Course Director: Anton Petrenko PhD

Tuesday: 16:00-19:00 p.m. R S205

Office Hrs: Tuesday 19:00-19:45 (by appointment)

Email: Petrenko@yorku.ca

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the relevance and importance of ethics and social responsibility in business. Important learning objectives are to increase students’ awareness and understanding of ethical issues in business, and to provide students with useful conceptual tools to guide analysis and decisions. The ultimate intent of the course is to leave students better equipped to identify, think critically about, and resolve ethical issues that are encountered in one’s working life at the individual, organizational, and societal levels.

The course will apply these conceptual tools and frameworks to the treatment by business of their various stakeholder groups including: shareholders; employees; consumers; suppliers, the natural environment, communities, and governments. The course concludes with a discussion of how companies can better establish ethical corporate cultures (e.g., compliance and ethics programs).

Learning Objectives:

1. To enhance awareness and increase understanding of the nature of business ethics in the Canadian as well as global business environment.
2. To examine the ethical implications of business practices from a stakeholder perspective.
3. To increase awareness of the challenges of business social responsibility.
4. To develop critical thinking skills via the application of concepts and theories to business cases.

Important Dates:

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| ENROLMENT DEADLINE (without permission) | May 12th |
| DROP DEADLINE (without receiving a grade) | June 28th |
| MID-TERM EXAM | June 4th |
| MAKE UP EXAM  | TBA (email for date) |
| TAKE HOME EXAM  | Due July 26th (assigned July 16th) |

Main Textbook:

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| * Text – *An Introduction to Business Ethics*, Joseph DesJardins, Fifth Edition. (2014), New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
* Moodle Materials (CT) – PowerPoints
* Course pack available from the bookstore
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Topic Schedule:

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| April 30th**Lecture 1:** **Introduction to Business Ethics** Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics: Why Study Ethics?* (chapter 1)*Session Summary*: The goal of the introductory session is to introduce students into the subject of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. Some of the questions raised will include: What is ethics? Why do we need business ethics? Are moral norms relative? Is ethical behaviour possible?  |
| Topics:Ethics or ethos?All we need is law?Why study ethics?Challenges: Relativism | Case Discussion: Enron Malden Mill |
| May 7th**Lecture 2: Ethical Frameworks**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics: Ethical Theory and Business* (chapter 2, pp. 20-37);*Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to introduce basic tools and theoretical frameworks for engaging in ethical analysis and decision making. The role of core values will be examined, and normative decision procedures based on morals standards will be applied to cases. |
| Topics:Psychological Egoism Utilitarian Theory  | Case Discussion: Gas or Grouse?The Willowbrook School |
| May 14th**Lecture 3: Ethical Frameworks** Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics*: *Ethical Theory and Business* (chapter 2, pp. 37-46);Supplementary Reading: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights *Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to introduce basic tools and theoretical frameworks for engaging in ethical analysis and decision making. The role of core values will be examined, and normative decision procedures based on morals standards will be applied to cases. |
| Deontological TheoryVirtue EthicsFairness/Justice | Case Discussion: Plasma Int.: Buying and Selling Blood; Gap’s Labour Problem; Deceptive Psychological Testing |
| May 21st**Lecture 4: Corporate Social Responsibility**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics:**Corporate Social Responsibility* (chapter 3);*Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to examine the role of business in society and the extent of its ethical obligations. The major question that will be examined is whether business merely obligated to maximize profit for its shareholders or whether there are additional obligations to a broader circle of stakeholders (e.g. employees, stockholders, consumers, suppliers, community, and society).   |
| Topics:Stockholder ModelCSR: The Moral MinimumStakeholder Model | Case Discussion: Wal-Mart: The Main Street Merchant of Doom;GM Plant Closing and Efforts at Outplacement; Chrysler and Its Cost of Closing; |
| May 28th**Lecture 5: Moral Rights in the Workplace**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics: Moral Rights in the Workplace* (chapter 6);Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): PIPEDA Guide for Organizations; Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): Guide to Occupational Health and Safety Act *Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to apply previously discussed frameworks (CSR) and moral standards to examining the ethical nature and scope of the rights of the employees in the workplace. What are employee rights in relation to privacy, workplace participation, dismissal, or health and safety issues? |
| Topics:Employment-at-will/Due ProcessParticipation rightsHealth and SafetyPrivacy  | Case Discussion: The Fired Killjoy; The Smoking Prohibition; Health and Genetic Screening; DUI and Deliveries  |
| June 4th**------------------------------------------------------------------MIDTERM TEST---------------------------------------------------------------**Reading Week June 6th-14th |
| June 18th**Lecture 6: Diversity and Discrimination**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics:**Diversity and Discrimination* (chapter 11);Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): Employment Equity Act (sec. 2; 5-10); Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): Guide to OHRC on Sexual Harassment (pp. 4-13) *Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to apply previously discussed frameworks (CSR) and moral principles (justice and fairness) to the issues of sexual harassment and discrimination at the workplace. Is affirmative action or preferential treatment justified? What is sexual harassment? Is there such a thing as justified discrimination? |
| Topics:Equal Opportunity Affirmative ActionPreferential TreatmentSexual HarassmentReasonable Person/Women Standard | Case Discussion: Hooters: More than a Waitress?Stroh’s Swedish Bikini Team; Sing’s Chinese Restaurant;  |
| June 25th**Lecture 7: Employee Responsibilities**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics:**Employee Responsibilities* (chapter 7); Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): Criminal Code of Canada (425.1); Bill 158 Statutes of Ontario (139-142) *Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to apply previously discussed frameworks (CSR) and moral standards to examining the ethical nature and scope of employee (managerial and non-managerial) obligations. What are the employee’s obligations to stockholders, managers, colleagues, professional community, themselves and their families, their community and society in general? How should these obligations be balanced? |
| Topics:Responsibilities: Agent/Principal ViewGatekeeper FunctionTrust and Loyalty/WhistleblowingInsider Trading/Conflict of InterestHonesty in Negotiations | Case Discussion: Orders of Shoot to KillNASA and the Space Shuttle Booster RocketThe Whistle-blower at Canadian Marconi |
| July 2nd**Lecture 8: Marketing Ethics - Product Safety and Pricing**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics: Marketing Ethics - Product Safety and Pricing* (chapter 8);Supplementary Reading: (Legal Perspective): The Competition Act (sec. 76-80)*Session Summary*: The goal of this session is to examine the ethical basis of obligations that firms have towards their consumers and clients, in relation to product safety and pricing. Should firms be responsible for harms caused without fault? How responsible should the consumer be? Should the pricing of life-saving cures be subject to market pressures?  |
| Topics:Caveat emptor/Negligence/Strict LiabilityPricing Life-Saving CuresPrice GougingPrice Fixing/Monopolistic Pricing | Case Discussion: Ford and Its PintoA Toy to Die ForVioxx/DES casesToxic Tacos |
| July 9th**Lecture 9: Marketing Ethics - Advertising and Target Marketing** Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics:**Advertising and Target Marketing* (chapter 9);Supplementary Reading: The Canadian Code of Advertizing Standards; Supplementary Reading (Legal Perspective): The Competition Act (52-54; 74) Session Summary: The goal of this session is to apply previously discussed frameworks, moral standards, and principles to the normative evaluation of marketing techniques, advertizing, and target marketing. What is deceptive and manipulative marketing and how should it be regulated? What are the ethical limits of marketing to vulnerable groups (e.g. children, elderly)? |
| Manipulation/DeceptionRegulating Deceptive AdvertizingDependence EffectTarget Marketing and Vulnerable Consumer | Case Discussion: Malt Liquor Ads: Crack, Gangs, and GhettoesThe Sexist Beer AdsJoe CamelInsurance for the Drive-by VictimsAssurance Magnum of Quebec  |
| July 16th (Take-Home Case Analysis Released)**Lecture 10: International Business and Globalization**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics: International Business and Globalization*  (chapter 12);Supplementary Reading: Core Labour Standards Handbook (ILS)*Session Summary*: This session focuses on doing business abroad, when one’s home country’s legal or ethical standards may conflict with those where one is doing business. When in Rome, should one ‘do as the Romans do’? What are the corporate responsibilities towards other countries, their governments, and their populations, in the context of globalization? |
| SweatshopsEthical Relativism and Cross-Cultural ValuesRace to the Bottom LineGlobalization and Democracy | Case Discussion: Unocal in Burma Nike Inc.The Adoption Agency and Senor Jose’s Fees  |
| July 23rd (Take-Home Case Analysis is Due on July 26th)**Lecture 11: Business’s Environmental Responsibilities**Reading: *An Introduction to Business Ethics:**Business’s Environmental Responsibilities* (chapter 10);*Session Summary*: This session will examine the corporate environmental responsibilities in the context of global warming, sustainable development, and environmental degradation. Do business firms have ethical obligations towards the environment, future generations, individual animals, or ecosystems?  |
| Anthropocentric vs. Eco-centric approaches Individualistic vs. Holistic approachesMarket FailuresSustainable Development | Case Discussion: Gas or Grouse? Exxon and AlaskaInterface Corporation |

