

SOCIAL & ETHICAL ISSUES IN BUSINESS

MGMT 567 (SPRING - 2008)

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Office Hour: Monday 1 - 2, after class, or by appointment
Location: The class meets in RO 220 on Mondays from 6:20 to 8:50 PM

Course Description

Introduces principles of ethical thinking and applies them to situations and models for business decision making. Explores and analyzes business ethics issues relating to the interaction between the organization and society. Provides a conceptual and systematic study of business ethics to develop consistent criteria for business ethics decision making.

At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- Describe important historical approaches to ethics.
- Discuss the role of corporations (formal organizations) in today's global society and the relationship among corporations and their various stakeholders and constituencies.
- Critically examine the impact of individual and business decisions to social/ethical problems.
- Locate and identify topical and salient resources required for ethical analysis and problem solving
- Articulate and defend opinions on a wide range of contemporary topics including environmentalism, privacy, labor rights, community involvement, advertising, and technology.

Throughout the course business applications and case studies will be emphasized.

Class Format

A seminar format is used extensively for this course. As such, the role of the instructor will be to introduce material, facilitate informative discussions, and offer resources to the class that they might not have seen but may be interested in. It is expected that all students will actively participate in class discussions and will come to class prepared with resources that contribute to the conversation and topic understanding.

Group casework and in-class exercises will be used extensively during the semester to illustrate concepts and foment critical thinking on ethical issues. Videos and other multimedia will also be used on occasion to supplement class discussion.

Attendance

Consistently arriving late for class will result in lowering of your grade by ten points. Please notify the instructor via email if you will be unable to attend class. Unexcused absences in excess of 3 will result in a failing grade.

Assessment

The final grade will consist of the following components:

Assignment	Points
Position Paper #1	25 points
Position Paper #2	25 points
Peer Reviews	12 points
Corporate Analysis	25 points
Class Participation	13 points

Semester letter grades will be assigned as follows:

Total Points	Grade
100 – 93	A
92 – 90	A-
89 – 86	B+
85 – 83	B
82 – 80	B-
79 – 77	C+
76 – 73	C
72 – 70	C-
<70	F

Position Papers and Peer Reviews

Each student will be required to complete two position papers during the semester. Each

paper will be on an issue of the student's choosing within the confines of the major topics covered in the class. The papers will be assessed on the articulation of the stance, the strength of the argument, and the use of supporting sources. A moderated peer review system will be used to grade the papers and provide students with experience in providing, and receiving, critical feedback.

- Position papers should be a maximum of 6 pages long double-spaced, with standard fonts and margins. References and figures will not count against the page limit.
- The paper should contain a bibliography citing all sources used to complete the paper. It should include at least 5 references. These should be recent (published within the last 4 years), with the exception being classic texts.
- You are not permitted to "recycle" a paper from a previous course to fulfill this requirement.
- All papers and peer reviews will be submitted electronically. Instructions on this process will be made available through blackboard.

Corporate Analysis

This is a project that should be worked on throughout the semester. It is due at the beginning of class on 12/13.

Students will analyze and report on the ethics strategy of a major corporation. It is expected that students will discuss the components of the ethics policy, how it impacts the various stakeholders in the organization, and its impact on overall corporate strategy and the bottom line. A sample outline will be made available on the blackboard site.

- The corporate analysis paper should be a maximum of 18 pages long double-spaced, with standard fonts and margins. References and figures will not count against the page limit.
- The paper should contain a bibliography citing all sources used to complete the paper. It should include at least 10 references. These should be recent (published within the last 4 years), with the exception being classic texts.
- You are not permitted to "recycle" a paper from a previous course to fulfill this requirement. Upon completion, please email me a digital copy of your assignment as a Word or PDF attachment. The file name should include your first and last name.

Class Participation

Participation entails class attendance and active involvement in class discussions. Students are expected to question, challenge, argue, and debate the viewpoints and issues

presented in class. Undoubtedly there will be those with dissimilar views. I expect all discussion to remain on topic and handled in a respectful manner.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism, the use of material from another source without proper attribution, is very serious and will result, at minimum, in a grade of 0 for the assignment. You are permitted to use the citation style of your choice, so long as you use a single style for the duration of each assignment.

Required Materials

There are three required texts for this course:

- 1) *Business and Society: Stakeholders, Ethics, Public Policy* (Paperback) by Anne T. Lawrence, James Weber, James E. Post. McGraw-Hill College;
- 2) *Epidemic of Care: A Call for Safer, Better, and More Accountable Health Care* by George C. Halvorson and George J., MD Isham. Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 0133507866
- 3) *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam. Simon & Schuster. ISBN: 0743203046

Additional readings will be available on the Blackboard site or will be provided as handouts.

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
1/28	Course Introduction	
2/4	Conceptualizing Corporate Social Responsibility	BS 1, 3
2/11	Philosophical perspectives on ethics	
2/18	Business & Public Affairs	BS 2, 4
2/25	Ethical Issues & Dilemma	BS 5, 6
3/3	Ethics and the Health Care Industry	Epidemic of Care
3/10	<i>No class Spring break</i>	
3/17	Corporations and Public Policy	BS 10 Case study 1 due
3/24	Environmental Policy Issues	BS 11, 12
3/31	Researching Ethical Policy - In the library	
4/7	Corporate social responsibility in the non-profit world	BS 8, 9
4/14	The community as a stakeholder / Trends in US Society	Bowling Alone
4/21	Media and Advertising	BS 13, 14, 20
4/28	Business and consumers	BS 15, 16
5/5	Technology and the Digital Divide	Case study 2 due
5/12	Global Business	BS 7