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| **Department** | | | Institute for Corporate Citizenship | |
| **Discipline** | | | Any | |
| **Research Focus Area** | | | Business Ethics | |
| **Total capacity for 2024** | | | 2 (1 Masters and 1 PhD) | |
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| **Supervision Team details:** | **Academic Profile** | | | **Capacity** |
| **Prof Eccles**  **[[1]](#footnote-1)(Contact person for this focus area)**  Office: Samuel Pauw 3-36  Email: [ecclens@unisa.ac.za](mailto:ecclens@unisa.ac.za)  ORCID : https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5845-5946  Institutional repository link | Neil Eccles is Professor in the Institute for Corporate Citizenship. He has published widely in the broad area of business ethics. His work (particularly his later work) has typically been of a critical character. He has supervised a number masters and doctoral students. Finally, he is the editor-in-chief of the *African Journal of Business Ethics*. | | | 1 doctoral candidates |
| **Mr Asmal**  Email: [asmalmz@unisa.ac.za](mailto:asmalmz@unisa.ac.za) | Zakaria Asmal is a lecturer at the Institute for Corporate Citizenship in the College of Economic and Management Sciences at UNISA. He is also a PhD candidate and researcher at the Network for Religion Education at the University of Cape Town. His research broad focus is on political and religious philosophy including Islamic political philosophy, African philosophy, the philosophy of liberation, postcolonial studies and Africana existential philosophy. His doctoral dissertation analyses the role of religion in the writings of South African Black Consciousness (BC) leader Bantu Stephen Biko. More specifically it shows how the academically neglected strand of religion in Biko’s works is a central thematic concern in his exposition of the BC cultural revival project. His dissertation poses two basic questions. First, for Biko, does Christianity–which is itself of colonial import and conceptualisation–have a role to play in liberation? Second, if religion generally does have a role to play in liberation, how are we to decolonise Christianity to make it relevant to racialised settings such as South Africa | | | 1 Masters student |
| **Model of supervision** | Candidates will be allocated to a supervisor but will be required to work independently within the requirements of higher degree studies. Additionally, the candidate should submit his/her work to be reviewed by a blind peer review process. | | | |
| **Selection criteria: Master’s/Doctorate** | Refer to the qualification website for selection criteria. | | | |
| **Selection Procedure** | Refer to the qualification website for selection procedure. | | | |
| **Research scope** | The field of business ethics is exceptionally broad. At its most general level, it is a branch of applied ethics that considers the moral dimensions of business. It asks the fundamental questions: Is business good or bad? Is business right or wrong? And on a practical level it asks: Assuming we shouldn’t just chuck it out altogether, how can we make business better?  Conventionally, areas of study that have fallen under its banner would include:  corporate social responsibility, corporate citizenship, corporate sustainability, social accounting and reporting, responsible business leadership, socially responsible investment and even corporate governance. The involvement of business in issues ranging from corruption through to climate change, sweat shops through to inequality and just about any social or environmental issue in between has been considered. Under the banner of business ethics, business activities can and have been considered from every major ethical tradition (deontology, teleology and virtue ethics perspectives). And under its banner business has been presented both positively (as a force for good in society) and negatively (as a source of bad).  While we will consider almost any interesting study that could conceivably fall under the banner of business ethics we will give preference to the following:   1. **Critical studies**   Grounded in the assumption that business *is* good, much of the work falling under the banner of business ethics has sought to “prove” or demonstrate this. In effect, either by intent or by accident, it has sought to legitimize business, to sell business to society. We however are profoundly suspicious of the underlying assumption that business *is* good. We feel that it ought to be challenged. In this regard we will give preference to projects that are located within a critical research tradition (Alvesson et al, 2000). Studies might include feminist, critical race, Marxist, critical theory, postmodern, critical histories, decoloniality perspectives of business.   1. **Socially responsible investment**   By accident of history we have a particular interest in what has been labelled “socially responsible investment” as a sub-discipline of business ethics. (alternatively labelled: ethical investment, sustainable investment, responsible investment but NOT including so-called corporate social investment). We will give preference to students who are interested in this, particularly if this interest can be characterized as critical.   1. **Business ethics teaching**   In their global survey of the perceptions of academics as to the most pressing business ethics research issues, Holland and Albrecht (2013) reported that “issues relating to business ethics education such as curriculum, pedagogy, faculty, and accreditation” emerged as the most commonly identified issue. We too have an interest in this field in no small way driven by our own teaching efforts in delivering the signature module of the College of Economic and Management Sciences. This module, which has as a theoretical basis moral philosophy, is delivered to a large body of student and provides fertile ground for examining student experiences of what is delivered and even for experimentation. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Subject Field** | **This is a selection of articles and/or recent books in this research focus area. ‎Further reading over and above these is essential:**  General:   * Alvesson, M. 2011. *Classics in Critical Management Studies*. Elgar Research, Cheltenham, UK. * Brown, W. 2015. *Undoing the Demos. Neoliberalism’s stealth revolution*. Zone Books. * MacIntyre, A. 2011. *After Virtue*. Bloomsbury, Bedford. * Harvey, D. 2014. *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*. Profile Books, London. * Rawls, J. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA. * Sen, A. 2010. *The Idea of Justice*. Penguin.   Socially Responsible Investment:   * Eccles N.S. & Viviers. S. 2011. The origins and meanings of names describing investment practices that integrate a consideration of ESG issues in the academic literature. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 104; 389-402. * Richardson, B.J. 2008. *Socially Responsible Investment Law. Regulating Unseen Polluters*. Oxford University Press, Oxford. * Sullivan, R. & Mackenzie, C. 2006. *Responsible Investment*. Greenleaf Publishing, Sheffield.   Business Ethics Teaching:   * Buchko, A.A. and Buchko, K.J. 2009. So we teach business ethics – Do they learn? *Journal of Business Ethics Education,* 6: 119-146. * Foucault, M. 1980. *Power/Knowledge*. Vintage, New York. * Freire, P. 2005 *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Continuum, New York Available at: http://www.users.humboldt.edu/jwpowell/edreformFriere\_pedagogy.pdf * Giroux, H. 2011. *On Critical Pedagogy*. The Continuum International Publishing Group, New York. * Holland, D. and Albrecht, C. 2013. The worldwide academic field of business ethics: Scholars’ perceptions of the most important issues. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 117: 777-788. * Van Niekerk, A.A. 2003. Can more business ethics teaching halt corruption in companies? *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 22(2): 128 – 138. | | | |
| **Reading:**  **Research Methodology** | **This is a selection books on methodology. Further reading over and above these is essential:**   * Alvesson, M. & Deetz, S. 2000. *Doing Critical Management Research*. London: Sage * Creswell, J.W. 2009. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches***.** London: Sage. * Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master’s and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book***.** Pretoria: Van Schaik. | | | |
| **Resources: Scholar community** | * Journal of Business Ethics - https://www.springer.com/philosophy/ethics+and+moral+philosophy/journal/10551 * African Journal of Business Ethics - http://ajobe.journals.ac.za/pub * The Business Ethics Network of Africa – [www.benafrica.org](http://www.benafrica.org) * The European Business Ethics Network – www.eben-net.org | | | |
| **Potential M&D research focus areas or research projects** | | | | |
| **Unit of Analysis** | | **Research Focus** | | |
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1. Please note that consulting the research focus area leader is no assurance that your application will be approved. If, however, your application is approved, it is also not a guarantee that he/she will be allocated as your supervisor. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)