

Sample Case for Mid-Term In-Class 'Mock' Examination for MN330: Business, Ethics & Society.

John Cullen

General Instructions

Only answer on the answer sheet (A sample answer sheet is appended to the end of this case).

Write your name and student number on the answer sheet in the spaces provided.

This exercise generally follows the format of the end-of-term examination and aims to assist develop students' ability to apply the content to the module to a short case. PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS THAT ONLY 20 QUESTIONS ARE ASKED IN THIS EXERCISE. **IN THE SUMMER EXAMINATION 30 QUESTIONS WILL BE ASKED.**

All questions will be multiple choice questions (MCQs) and students **must answer on the answer sheet provided.** Failure to do this will result in students receiving 0 (zero) if this happens in the final examination.

Each correctly answered question is worth 1 mark each. Each examination will also apply negative marking to reward students who have prepared for the examination and to discourage guessing. Each incorrect or unanswered question will be awarded a mark of -1 (minus 1).

Please read the case below in full and answer questions 1-20 on the answer sheet.

MINI-CASE

Bill, Gemma and John have worked closely in a department in a large organisation for 5 years. Recently Gemma and her partner have decided to start a family but she is very concerned about how well this will be received in her workplace. Her manager frequently makes jokes about women 'costing' more than men in the workplace due to the organisations need to recruit and train replacements for women who take maternity leave. Her colleagues are all male, and those who have families also have wives or partners who work exclusively at home. Shortly after Gemma becomes pregnant, she contacts her manager to let him know that she will be applying for maternity leave in the near future.

John is a gay man who does not discuss his sexual orientation with his work colleagues. This is not because John is ashamed, but because he has often heard colleagues joke about homosexual people or clichés. John feels that he would be singled out for negative treatment if he disclosed his sexual orientation. Eventually the amount of homophobic comments and statements that are made openly in John's company leads John to believe that somebody in the department has learned about this aspect of his personal life which

he preferred to keep private. John approaches his manager to discuss this in private, and the manager tells him that he is being too sensitive. Following this meeting however, John feels that the anti-gay atmosphere in the workplace increases and he decides to resign from the organisation.

When John leaves the department the manager feels that the work Gemma performed in tandem with him is no longer necessary and he arranges for her position to be 'downsized'. The manager thinks that this is fair given that the work she was originally hired to do is no longer needed by the department. Bill is very concerned about what has happened in the organisation as he found Gemma and John to be very competent members of staff who he had grown to consider friends over the years. His work involves liaising with a number of departments throughout the organisation and he gradually learns that there is an unwritten HR policy that sees employees solely as resources which are hired to deliver value to the organisation. Any form of employee relationship beyond this is seen as being the source of a cost to the employer. This aligns with the overall decision-making style in the organisation which prioritizes economic, 'bottom-line' decision-making over any other style. Bill gradually learns from a number of sources that the organisation favours hiring married heterosexual males as it believes that they make longer commitments to the organisation. He hears a number of stories from various parties in the organisation which supports this.

Gemma and John both take legal action against the organisation as they believe that they have not been treated well in the lead-up to them leaving the organisation. Their primary objective in doing this is to ensure that the loss of earnings they have suffered as a result of leaving or being dismissed from the organisation is addressed. Bill has become concerned about unwritten policies in the organisation and wishes to address what he perceives as bad practice. He considers himself to have high levels of idealism and low levels of relativism so is deeply concerned about the ethics of people who have low levels of each! More importantly he has recently found himself drawn to a moral philosophy which emphasises that individuals should be concerned with making choices that will eventually lead to their flourishing as human beings. This philosophy also stresses that individuals typically make such decisions in relation to the productive work that they do in society. Bill is increasingly uncomfortable in the organisation and contemplates reporting it to an outside agency for what, he believes, are substantial ethical violations. Bill researches ethical decision-making and discovers a decision-making process which begins by determining an individual's moral awareness of whether a situation involves ethics or morality.



Answer Sheet

Student Number

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MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Mark like this
- Use an HB pencil or blue/black ballpoint.
- Do NOT use correction fluid/paper
- Do NOT crease or fold this sheet
- Make no stray marks
- Please do NOT tick, cross or circle



Name

Module Code/Title

Date

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