I. OVERVIEW

This course asks what it means to be a good citizen, good consumer, and good corporation in light of contemporary social and environmental problems. Our inquiry will focus on the relationship between democracy and capitalism on local, national, and global levels. We will investigate the complexities of understanding and implementing social responsibility from both an individual and institutional standpoint by asking questions like: Is it possible for large corporations to behave responsibly? Can one truly be an ethical consumer? How can we tell the difference between responsible companies and slick marketing? The course will emphasize deep reading, critical thinking, a variety of learning styles (audio, visual, literary, applied), in-depth research, face-to-face interviews, and the development of a resource- and skill-set that will allow you to pursue questions of corporate social responsibility on your own.

OBJECTIVES

1. Grasp the many complexities that make up consumers, corporations, and their impacts on, and responsibilities to, the larger society.
2. Achieve a basic understanding of the national and global social transformation resulting from the evolution of the relationship between the modern corporation and the modern consumer.
3. Gain the ability to think critically about the economic, social, and environmental impacts of corporations and consumers on the local, national and global levels.

IIla. REQUIRED MATERIALS


IIlb. REQUIRED RENTALS *

11. Food, Inc. – 2009. (DVD/Netflix Streaming/AppleTV/Amazon/Vudu)

* Each of these titles can also be purchased new/used in stores or online (the earlier, the better).

IIlc. RECOMMENDED READINGS

**IV. INSIGHT-QUESTION CARDS**

In lieu of weekly response papers, I’ve decided to create a much more efficient assignment that will allow you to: keep up with the readings, get credit for your hard work outside of class, and facilitate class discussion on any given day. It should only take you 10 minutes to prepare, twice a week, and it should allow you to focus more specifically on the ideas in class that speak to you.

In brief, for every class, you will bring in a 4X6 card with your name, the class day (WEEK #3 – Wednesday), and an insight gained from the readings/videos on the front (2-4 sentences). You’ll also include 1-3 questions sparked by the readings/videos on the back. What you write is completely up to you. You will hand these in at the end of every class period. At the end of the semester, I will assess the quantity (50%) and quality (50%) of the IQ cards you’ve handed in to determine a fair grade for your work on them. These cards will make up 15% of your final grade.

**V. ONLINE CONTRIBUTIONS**

On the Moodle website for the class you’ll find a folder labeled “Consumer & Corporate Social Responsibility News Forum”. Over the course of the semester, you are expected to add at least 3 interesting audio, video, photo, illustration or document files that you come across as you explore various aspects of social responsibility on the web. Your online contributions will count for 1/5 of your scholarly attitude score (2% of your final grade).

**VI. RADIO NEWS CLIP WEDNESDAYS**

On one of the 14 weeks of class, you and another student will be assigned to bring in a 1-5 minute audio clip taken from a news story concerning aspect of corporations, consumers, or social responsibility, heard on public radio within the last week. The purpose of the radio news clip will be to allow the class to discuss the most recent issues of corporate and consumer responsibility in order to apply what we are learning in class to real world events.

You may download the clip from a website (e.g. www.npr.org or www.pri.org), but it must be from a public radio news source (ABC, NBC, CNN, etc. are not acceptable). You may not repeat another student’s news clip. You must email your clip to me as an attachment (MP3 preferred) that is playable via computer (with a definitive start and stop point between 1 and 5 minutes). The sign-up sheet will be available on the very first day of class to allow you plenty of time to prepare. Your radio clip will count for 1/5 of your scholarly attitude score (2% of your final grade).

**VII. ASSIGNED OFFICE HOURS**

On one of the 14 weeks of class, you will be required to attend my office hours for 10 minutes so that I can get to know you and gain a better understanding of how the class is going for you. You may bring in any number of specific questions or topics to discuss, but at the very least I’d like you to bring in one question and one topic related to the class that interests you. Your office hour visit will count for 1/5 of your scholarly attitude score (2% of your final grade).

