PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
THE GEORGE L. GRAZIADIO
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT

DR. JOHN RICHARDSON

BSM 482.45

BUSINESS ETHICS

FALL 2003

Weekends
September 19-20, 2003
October 17-18, 2003

Friday 6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Saturday 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Orange County Center

SYLLABUS
Course Description:

This course explores ethical decision making in a society with changing values and an increasing international interdependence. It stresses the development and application of moral and ethical concepts to practical cases and ethical dilemmas management faces. It develops an awareness of the ethical, social, and environmental implications and consequences of managerial decisions involved in managing a firm's relationship with society, its marketplace, and employees. Special attention is given to the question: To what extent should corporations exercise social responsibility?

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the major ethical systems

2. Understand professional ethical standards and the broader value and needs of the society

3. Develop an understanding of one's own personal value system and its tenability when confronted with conflict and ambiguity

4. Clarify "market ethics" in light of the corporate role in society and the changing nature of social values
5. Identify the relationship of ethos to a given business in the context of management decision-making policies

6. Develop personal analytical skills, discernment, and sensitivity in dealing with moral issues

7. Scrutinize one's own ethical position on controversial business issues and appreciate the point of view of others who disagree

8. Develop the capacity to control the moral factors of the management situation so that an appropriate decision can be implemented

9. Acquire skills and perspectives that result in viable moral judgment

10. The integration of managerial expertise and moral competence

**Minimum Course Content:**

The salient topics in Business Ethics that need to be addressed are: ethical theories and their application to business; the Work Ethic; the need for business ethics; the ethical dimensions involved in hiring, promotions, discipline, and discharge; the political and social environment within the organization; organizational influence in personal and private lives of employees; employee responsibilities to the organization; job atmosphere (e.g., work environment, wages, working conditions, and leadership styles); corporate and professional codes of ethics; business and the consumer (e.g., product safety, quality, and information dissemination); treatment of minority workers; ecology; developing a moral atmosphere; ethics and marketing decisions (e.g., pricing, promotion, packaging, labeling, etc.); governmental regulation and influence; profits and social responsibility of business; the complexity and ambiguity of moral judgment; and personal value clarification. (See "Key Topics to be Covered" and "Representative Ethical Issues" sections for further delineation).

**Key Topics to be Covered**

Ethical Theory
Work Ethic
Evolution of Ethical Thought
Moral Judgment
Social Responsibility
Professional Ethics
Political and Social Environment
Personal Responsibility
Corporate Size and Influence
Corporate Codes
Professional Codes
Institutional Ethics
Internal Company Policies
Governmental Ambiguity
Overlapping Jurisdiction

**Representative Ethical Issues**

Cessation of a product or function
Marketing/advertising
Collusion in pricing
Bribery/extortion
Deceit/misrepresentation
Fidelity to commitment
Pollution
Value of human life
Distribution equity
Investment policies
Market mechanism
Social expectations
Employment
Ethnic & sexual bias
Profit bias
Worker safety
Consumer safety
Accounting practices
Ecology
Required Course Texts:


ASSIGNMENTS, CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES, & GRADING

I. **Basic Assumptions for Class:**

Importance of openness, honesty, and confidentiality

Students are encouraged to share own opinion and proposed resolution of organization ethical situations and dilemmas

Written assignments/papers that need to be turned in should be typewritten, double spaced

II. **Methods of Evaluation:**
Your grade for the course will be based on the following components:

--2 reactionary papers  
(i.e. for critique of at least 20-25 articles from
*AE: Business Ethics* and critique of Blanchard
& Peale’s book)  
40 pts.

--Value Clarification/Ethical Approach Paper  
30 pts.

--Participation  
10 pts.

**Project**  
(**optional—but must be done in order

to be in running for A- or A grade)  
**20 pts.

TOTAL = 80 TO **100 pts.

III. Reactionary Papers:

Each reactionary paper should be a critique (typed, double-spaced, one-inch
margins, etc.), which reflects your personal evaluation and wrestling with
the reading.

**General Comments About Reactionary Papers**

1. A reactionary paper is **not** a simple summary of what was read.

2. Personally and critically react with the material read. State your positive and
negative feelings about what you got out of your reading. (For example,
how practical and relevant was the reading to you?). Be specific!

