

Chair of Economic and Social Ethics  
Prof. Dr. Matthias Uhl  
email: matthias.uhl@uni-hohenheim.de



## Reading Group “Economic Ethics” – Summer Semester 2025

### Course description:

The reading group targets doctoral students and post-docs from the University of Hohenheim. We will read seminal texts from the field of economic ethics and then discuss them together. Every week, one or two participants will give a summary of one or two texts. Once we have familiarized ourselves with the authors’ line of argument, we will discuss it critically. We will deal with current topics, but also with those that have been relevant to the field since its beginnings but remain controversial. In particular, we will dive into three sub-areas of economic ethics. The first will be about the meaningfulness of the field of business or management ethics as a whole. Here we will read some prominent critiques of the discipline. Secondly, we will look at the still hotly debated question of the moral limits of markets and consider proposed arguments for their expansion and containment. Thirdly, we will take a closer look at the young empirical field of folk economics, which has set itself the task of systematically examining lay intuitions about causal mechanisms of the economy as well as their perceived moral valence.

### Selected Literature:

Boatright, John R. (1999). “Does business ethics rest on a mistake?,” *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 9(4), 583-591.

Brennan, Jason; Jaworski, Peter (2015b). “In defense of commodification,” *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, 2(2), 357-377.

Friedman, Milton (2007). “The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits,” In: *Corporate Ethics and Corporate Governance* (pp. 173-178). Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.

Rubin, Paul (2003). “Folk Economics,” *Southern Economic Journal*, 70(1), 157-171.

Sandel, Michael (1998). “What money can’t buy: The moral limits of markets,” *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, delivered at Brasenose College, Oxford, May 11 and 12, 1998.

### Modalities:

The reading group will take place on Wednesdays during the summer semester between 2 and 4 p.m. A detailed program including the seminar room will be published before the beginning of the semester. Please join the ILIAS course at:

[https://ilias.uni-hohenheim.de/goto.php?target=crs\\_1687313\\_rcodev45BHwpSk8&client\\_id=UHOH](https://ilias.uni-hohenheim.de/goto.php?target=crs_1687313_rcodev45BHwpSk8&client_id=UHOH)