Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility

Contemporary organizations serve a social purpose that spans far beyond profitability. Ethics and social responsibility represent constructs that enable people to add value to a variety of contexts. Specific to the study of management, business ethics and corporate social responsibility represent practical frameworks for organizations to provide value to multiple stakeholders. This course is designed to integrate the central tenets of management studies – strategic planning, decision-making, leadership, and the like – with contemporary and practical perspectives of social responsibility.

This course challenges students to start with “why.” In doing so, students are encouraged to move from “me” to “we” capital, from a financial bottom-line to a triple bottom-line focused on people, planet, and profit, and from a concentric management approach to an integrated positive organizational leadership approach – indeed, integrating integrity, compassion, social responsibility, ethical standards, and partnerships into every facet of organizations.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a practical understanding of the key concepts and models used in contemporary discussions of business ethics and corporate social responsibility.
2. Examine contemporary relationships between positive organizational constructs and the broader social role of organizations.
3. Synthesize practical applications of integrity, compassion, social responsibility, ethical standards, and partnerships to recommend solutions to contemporary organizational challenges and opportunities.
4. Deconstruct the normative expectations of various organizational forms into the tacit knowledge required of professionals today.
5. Develop a framework to appraise socially responsible solutions to future business strategies and decisions.

Course Design

This course is designed to foster the development of general management skills, as well as the tacit knowledge required to excel in today’s business landscape. To do so, this course is designed around a process-based perspective, encouraging students to think critically and creatively to present practical solutions to common challenges and
opportunities faced by managers. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, this course is designed to develop the tacit knowledge required for socially responsible leadership.

This course is divided into three parts. In Part I, students are introduced to key concepts, models, and perspectives of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. Throughout Part I, students develop a practical plan to implement a triple bottom-line approach and value the impact of positive organizational initiatives as part of organizational assessments. In Part II, students will apply the concepts, models, and perspectives introduced in Part I to analyze real-world cases through action-oriented experiential learning opportunities. Students will be challenged to deconstruct unethical decisions in relation to normative expectations and professional codes of ethics. Students will also work to deconstruct exemplary examples of ethical triumphs that work to raise the bar of contemporary organizations. Finally, students will apply socially responsible solutions to address organizational challenges and opportunities. In Part III, students will be expected to synthesize and reflect on international ideologies and the influence of exogenous shocks on the ongoing construction of multi-national corporations. Students will also develop a framework demonstrating the application of a socially responsible worldview to their management philosophy and career trajectory. In short, the process-oriented approach captured in the course design develops students’ understanding of theoretical perspectives, applies those perspectives to action-oriented experiential learning opportunities, proposes the practical nature of course constructs to students’ own organizations, and develops a worldview that embodies value beyond profitability.

**Course Readings**

**Required:**


Course Packet (CP) – A list of readings is detailed below for each session.

**Recommended:**

**Assignments and Grades**

**Grade Composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Role Play (Star Power)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Session 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Practical Framework Proposals</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Session 2, 3, and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Development Plan (Detailed Outline)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Session 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliverable</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Sessions</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Development Plan (Final Essay)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Session 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Case Analyses</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Sessions 4, 5, 6, and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Reflection</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Session 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Contribution</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Sessions 1 – 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Evaluations</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Session 10</td>
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### Grade distribution

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<tr>
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<td>80 – 83.99</td>
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<td>66 – 69.99</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>84 – 87.99</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 59</td>
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### Required Deliverables

#### Personal Development Plan

The purpose of the personal development plan is to apply issues and ideas from the course to students’ professional careers. Grades are based on three factors: concrete use of course content, depth and creativity of the applied content, and integration between the applied content and the student’s management philosophy. The personal development plan is submitted in two phases. First, a detailed outline is due at the beginning of Session 3. Detailed outlines should clearly integrate discussions of a Triple-Bottom Line Approach and an Integrated Positive Organizational Approach into the student’s management philosophy. Second, the final essay submission is due at the beginning of Session 10. Final essays submissions should:

1. Demonstrate the application of theory into practice as the course constructs relate to the student’s career.
2. Characterize the tangible impact of course constructs within the student’s chosen industry.
3. Justify business ethics and corporate social responsibility as central to organizational vitality and the student’s management philosophy.
4. Develop a framework demonstrating the application of a socially responsible worldview to the student’s career trajectory.

The page limit is 8 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins all around.

#### Team Case Analyses

Team case analyses are designed to function as experiential learning activities where students can apply principles from both the course readings and their professional experiences to solve the issues and pursue the opportunities presented in each case.