Student Assignments and Grading:

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| **Assignment** | **Grade Weight** | **Due Date** |
| 1) Mid-Term Exam | 40% | June 4th |
| 2) Take-Home (Case Analysis)  | 60% | July 26th (Assigned on July 16th) |
| *TOTAL* | 100% |  |

***1) Mid-Term*** (40%)

The mid-term exam will be closed-book and cover all of the material from the beginning of the course, including readings, cases, videos, and lecture material. The mid-term will consist of short answer and long essay questions.

***2) Take-Home Case Analysis Assignment*** (60%)

The major assignment will cover all of the material in the course. You will have one week to do it. It will be assigned at the beginning of the last week of classes. No additional materials beyond the course will be required. The assignment will involve the ethical analysis of a case as well as possibly a few short essay questions. Instructions will be provided on how to submit the assignment. There will be a 5% penalty per day for any late submissions. Take-home case analyses are to be submitted on the due date on turnitin (our Moodle website) and in hardcopy to room 282, Atkinson.

Note on Make-up Test

This test is **ONLY** for students who missed the mid-term for an urgent and valid reason. Students must advise me by email of having missed the mid-term exam within 24 hours. Students will also need to provide a completed "Attending Physician's Statement"

(<http://www.atkinson.yorku.ca/Council/Students/physicianStatement.pdf>), which must include the name and phone number of a contact person who can verify the reason for absence, before taking the make-up exam. Students who fail to take either the mid-term or the make-up mid-term test will receive a grade of 0 on that test, ***with no exceptions.***

Plagiarism and Other Breaches of Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism and any other breach of academic honesty will be taken very seriously. All course work deemed to be in violation of York University’s Senate Policy on Academic Honesty will be handled according to the procedures set out in the following website:

http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm

Web-page:

The course will be available on Moodle. If you do not know your Moodle username and password please contact Atkinson Computing Services. Everyone enrolled in the course will have a username and password. Lectures, course syllabus, dates, and announcements will be regularly posted to the pages.