thought – overview ➤ Environmental ethics: Schools of thought – overview ➤ Anthropocentric and biocentric ethical perspectives ➤ The precautionary principle ➤ Topical issue: Does land have intrinsic value or merely economic value?
8	March 4	<p>Biocentrism: The Land Ethic and Gaia Theory --Scharper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community ➤ The land pyramid ➤ The notion of the Earth as a living organism ➤ The role of the human ➤ Topical issue: The ethics of patenting of life-forms
9	March 11	<p>Social) License to Commoditize the Commons? – Scharper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Historical perspectives ➤ The place of various religious ethical perspectives ➤ Notion of “The Religion of the Market” and Consumerism as a new World Religion? ➤ Guest Speaker, Dr. Mark Hathaway, School of the Environment, UofT ➤ Individual assignments due. ➤ Topical issue and Case Study: Water: Human Right or Corporate Commodity?

10	March 18	<p>Social Ecology: Ecofeminism and Environmental Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Correlation and Causation ➤ Determinant of corporate location decisions ➤ Trade-offs ➤ Topical issue: Environmental Racism in Dumping of Toxic Waste
11	March 25	<p>Indigenous Ethics and Cosmological Ethics– Scharper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notion of Filial Kinship with nature ➤ Awe and wonder as sources of environmental ethics ➤ Claims Vs Reality ➤ Winners and losers ➤ Notion of a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects ➤ Topical issue: The role of hope in environmental ethics
12	April 1	Examination

Instructors

Leonard J. Brooks is Professor of Business Ethics. He is the Executive Director of the Rotman School's Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics & Board Effectiveness, and Director of the University's Professional Accounting Centre, and Master of Forensic Accounting Program. He has authored many articles and authored or co-authored/edited several books including *Business & Professional Ethics for Directors, Executives & Accountants, 8e (2018)*; *Ethics & Governance: Developing and Maintaining an Ethical Corporate Culture, 4e (2012)*; and *Principles of Stakeholder Management (1999)*. Professor Brooks is a former Director of the Canadian Centre for Ethics & Corporate Policy, and was a member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal for Business Ethics* for fourteen years. He is a Faculty Associate of the University's Centre for Ethics and member of its Centre for Bioethics. His research interests include governance, business and professional ethics, risk management, ethical decision making, conflicts of interest, and developing and maintaining an ethical corporate culture. He received the 2000 Ethics in Action Award – Ongoing Social Responsibility – Individual in recognition of his leadership in the field of corporate social responsibility.

Webpages:

<http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/FacultyAndResearch/Faculty/FacultyBios/Brooks>

http://www.ethics.utoronto.ca/index.php?p_id=73&id=4

Dr. Stephen Scharper is associate professor at the School of the Environment and the Department for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto. He is also cross-appointed in the department of anthropology at the University of Toronto Mississauga campus, and is adjunct professor with the Toronto School of Theology.

A Senior Fellow of Massey College and a Fellow of Trinity College, Dr. Scharper holds a Masters in Theology from the University of Toronto and a Ph.D. in Religious Studies from McGill University, where his thesis supervisor was Professor Gregory Baum.

Dr. Scharper's research and teaching are in the areas of environmental ethics, worldviews and ecology, liberation theology, as well as nature and the city. His most recent book, **For Earth's Sake: Toward a Compassionate Ecology** (Novalis 2013), explores the notion of how we are being called to develop an affective relationship with the natural world in light of contemporary ecological challenges. His other books include **The Natural City: Re-envisioning Human Settlements** (co-editor, University of Toronto Press), **The Green Bible**, co-written with his spouse, Hilary Cunningham, and **Redeeming the Time: A Political Theology of the Environment** (Continuum).

Formerly President of the Religious Education Association of the US and Canada, and editor with Orbis Books and Novalis, Dr. Scharper has taught at McGill University, Prescott College, the University of Waterloo, the University of Vermont, and the University of Notre Dame, where he held the John A. O'Brien Chair in Ethics as a Visiting Professor.

Reading List

Week 7

Orr, David W. "What Is Education for?" *Earth in Mind: On Education, Environment, and the Human Prospect*. London: Island Press, 2004, pp. 7-15: <http://www.context.org/iclib/ic27/orr/>

Brooks, Leonard J. and Paul Dunn. "Ethical Behaviour—Philosophers' Contributions" (Chapter 3), *Business and Professional Ethics for Directors, Executives, and Accountants*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2014 (7th ed.), pp. 127-152.

Week 8

Leopold, Aldo. "The Land Ethic," *A Sand County Almanac*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1949: <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/texts/text3/leopold.html>

James Lovelock, "Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, v ii-12.

Week 9

Loy, David. "The Religion of the Market." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (1997) 65 (2), pp. 275-290.

Scharper, Stephen. "Water Is a Human Right, Not a Commodity," *Toronto Star*, Sept. 5, 2016: <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2016/09/05/water-is-a-human-right-not-a-mere-commodity.html>

McGregor, Deborah. "Treating Water as a Relative," *Anishnabek News*, January 10, 2014: <http://anishnabeknews.ca/2014/01/10/treating-water-like-a-relative/>

Week 10

Lynn White, Jr. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* (1967), 155: 1203-1207.

Greta Gaard and Lori Green, "Ecofeminism: Towards Global Justice and Planetary Health,"

Week 11

Guha, Ramachandra and Juan Martinez-Alier, "The Environmentalism of the Poor," in D. Clowney and P. Mosto, eds., *Earthcare: An Anthology in Environmental Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009, pp. 298-314.

Pope Francis, "Integral Ecology" (Chapter 4), *Laudato Si': Praise Be to You—On Care for Our Common Home*. Vatican City, May 24, 2015: <https://cruxnow.com/church/2015/06/18/laudato-si-chapter-four-integral-ecology/>

Thomas Berry, "The New Story," in Richard Foltz, ed. *Worldviews, Religion and the Environment: A Global Anthology*. Belmont, CA, 2008, pp. 525-531.