

Ethikos Volume 35, Number 4. October 01, 2021 On ethics: Jeffrey Moriarty

Jeffrey Moriarty (jmoriarty@bentley.edu), Professor of Philosophy and Executive Director, Hoffman Center for Business Ethics at Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts, USA

An interview by Adam Turteltaub (adam.turteltaub@corporatecompliance.org), CHC, CCEP, Chief Engagement & Strategy Officer, SCCE & HCCA.

AT: First, congratulations on your new position as executive director of the W. Michael Hoffman Center for Business Ethics at Bentley University. I have a special affinity for the center, I have to admit. When I first started working in compliance and ethics about 20 years ago, Mike Hoffman was one of the first people I got to know. He was a great teacher for me and, I have no doubt, for his students. Can you start by giving us some background on the center and its mission?

JM: Thank you! The mission of the W. Michael Hoffman Center for Business Ethics (HCBE) is “to give leadership in the creation of organizational cultures that align effective business performance with ethical business conduct.”^[1] Put a bit more simply, we try to make the business world more ethical. Bentley University is an educational institution, so the way we do this is through education. We produce and share knowledge in business ethics with multiple audiences, including undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals.

AT: What are some of the major areas of focus for the center today?

JM: HCBE is best understood as a collection of people who are committed to business ethics in their research, teaching, and professional activities. At the present moment, HCBE has just two full-time staff, but we are enriched by a group of eight faculty fellows and 24 advisory board members. Our faculty fellows hail from a variety of departments on campus, including philosophy, law, management, and accountancy. Our advisory board members come from a variety of organizations, including Raytheon Technologies, NAVEX Global, and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. So, there is no single project or set of projects HCBE is working on. Rather, individuals who are part of our community each pursue their own projects in their own unique ways, trading ideas with and getting feedback from each other.

As far as HCBE’s activities go, we host speakers and conferences throughout the year. Typically, we have monthly brown-bag seminars geared toward faculty; two major outside speakers, especially for students; and conferences for faculty and professionals. We have been lucky to have great corporate sponsors for our events, including Raytheon, Verizon, and State Street. We also successfully transformed our executive education course “Managing Ethics in Organizations,” which we have offered continuously since 1995, from a five-day, in-person program to a three-day, online program. We are really pleased with the results.

AT: Let’s talk about your background a bit. Can you share with us your journey to Bentley and what you’ve been teaching there?

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