Team case analyses will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Content: Did the team answer the questions appropriately?
2. Theory: How well did the team integrate the course readings into their supporting arguments?
3. Data: How well did the team utilize evidence from the case to support their arguments?
4. Analysis: How logical, coherent, and complete is the team’s analysis and plan?
5. Action Plan: Is the team’s plan concise and practical?
6. Writing: Is the case analysis well organized and concisely written?

Case write-ups are due at the beginning of class during each assigned session. The page limit is 3 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins all around. Teams should be prepared to verbally discuss their action plans.

**Interview Reflection**
The interview reflection is designed to provide students with an opportunity to understand business ethics and corporate social responsibility as it manifests in organizations outside the classroom. Students will be expected to identify a professional within the student’s line of work, schedule a time to meet with this individual either face-to-face or virtually, interview the individual regarding the practical application of a specific topic from the course, and submit a written reflection addressing the following questions:

1. What did you learn from the interview?
2. How will the knowledge learned during the interview impact your own professional career?
3. What similarities and differences did you recognize between the interview and the assigned course readings?
4. In your own words, what is the overall role of business ethics and corporate social responsibility in modern organizations?

Grades will be determined based on the student’s integration between the interview and course readings, as well as the depth of the student’s reflection. 3-page maximum, double-spaced, 12 pt font with a 1-inch margin all around.

**Team Practical Framework Proposals**
Practical framework proposals are designed to provide students with an opportunity to tangibly apply the content of the readings to specific organizations. Students are expected to propose a framework that tangibly links specific topics to an assigned organization. Practical framework proposals should be 1-page in length and written either as a bulleted executive summary or presented through a model. Submissions should address the following:

1. What is the core take away from the readings?
2. How can the core take away be applied to the assigned organization?
3. How does this application create value beyond profitability?
Assigned organizations: Session 2 – Trout Unlimited, Session 3 – Microsoft, Session 8 - Google

Classroom Contribution
Students are expected to be present and prepared to participate in weekly sessions. I do understand that some students are more comfortable participating in classroom discussions/activities than others. Classroom contribution includes discussion participation, team contributions, role-playing participation, and student-to-student and student-to-instructor discussions.

Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Please refer to the Student Handbook, etc., for more information about academic dishonesty. Please note that a student will receive a failing grade in this course for cheating.

Students with Disabilities
If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience.

Class Schedule
PART I – CONCEPTS, MODELS, AND PERSPECTIVES

Session 1 – Starting with Why: Introduction to Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility

This session provides a general introduction to the course, including conceptualizations and frameworks used to study business ethics and corporate social responsibility. We will begin with an in-class role-play exploring the ideologies of capitalism. We will also leverage Simon Sinek’s work to encourage purposeful actions grounded in “why.” Finally, we will discuss the Ford Pinto case through the frameworks and “why” thought process. Students will be expected to diagram the process of starting with “why” to inspire the socially responsible actions of other stakeholders.

Readings:
1 Paine, Ethics: A Basic Framework (CP)
2 Sucher, A Framework for Ethical Reasoning (CP)
3 Heineman, Chapters 1 – 2

Video: Simon Sinek: How great leaders inspire action (TED Talk)
Case: Goodpaster, Managing Product Safety: The Ford Pinto

Assignment: Star Power (in-class role play session)

Session 2 – Triple-Bottom Line Approach: Contemporary Models of Business Ethics with Staying Power

Corporations are often critiqued for pursuing a profits first doctrine, where value is determined solely through profitability. We will explore the contemporary model of the Triple-Bottom Line Approach, extending value to People, Planet, and Profit. We will use ITC and Burt’ Bees to discuss this model in context. Students will also be expected to develop a concise and practical plan to positively implement a Triple-Bottom Line Approach within their own organizations.

Readings: 1 Chouinard, History, Philosophies (Product Design, Production, Management, and Environmental)  
2 Slaper, The Triple Bottom Line: What Is It and How Does It Work? (CP)

Cases: 1 Ojha, ITC Ltd.: Toward a Triple Bottom Line Performance (CP)  
2 Marquis, Burt’s Bees: Balancing Growth and Sustainability (CP)

Assignment: Practical Framework Proposal (Team)

Session 3 – An Integrated Positive Organizational Approach

Positive organizational theory is a philosophy devoted to energizing and transforming organizations. As part of this process, we will value the constructs of integrity, compassion, social responsibility, ethical standards, and partnerships within an integrated management approach. We will use the Sierra Nevada case to deconstruct how an Integrated Positive Organizational Approach is developed and applied in context. Students will be expected to design metrics to analyze and value the impact of integrated positive organizational initiatives.