**VIII. SCHOLARLY ATTITUDE**

Many college instructors evaluate a student’s “participation” as one component of his or her total course grade. In this class, you will be evaluated on your “scholarly attitude.” Having a “scholarly attitude” involves developing intellectual curiosity and a genuine engagement with the ideas presented in the course. Students with a scholarly attitude take the student role seriously and demonstrate their commitment to academic pursuits by actively engaging in the material, reflecting deeply on the readings, raising thoughtful questions and comments in class, bringing unsolicited materials to share that are directly relevant to the topics being covered, come early and/or stay late to raise their own questions about the material, and generally go above and beyond the
requirements of the course. Students who lack a scholarly attitude passively complete the readings and responses, occasionally engage in other activities during lecture (iPods, texting, daydreaming, and so on), and are primarily concerned with obtaining a particular grade in the course.

I understand that some college classes do not lend themselves to the nurturing of your intellectual curiosity. The inclusion of a “scholarly attitude” score reflects my own commitment to cultivating a spirit of inquiry among my students. In other words, I promise to do my best to spark your interest the course material. The points will be given out as follows: Excellent = 4, Very Good = 3, Good = 2, OK = 1, Fair = ½, Low = 0. To receive anything above OK, you must stand out in my mind as having gone above and beyond the others in the class. This will make up 4% of your grade. The other 6% come from your online contributions (2%), radio news clip (2%), and assigned office hours (2%). The total of the 4 make up 10% of your grade. Note that this score is not assessed along the typical grading scale – it is earned from the bottom up.

IX. MIDTERM EXAM

In the middle of the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate your ability to apply your new found knowledge on a midterm exam that will cover all of the material presented since the beginning both in-class and through the assigned readings and videos. It will be a very straight forward assessment of your total comprehension of the material including concept definitions, short answers, and essays. The last week of class before the midterm will include an overview of its structure, assessment criteria, and sample questions. The exam takes place on Wednesday, March 16th and makes up 25% of your grade.

X. INDUSTRY PROFILE RESEARCH PAPER

During the second half of the semester you will craft a research paper (5 page minimum, single-spaced, 10pt font) where you will investigate the social responsibility issues involved in one of 25 industries (coffee, clothing, computers, etc). You will be asked to utilize all 3rd-party sources (i.e. you cannot integrate information offered by the companies themselves) in your investigation. The end result will be a social responsibility profile of your particular industry and the challenges/opportunities faced by socially responsible consumers. Details of this paper will be handed out at the end of the 7th full week of class. The paper will be due in class on Wednesday, May 4th. This paper will make up 25% of your grade.

XI. FINAL EXAM

At the end of the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate your ability to apply your new found knowledge on a final exam that will cover all of the material presented since the midterm in-class and through the assigned readings and videos. It will be a very straight forward assessment of your total comprehension of the material including concept definitions, short answers, and essays. The last weeks of class will include an overview of its structure, assessment criteria, and sample questions. The final exam will take place sometime between May 12th - 18th. This exam will make up 25% of your grade.

XII. GRADES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Scholarly Attitude</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IQ Cards</td>
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<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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XIII. COURSE POLICIES

