

Bus603 Ethics and Social Responsibility (3 credits)**Instructor: Dr. Don Dickerson****402-770-1149; DrD1@neb.rr.com**

How can we make wiser decisions? How do we defend them when we make them? What standards or principles can guide us as we plan, as we problem solve, as we move into the future? The complexities of our modern world at home and abroad are unmatched in human history. We know so much yet so little. Evolutions and revolutions place high demands on government and the marketplace. Trying to keep afloat in highly competitive industries tests the character of individuals and companies. Advancing technology beckons us to the latest discovery or invention. Scandals in the business world and among leaders challenge our optimism and resolve to hold fast to what we value.

Managers get bombarded with a multitude of decisions on a daily basis. Decisions in business involve many factors. Ethics is only one. Today it occupies a central concern in all corners of the world. Business or organizational decisions are typically made from three points of view: the economic, the legal, and the moral (or “ethical,” as some prefer to call it). But ethics always looms large in decision making.

This class tackles a number of tough cases that touch on a variety of issues individuals and managers face locally, nationally, and globally. The focus is clearly on using ethical approaches to arrive at sound decisions. Applying sound critical thinking to all we do as managers and leaders demands very high ethical standards in order to demonstrate social responsibility. The purpose is not to teach you *what* to think, but *how* to think wisely from an ethical point of view.

"A person who stands for nothing will fall for anything."

Malcolm X

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A more diverse, technologically changing society produces differing ethical standards that must be examined by managers for their application to decisions made about tasks and people within the workplace. This course examines the relationship between business (both for-profit and not-for-profit) organizations and society as a whole, and specifically, the responsibility of business to society. Students will focus on learning how to think ethically and critically in planning, decision-making, evaluating, and problem solving. (Required core course.)

“When in doubt, tell the truth. It will disarm your friends and befuddle your enemies.” –Mark Twain

READINGS

1. Required text: *Ethics and the Conduct of Business, 5th ed.*, John R. Boatright. Prentice Hall, 2007, ISBN 0-13-194721-4
2. Designated articles on the Internet and/or handouts given in class.
3. A class notebook (referred to as “CN”) on related topics/information pertinent to the course will be distributed at the beginning of the class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES. This course encourages the application of ethics to many important issues that arise in the business and professional world. Through reading, discussion, reflective writing, presentations, and especially critical thinking, you will:

1. demonstrate competency in analyzing and evaluating case studies/scenarios.
2. apply ethical principles and theories to arrive at socially responsible solutions;
3. learn how to use an ethical algorithm (process) in the solution of case studies and workplace dilemmas; and as consumers and disseminators of information;
4. examine your own values and personal worldview imperative, to see how these contribute to defensible ethical decisions and social responsibility.

"If you tell the truth you don't have to remember anything."

Mark Twain

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance is an expectation, not an option.** Active work is done in the classroom environment, stemming from assignments. Your contribution to the exchange of ideas can significantly impact the overall learning experience of the class.
2. **Computer generate all written assignments online, using Microsoft Word.**
3. Special note: **You must have an e-mail address to use for this class.** And you are expected to check it regularly with respect to class-related items. You will also need it to correspond with team members as you work on your major team project. You may use Doane’s computers for free e-mail service if you do not have access to a personal computer. Of course, you may use it for other school needs.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>General Guidelines</u></p> <p>Each class fully attended and actively participated in can merit up to 50 points per week (400 points for 8 weeks). Participation includes being present and evidence that you have done assigned reading and work.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Possible Points</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4 0 0</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Individual Written Assignments Due Dates</u></p> <p>You will do all written assignments online and follow the guidelines explained in class. These assignments and directions will also be given online. You must use Microsoft Word when submitting assignments. You will attach the Microsoft Word document assignments to your e-mails.</p> <p>Week 2: Your ethical orientation and personal values (15 pts)</p> <p>Week 5: Ethical audit of your company (35 pts)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5 0</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Team Project</u></p> <p>The class team project (as explained in class) will focus on a business ethical management issue pertinent to social responsibility. Class team(s) will critically examine the issue from several perspectives (domains). Each team member will contract to research the topic within a specific domain, focusing on diverse opinions within that domain. Team members will give a PowerPoint presentation that covers all the domains. Details of the project will be explained in the first class meeting. [If you don't know how to do Power Point, don't worry. Someone on your team will take the lead on that. The only writing required for the project is the references use--one document for all team members. All references used by team will be on this document.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2 5 0</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Total Possible Points</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7 0 0</p>

4. **Learn how to apply an ethical algorithm** (method) to analyze case studies in order to arrive at a defensible ethical decision. You will learn how to use this ethical algorithm.

Grading and Class Policies

How to determine your grade. Divide the number of points you earn by 700. If you gain 650 points that equals 93% and merits a grade of A- (A minus). See table below.

Letter grade numerical values

A+ = 98-100	B+ = 89-91	C+ = 80-82	D+ = 71-73	F = 64 and below
A = 95-97	B = 86-88	C = 77-79	D = 68-70	

A- = 92-94	B- = 83-85	C- = 74-76	D- = 65-67	
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Academic Integrity Policy. The Academic Integrity Policy will be enforced in this class. This policy requires that you immediately and cheerfully offer the benefit of your knowledge and skills to any fellow student who needs your help. If someone helps you, whether a fellow student, the author of a book/article, an Internet source, a family member, a coworker, an interviewee, or anyone else, then you will state or acknowledge that they helped you. This is called “citing a source.” Always show respect for the ideas or words of others by giving them credit. If you do not do this you are acting unethically and lack academic integrity. You are guilty of plagiarism. Should you commit plagiarism you risk meriting an “F” for the course.

Absentee Policy. You must negotiate with professor for any missed class within three (3) days of the missed class. If you do not contact the professor within three (3) days of your absence, you forfeit 50 points. Except for extraordinary circumstances, missing more than two classes results in a failure. You can merit an A if you miss only one class and you do quality makeup work for 25 points. Thus, 25 of 50 points (which a fully attended class merits) can be gained for that missed class. [This applies only for a maximum of two missed classes.]

Join us for an exciting adventure in the business world of ethics. We will debate and discuss a variety of relevant and significant ethical issues surrounding the business world, while applying ethical standards and critical thinking.