Readings: 1 McCoy, Parable of the Sadhu (CP)  
2 Badaracco, Discipline of Building Character (CP)  
3 Heineman, Chapters 3 – 4

Case: Ceranic, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.: End of Incentives (CP)

Assignments: 1 Practical Framework Proposal (Team)  
2 Personal Development Plan (detailed outline)
PART II – ANALYSIS AND APPLICATION

### Session 4 – Deconstructing Mistakes

In Session 4, we shift the focus to analysis and application. Widespread studies of business ethics and corporate social responsibility focus on cases of ethical miscues. During this week, we will analyze the Enron and WorldCom cases to deconstruct the power of toxic organizational cultures. Students will be expected to assess why unethical actions occur within a broader ecosystem characterized by normative expectations.

**Readings:**
1. Chouinard, Philosophies (Image and Financial)
2. Handy, What’s a Business For? (CP)

**Video:**
Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room

**Cases:**
1. Hamilton, Enron Collapse (CP)
2. Mead, Cynthia Cooper and WorldCom (CP)

**Assignment:** Team Case Analysis (Enron OR WorldCom)

### Session 5 – Deconstructing Triumphs

During Session 5, we will take a more optimistic stance as we deconstruct why and how exemplary examples of ethical triumphs work to raise the bar of the normative expectations of contemporary organizations. Students will be expected to characterize a practical integration of ethical triumphs into their own management philosophy.

**Reading:** (Optional) Mackey, Conscious Capitalism: Liberating the Heroic Spirit of Business

**Instructor:** Social Leadership at Chrysler

**Case:** Austin, Starbucks and Conservation International (CP)

**Assignment:** Team Case Analysis

### Session 6 – Making Decisions to Address Organizational Challenges

In Session 6, we focus on the social responsibility of organizational decision-making processes to address organizational challenges. We will focus on the Valley Systems and HP cases to analyze organizational challenges and propose solutions related to decision-making. Students will be expected to design metrics to evaluate proposed solutions.
Case 1: Morgridge, Valley Systems (CP)
Case 2: Lawrence, Unauthorized Disclosure: Hewlett-Packard’s Secret Surveillance of Directors and Journalists (CP)

Assignment: Team Case Analysis (Valley Systems OR HP)

Session 7 – Making Decisions to Address Organizational Opportunities

In Session 7, we continue to focus on decision-making, but as part of organizational growth strategies. Students will be expected to identify and value multiple organizational opportunities to expand the social value provided by the organization itself. Students will also be asked to reconstruct the strategic planning process to include the normative role of the organization.

Case 1: Marquis, B Lab: Building a New Sector of the Economy (CP)
Case 2: Healy, Fighting Corruption at Siemens (CP)

Assignment: Team Case Analysis (B Lab or Siemens)

PART III – SYNTHESIS AND REFLECTION

Session 8 – Ethics Beyond Borders: Exogenous Shocks and International Perspectives

During Session 8, we shift the focus to consider international ideologies and the impact of those ideologies on the ethics and social responsibility of international economies. Students will be expected to classify the roles of exogenous shocks and cultural norms in the ongoing construction of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. Students will also be expected to develop a socially responsible statement for a multi-national corporation and explain the influence of international perspectives of business ethics and corporate social responsibility on their own management philosophy.

Readings: Donaldson, Values in Tension: Ethics Away from Home (CP)

Podcast: NPR, The Awesomest Economy?
http://www.npr.org/blogs/money/2010/01/podcast_the_awesomest_economy.html

Cases: 1 Lundberg, Aiding or Abetting? The World Bank and the 1997 Judicial Reform Project (CP)
Case 2: Teagarden, Blood Bananas: Chiquita in Colombia (CP)

Assignment: Practical Framework Proposal (Team)
Session 9 – The New You: CEO (Chief Ethics Officer)

Session 9 represents the final week that we introduce new content. Students will broadly be expected to demonstrate an application of theory into practice as the course constructs relate to their own career. Student applications will characterize the tangible impact of ethics and social responsibility in their chosen industry. As part of an interview reflection, students will discuss a course topic of their choice with an industry leader. Finally, students will develop a framework demonstrating the application of a socially responsible worldview to their career trajectory.

Readings: 1 Badaracco, Personal Values and Professional Responsibilities (CP) 2 Ely, Rethinking Political Correctness (CP)

Assignment: Interview Reflection (Individual)

Session 10 – Evaluation and Final Assessment

Assignment: Peer Evaluation Forms Personal Development Plan (paper submission)