3. Along with your personal reactions, please give reasons and/or examples to
support your reactions. In the body of your paper, put the pages in
parenthesis, which you are referring to in the source. **Example:** (pp. 15-17)
or (p. 21).

4. In your concluding paragraph, give me an **overall impression** of how you
liked the book... how it stimulated your thinking... disappointed you... to whom you would recommend reading the book, etc. Also, list your five favorite articles.

IV. **Project:**

The **optional** project can focus on any of the areas covered in the “Key Topics to be Covered” or “Representative Ethical Issues” suggestions as well as the major topics covered in the *Annual Editions: Business Ethics* text. This project should be a thoughtful and thorough paper, which is both well researched and personally applied to a current area of business ethics.

V. **Evaluation and Grading:**

The primary goal in the course is to have you learn something of value. In addition, we are concerned with the quality of your learning achievement. Grades are awarded on this basis:

- **A** - Outstanding achievement
- **B** - Superior
- **C** - Average or satisfactory
- **D** - Low passing grade
- **F** - Failure

Letter grades are determined by the following percentages:

- 90 – 100%   **A** (i.e. 90% = A-; 92% = A)
- 80 – 89 %   **B** (i.e. 80% = B-; 82%-87% = B; 88% = B+)
- 70 – 79%   **C**
- 60 – 69%   **D**
- 59% & below   **F**
Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is important for systematic progress in the course. If work or travel schedules or personal situations require you to miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes and handouts and to keep up with the reading schedule and required written submissions. Written work should not be presented late.

Consultation:

I am available to consult with you on any matter related to the course, the general area of business ethics, or the Pepperdine BSM program. I can meet with students individually, or in groups before class, after class, or at other times that may be mutually convenient.

I can, at your request, answer questions and review and react to outlines of drafts of case analyses or course projects. All that is necessary is to make an appointment at the previous class meeting or contact me by phone.

Conduct

“The University expects from all of its students and employees the highest standard of moral and ethical behavior in harmony with its Christian philosophy and purposes. Engaging in or promoting conduct or lifestyles inconsistent with traditional Christian values is not acceptable.

The following regulations apply to any person, graduate or undergraduate, who is enrolled as a Pepperdine University student. These rules are not to be interpreted as all-inclusive as to situations in which discipline will be invoked. They are illustrative, and the University reserves the right to take disciplinary action in appropriate circumstances not set out in this catalog. It is understood that each student who enrolls at Pepperdine University will assume the responsibilities involved by adhering to the regulations of the University. Students are expected to respect order, morality, personal honor, and the rights and property of others at all times. Examples of improper conduct for which students are subject to discipline are as follows:

• Dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, illegal copying of software, and knowingly furnishing false information to the University.

• Forgery, alteration, or misuse of University documents, records, or identification.

• Failure to comply with written or verbal directives of duly authorized University officials who are acting in the performance of assigned duties.

• Interference with the academic or administrative process of the University or any
of the approved activities.

• Otherwise unprotected behavior that disrupts the classroom environment.

• Theft or damage to property.

• Violation of civil or criminal codes of local, state, or federal governments.

• Unauthorized use of or entry into University facilities.

• Violation of any stated policies or regulations governing student relationships to the University.

Disciplinary action may involve, but is not limited to, one or a combination of the alternatives listed below:

**Dismissal** – separation of the student from the University on a permanent basis.

**Suspension** – separation of the student from the University for a specified length of time.

**Probation** – status of the student indicating that the relationship with the University is tenuous and that the student’s records will be reviewed periodically to determine suitability to remain enrolled. Specific limitations to and restrictions of the student’s privileges may accompany probation.” See current GSBM Catalog.

**Policy on Disabilities**

Assistance for Students with Disabilities

“Students with disabilities, whether mental or physical are encouraged to contact the Equal Opportunity Office before the academic year begins or soon after classes are in session. This office will assist each student by providing general information about campus facilities and available resources. The Office will assist in providing reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities pursuant to applicable laws. Inquiries should be directed to equal opportunity officer, (310) 506-6500. (Students who wish to file a formal grievance should refer to the “Nondiscrimination Policy,” which is listed in the “Legal Notices” section of this catalog.)” See current GSBM Catalog.