Please note that late work will not be accepted except in the case of a medical/family emergency that must be verified with documentation. Make-up exams will not be offered. If you have any special requirements, please speak with me during the first week of class about possible accommodations. Attendance is not compulsory. Please come only if you are truly interested in learning about consumers, corporations, and their impacts on society.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE DUE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WED Jan 26th</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</table>
|      | FRI Jan 28th | | Perry – Stages of Critical Thinking  
Plato – Allegory of the Cave  
Hardin - Tragedy of the Commons |
| 2    | WED Feb 2nd | ADVANCED CAPITALISM | Noung – On The Protestant Ethic & The Spirit Of Capitalism  
Robbins – *Global Problems* [4-7,32-38]  
Gereffi – The Global Economy |
|      | FRI Feb 4th | | FILM: *Capitalism: A Love Story* |
| 3    | WED Feb 9th | THE EVOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION | Bakan – *The Corporation*: Chapter 1  
Robbins – *Global Problems* [86-91]  
Drutman – History of the Corporation  
VIDEO – *The Corporation*: 1-3 |
|      | FRI Feb 11th | | Bakan – *The Corporation*: Chapter 2  
*Summary Excerpt* – Corporation: Legal Status & Types  
DSM IV Summary - Psychopathy  
VIDEO – *The Corporation*: 5,6,8,9 |
| 4    | WED Feb 16th | CORPORATE ORGANIZATION | Bakan – *The Corporation*: Chapter 3  
VIDEO – *The Corporation*: 4,7 |
|      | FRI Feb 18th | | Ritzer – The McDonaldization of Society |
| 5    | WED Feb 23rd | CORPORATIONS & THE STATE | Bakan – *The Corporation*: Chapter 4  
VIDEO – *The Corporation*: 17-21 |
|      | FRI Feb 25th | | Robbins – *Global Problems* [102-103,118-119,122-127]  
Smith, Chomsky, Bakan – Corporation: Criticism |
| 6    | WED Mar 2nd | CORPORATIONS & CONSUMERISM | Ryan – *Stuff: The Secret Life of Everyday Things* |
|      | FRI Mar 4th | | Bakan – *The Corporation*: Chapter 5  
VIDEO – *The Corporation*: 11-15  
Veblen, Mill: Conspicuous Consumption |
|      | | | FILM: *The Cove* |

**SPRING BREAK**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Reading/Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>WED</td>
<td>Mar 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>*** MIDTERM EXAM ***</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| 8    | FRI  | Mar 16<sup>th</sup> | ALTERNATIVE ECONOMIC PARADIGMS  
Derber – Corporation Nation: Five Reasons [172-186]  
Robbins – Global Problems [364-377]  
VIDEO – The Corporation: 22,23 |
|      | WED  | Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> | CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY  
Frederick – Corporation, Be Good!: Four Views [30-35]  
UNCTAD – Disclosure of the Impact of Corp’s [3-7]  
Derber – Corporation Nation: What’s Wrong? [221-229] |
|      | FRI  | Mar 25<sup>th</sup> | Alternative Economic Paradigms  
Anderson – Confessions of a Radical Industrialist |
|      | WED  | Mar 30<sup>th</sup> | THE RISE OF THE CITIZEN-CONSUMER  
Bakan – The Corporation: Chapter 6  
Robbins – Global Problems [378-387] |
|      | FRI  | Apr 1<sup>st</sup>  | VIDEO: Reich – Supercapitalism |
|      | WED  | Apr 6<sup>th</sup>  | THE ETHICAL CONSUMER  
Harrison, et al – The Ethical Consumer Ch 1-6 & 13 |
|      | FRI  | Apr 8<sup>th</sup>  | FILM: Food, Inc. |
|      | WED  | Apr 13<sup>th</sup> | ECONOMY & DEMOCRACY  
Clark & Unterberger – Shopping with a Conscience  
Young & Welford – Ethical Shopping |
|      | FRI  | Apr 15<sup>th</sup> | Jones – The Better World Shopping Guide  
Jones – Social Responsibility Activism |
|      | WED  | Apr 20<sup>th</sup> | VIDEO: The Story of Stuff |
| 13   | WED  | Apr 27<sup>th</sup> | EASTER BREAK |
|      | FRI  | Apr 29<sup>th</sup> | LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY  
McDonough – Cradle To Cradle  
Hollender – In Our Every Deliberation  
Esposito – Sustainability  
Toffel - Sustainability  
Jones – On Sustainability |
| 14   | WED  | May 4<sup>th</sup>  | RESEARCH EXCHANGE  
*** RESEARCH PAPER DUE *** |
|      | FRI  | May 6<sup>th</sup>  | CLASS WRAP-UP |
|      | May 12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> | *** FINAL EXAM *** |

*All full-length books and videos/films are noted in bold along with major assignments.*
ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to behave in accordance with the academic honesty policy developed by College of the Holy Cross. Plagiarized, fabricated, or fraudulent work will not be tolerated, nor will facilitating the process for other students. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please refer to:

www.holycross.edu/catalog/academic-honesty-policy.pdf