

Doane College at Grand Island
Spring Term
March 14 – May 14, 2011

BUS 365 – Business and Professional Ethics

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Office Hours – By Appointment

Course Description

Students explore the ethical implications of business policies, the decisions made and actions taken by business entities, and individual decisions and actions within a business environment. Students will be able to identify ethical problems found in business situations, analyze these problems from multiple perspectives, and apply concepts from many facets of the business environment in determining a recommended course of action for policy makers, organizations and individual.

Required Text

None required. Class will be taught from case studies provided by the instructor.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to stimulate the student's thinking on issues of business ethics and social responsibility. The material covered will prepare students to recognize ethical dilemmas that arise in the conduct of business and provide guidance in managing these issues in a socially and ethically responsible manner. The course will assist students in formulating their own standards of organizational integrity and professionalism.

Specific course objectives include:

- Increasing the student's awareness of the ethical dimension of business conduct
- Contributing insight into the professional standards and responsibilities of the student in future career endeavors
- Developing analytical skills for identifying and resolving ethical and social responsibility issues in business; and
- Practicing decision making about ethical and social responsibility issues

The case studies will provide the student with the opportunity to reflect on and critically examine the values and assumptions brought to business decisions made by others in classic cases of business ethics.

Course Grading

The final course grade will be composed of the following:

Five (5) Case Study Summations - 100 points (20 points each)

Attendance and Class Participation - Bonus of 0 – 10 points

Projected Grade Distribution will be as follows:

A 90 – 100 points

B 80 – 89 points

C 70 – 79 points

D 60 – 69 points

At the end of the term, individual grades may be raised by bonus points earned through class participation. The number of bonus points earned is at the discretion of the instructor. As a result, the actual grade earned will not be known with certainty until after the term has been completed. Overall grade will *not* be lowered as a result of lack of class participation.

Case Study Summations:

Students will be asked to read and provide a critical analysis and summation of assigned classic case studies of ethical dilemmas in business. In a brief written synopsis, students will identify the ethical dilemma, define the ethical conflict, evaluate the situation in light of the concepts of *human welfare*, *human justice*, and *human dignity*, select a form of moral reasoning, and conclude whether an ethical decision was made in the referenced case study.

Case study summations will be discussed in class as well as handed in as written assignments.

Doane College makes all decisions regarding the cancellation of classes due to bad weather. In the event of a cancelled class, assignments carry over to the next class time.

Please Note – There will be no class on Tuesday, April 5. This means that we will complete this course on Tuesday, May 10.

Course Outline and Case Study Assignments

Session Number 1 – Is business ethics possible in a capitalistic environment?

Course Introduction
Personal Introductions
Case studies and critical thinking
Assigning the case studies
An argument for ethics and social responsibility in business

Session Number 2 – Business Ethics and Food Products

Case Study Summations
Study No. 1 – Frankenfoods: Is genetic engineering of food products ethical?
Study No. 2 – Not so *Quik*: Nestlé and the Infant Formula Debacle

Session Number 3 – Ethical Behavior in the Workplace

Case Study Summations
Study No. 3 – Sexual harassment: Perception or reality?

Session Number 4 – Tobacco and Tires: Ethical Considerations When Products Kill

Case Study Summations
Study No. 4 – The tobacco issue: Who's really to blame?
Study No. 5 – Faulty tires/faulty gas tanks: Ford can't catch a break

Session Number 5 – Ethical Consideration of the Environment

Case Study Summations
Study No. 6 – The canal that nobody loved

Session Number 6 – The Ethics of Greed

Case Study Summations
Study No. 7 – Was Martha just getting “Wiggie” with it?
Study No. 8 – Lincoln Savings & Loan: When auditors need auditing

Session Number 7 – Microscopes and Morphing Ethics

Case Study Summations
Study No. 9 – The *Challenger*: An unnecessary catastrophe?

Session Number 8 – “When in Rome...”

Case Study Summations
Study No. 10 – Who was responsible for Bhopal?
Course recap