

# Objectivism, Work, and Business

Fall 2025 - ARI Live Courses Syllabus - DRAFT

Last updated: September 06, 2025

**COURSE TITLE:** Objectivism, Work, and Business

**COURSE ABBREVIATION:** PHIL 290

**COURSE YEAR AND TERM:** Fall 2025

## PREREQUISITES

At minimum, students should have read *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead* before starting this course.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Howard Roark, Hank Rearden, Francisco d'Anconia—Ayn Rand's heroes inspire the zealous pursuit of an outstanding and rewarding career. Yet, it can feel as if the gap between the real and the ideal is unbridgeable. How do you take the abstract principles embodied by Rand's heroes and apply them to the concrete reality of your own career? How can you use Objectivism to achieve the success you desire?

Answering such questions is the whole purpose of "Objectivism, Work, and Business," a course designed to help you apply the timeless principles of Rand's life-serving philosophy to navigate the dynamic landscape of your working life.

Wherever you are in your career, this course offers unmatched value. You'll mine Rand's philosophy for its powerful life and career guidance. You'll unpack its lessons with the help of Tal Tsfany, president and CEO of ARI, and Don Watkins, bestselling author and ARI's vice president of fundraising and marketing. Through guest lectures, you'll see how top-notch businessmen, intellectuals, and creatives have leveraged Objectivism to make important career decisions—and how doing so has empowered them to build lucrative companies and fulfilling lives.

Are you ready to elevate your perspective and supercharge your career? Whether you're struggling with an important decision or just want rocket fuel for the journey you're already on, this course will help. Approach your next fork in the road—your next make-or-break decision—with newfound clarity and confidence.

**COURSE DURATION:** 8 weeks

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Lead Instructor(s):

**Don Watkins**

Mr. Watkins is vice president of fundraising and marketing at the Ayn Rand Institute. He is the best-selling author of books such as *Equal Is Unfair* (co-authored with Yaron Brook) and, most recently, *Effective Egoism*.

**Tal Tsfany**

Mr. Tsfany is president and CEO of the Ayn Rand Institute. Previously, he was an entrepreneur, investor, and executive in the software world in Israel and the United States. He is a co-founder of the Ayn Rand Center Israel and his most recent book is *Secrets of a Passionate Life*.

Teaching Assistant:

**Nicolas Krusek**

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

Over the course of 8 classes, we will cover the following topics:

- The philosophy of work and philosophy at work
- Choosing a career path
- Career skills
- Developing a career vision and strategy

There will be three types of assignments in this course:

- Initial survey
- Short weekly assignments
- Career vision and strategy

TAs will provide some written feedback on the assignments. Specific criteria for each assignment will be described separately. Please see the ARI Live Courses Student Handbook for our late policy in regard to assignments.

**LIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**

Classes will take place on Thursdays, 3:30–4:30 pm ET (12:30–1:30 am PT) via Zoom and will be recorded. Once enrolled, you will be provided access to the course on Populi, from where you will be able to attend the live class by clicking the “Join Conference” Zoom link at the time of the class.

**TBD:** Guest speakers during the course

**Week 01 – October 02**

The philosophy of work and philosophy at work

**Week 02 – October 09**

Choosing a career path 1

**Week 03 – October 30**

Choosing a career path 2

**Week 04 – November 06**

Career skills 1

**Week 05 – November 13**

Career skills 2

**Week 06 – December 04**

Developing a career vision and strategy 1

**Week 07 – December 11**

Developing a career vision and strategy 2

**Week 08 – December 18**

Final thoughts and open Q&A

**OFFICE HOURS**

We'll post information on Populi about office hours availability and the links to book an appointment. We encourage all students to make use of office hours to discuss both course material and your own assignments. But for those students unable to attend the live sessions, we especially encourage you to come to some office hours, and this is the other way to participate in the course even if you are unable to attend the live sessions.

**READINGS**

Students are required to purchase two books:

- [\*Secrets of a Passionate Life\*](#) by Tal Tsfany
- [\*Effective Egoism\*](#) by Don Watkins

You may be asked to read or watch shorter pieces as part of your weekly assignments.

**OVERALL COURSE GRADE**

10% of total = grade on your initial survey, graded on a scale of 0 to 5

30% of total = grade on your weekly short assignments, each graded on a scale of 0 to 5

30% of total = grade on career vision and strategy, graded on a scale of 0 to 20

30% of total = class participation grade

**COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES**

All policies from the ARI Live Courses Handbook apply to this course, including policies on late work and extensions.

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### **GENERAL POLICIES:**

Familiarize yourself with the [ARI Live Courses Handbook](#) [real link forthcoming] if you have not already done so. Unless specified otherwise in this syllabus, all policies in the Handbook are in effect for this course.

### **COURSE ACCESS:**

Upon enrollment, you will be provided access to the course via Populi, from where you will be have access to:

- Live class schedule and the “Join Conference” Zoom link to attend live classes
- Recordings of past classes
- Office hour details, including links to book an appointment
- Teaching assistant information
- How to join the ARI Live Courses Discord server

Populi also has an app that provides limited access to the course on mobile. Contact [livecourses@aynrand.org](mailto:livecourses@aynrand.org) if you have any issues accessing the course on Populi.

### **COURSE COMMUNICATION:**

- Course announcements are posted in the course Bulletin Board on Populi and automatically sent out as email or push notifications to your device if using the Populi mobile app. Please make sure you are receiving these emails and notifications, and that the emails are not going to your spam folder. If you join after the start of class, be sure to check the course Bulletin Board for anything you may have missed.
- For questions about course content, structure or schedule, please ask during the live class or in the course channel on the ARI Live Courses Discord server (see the Discord information placed on Populi). Questions about your assignments and grades should be directed to the teaching assistant.
- For personal administrative issues (e.g., website problems), contact [livecourses@aynrand.org](mailto:livecourses@aynrand.org).
- If you have a technical issue preventing submission of an assignment, email your assignment to the Instructor or TA and cc: [livecourses@aynrand.org](mailto:livecourses@aynrand.org) to troubleshoot the matter.