ADEC7500  Ethics, Economics, and Public Policy
Fall, 2015  4 Credits

Instructor: Richard McGowan, S.J.
Office: Fulton 252
Office Hours: by arrangement
Schedule: Wednesday, 6:30-9:00 pm

BC email: mcgowan@bc.edu
Telephone: 617-552-3474
Room: Stokes 205S

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
The focus of the course is to ascertain how public policy makers decide to either regulate or legislate how an industry/firm will operate in society. This is a rather ambitious goal and to begin accomplish it we will need to examine the process from three different vantage points: Ethical, Economic and Policy. The first part of the course will spent examining the role (or lack thereof!) that ethical thinking plays in motivating public policy makers to take action. The second part of the course how economic pressure come into play as policy makers try to establish bounds on an industry or a firm. Finally the role that social pressures such as the media, interest groups in influencing how public policy makers react to various issues that confront an industry or a firm.

Course Objectives

1. Exposed students to the interactions between ethical and economic thought.

2. To be able to assemble data/research to analyze a public policy issue that has economic implications.

Course Methodology
The course will be taught in a seminar style. Students will be given the task of presenting the various readings and lead the discussion on those readings.
The course will be divided into three parts.
In the first part, we will examine how various academic fields have analyzed the various concepts of ethics and the role ethical thinking plays in influencing public policy. This section of the course will be lecture and class discussions. The second part of the course will apply the various conceptions of
economics to industries such as tobacco, alcohol, gambling, and marijuana, GMOs, financial services as well as many others. In this part of the course each group will present one of the cases. The last part of the course will involve students presenting their research on a business/economic topic that evaluates the effectiveness of various public policy measures.

**Grading**
25% class participation and discussions
25% Group presentation
50% final paper

*WCAS Grading System*
The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

**Text(s)/Readings (Required)**
Economics and Ethics: AN Introduction to Theory, Institutions and Policy,
By Douglas Vickers, Praeger

**Text(s)/Readings (Recommended)**
TBA

**Important Policies**
[http://www.bc.edu/content(bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html](http://www.bc.edu/content(bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html)

**Written Work**
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html](http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html).

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.
The provision of accommodations will be made to students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at [http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html](http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html).

### Attendance

Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate’s notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

### Deadlines

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.
Course Assignments (readings, exercises and/or experiences)

Course Outline

Week 1 (Sept. 2) : Definition of Ethics vs Morality

Week 2: (Sept. 9) General Description of Ethical Thinking

Week 3: (Sept. 16) Models to describe the Business and Public Policy Processes

Week 4 & 5: (Sept. 23, 30) Gambling: Internet Gambling; Sports Gambling

Week 6 (Oct. 7) “Alcohol Industry”

Week 7 (Oct 14) “Legalization of Marijuana”

Week 8: GMOs (October 21) Case: Monsanto

Week 9: (Oct.28) Financial Services “Too Big to Fail”; Dodd- Frank

Week 10: (Nov. 4) Anti-trust (US Versus EU standards)

Week 11: (Nov. 11) “E-Cigarettes & Tobacco Industry

Weeks 12 (Nov.18), 13 (Dec. 2), and 14 (Dec. 9) : Students present their case research in a topic of Business and Public Policy in which they have an interest along with a final written report.