

AP/ADMS 3660 G  
Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility  
Fall 2024

## Course Information

Course Instructor: Cedric Dawkins  
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Office Hours  
Wednesday 2:30 – 3:30 and  
by appointment

Course Time & Days: Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m.  
Class Location: SC (Stong College) 303  
Course eClass site:  
<https://eclass.yorku.ca/course/view.php?id=120546>

## Land Acknowledgment

York University recognizes that many Indigenous Nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Huron-Wendat. It is now home to many First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities. We acknowledge the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

[Understanding the Land Acknowledgement.](#)

## Course Overview

Business is a collection of private, commercially oriented organizations, whereas society is a broad group of people with varying traditions, values, institutions, and collective activities and interests. Hence, Western businesses operate in free markets but are subject to obligations to protect (or do no harm) to the common good. Their challenge is to marry the profit motive with responsibility for others and particularly for the vulnerable. Business ethics provides moral systems for aligning priorities amid what are regularly contradictory or inconsistent sets of goals. This course examines the nature of these challenges from the basis of business ethics, their effects on companies and managers, and the conceptual tools managers can use to better understand and address complex issues involving those who are impacted by their business' activities.

### Course Description

Introduces students to the relevance and importance of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. The course applies moral theory to the treatment by business of various stakeholder groups including shareholders; employees; consumers; governments; communities; and the natural environment. Prerequisite: AP/ADMS 1000 3.00.

### Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the student should be prepared to think critically and strategically about the ethical issues confronting business leaders, while being conscious of ethical principles, personal and company values, and socially responsible management practices.

### Course Format and Organization

We will accomplish this objective through a variety of methods, including readings, current issue briefs, class discussions, debates, case studies, and examinations. Substantial student involvement is required. Students will address a variety of “what if…” issues wherein there is a great deal of uncertainty. In most cases, there is no precedent of effective policy or *best practice* and there are fundamental disagreements about the facts, or the proper role of business. Participation in class discussions is also essential for success in this course.

### Technical Requirements

You will need access to a stable, high-speed Internet connection for eClass announcements, forum postings, and Zoom polls that I will take during class.

### Course Evaluation

Debate (Group)	140
Midterm Exam	300
Final Exam	300
Attendance	40
Forum postings	<u>60</u>
<b>Total</b>	840

### Assessment Descriptions

Detailed guidelines for the Lincoln-Douglass style debates and position papers can be found in the ‘Assignments’ folder on eClass.

Also note that participation is comprised of your forum posts regarding the class readings and your active (although not necessarily verbal) engagement in our classroom sessions.

### Submitting Assignments

Papers will be submitted digitally via eClass. They are due at the start of class on the due date. If the paper has not been submitted at the outset of class, it is late and subject to penalty of not less than 10 percent, depending on when it is received.

### Late Work Policy

Late coursework will receive a decreased score of not less than 10% (can be more depending on lateness). There will be no acceptance of late posts to the class Forum. Please proactively speak to me if you anticipate any challenges.

### Missed Tests and Exams

Missed exam make-ups will be at the discretion of the instructor. While any make-up exam will cover the same course content, it **will not** be the same exam given in class at the scheduled time.

### Grading

The grading scheme for this course conforms to the 9-point system used in undergraduate programs at York University. For a full description of the York grading system, visit the York University [Academic Calendar](#).

GRADE	GRADE POINT	PERCENT RANGE	DESCRIPTION
A+	9	90-100	Exceptional
A	8	80-89	Excellent
B+	7	75-79	Very Good
B	6	70-74	Good
C+	5	65-69	Competent
C	4	60-64	Fairly Competent
D+	3	55-59	Passing
D	2	50-54	Marginally Passing
E	1	(marginally below 50%)	Marginally Failing
F	0	(below 50%)	Failing

### How to Use Citations

Citation practices are very important support academic integrity by linking information back to an identifiable source. You can use any of the three styles of citation, but you cannot mix them.

Following is a list available resources to support research and citation:

- [SPARK Student Papers & Academic Research Kit](#)
- [Chicago Style Overview](#)
- [MLA Style Overview](#)
- [APA Style Overview](#)
- [Drop-in Research Support](#)
- [Writing Centre](#)

## Required Course Materials

**Joseph DesJardins (2016). An Introduction to Business Ethics (7<sup>th</sup> Ed). McGraw Hill.**

Note that **any of the last several editions** of this textbook will likely be suitable for this course (older editions are much cheaper).

## Additional Materials

There will be additional readings or other media required for which I will supply copies or give instructions on access through eClass.

## Course Policies

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information:

- [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

## Group Work Policy

Your debate assignment is a group assignment. All group members will evaluate the performance of their peers. Your grade for the group project will be a factor of the group evaluation. For example, if the group scores 90% on the group project but evaluates your performance at 70%. Your score for the project is 63% (70 percent of 90).

In addition, the group is not obligated to wait ‘until the last minute’ for a group member to get involved with the project. If the group member is not meeting group expectations the group should consult with me. I will contact the individual and, if warranted I may discharge that individual from the group. In such a case, the ‘expelled’ member is required to submit the assignment on his or her own for reduced credit of not less than 25%.

## Academic Integrity

In this course, we strive to maintain academic honesty to the highest extent possible. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of academic integrity by completing [SPARK’s Academic Integrity module](#) at the beginning of the course. Breaches of academic honesty range from cheating to plagiarism (i.e., the improper crediting of another’s work, the representation of another’s ideas as your own, etc.). All instances of academic dishonesty in this course will be reported to the appropriate University authorities and can be punishable according to the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

## COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE & MODULE	TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES	READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS
CLASS 1 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> September 4	<b>No formal class meeting</b> <b>Optional Drop-in (introductions/questions)</b>	
CLASS 2 – <b>IN PERSON</b> September 11	Course Overview: Apples or Barrels Introduction to Ethics and Business This American Life: “The Super”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert E. Rubin: Philosophy Prepared Me for a Career in Finance and Government</li> <li>• Chapter 1 – Why Business Ethics?</li> </ul>
CLASS 3 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> September 18	Ethics and Capitalism: Two Basic Perspectives on the Operation of Business Enterprise  Utilitarian and Libertarian Ethics  Assignments to Debate Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Economist Manifesto</li> <li>• The Tragedy of the Commons – Hardin.</li> <li>• The Social Purpose of Business – Friedman.</li> </ul>
CLASS 4 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> September 25	Principle-Based Ethics, Individual Level Principle-Based Ethics, Societal Level Character-Based Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 2 – Ethical Theory and Business</li> </ul> <p>eClass Discussion Board Posting #1: Did Mylan Pharmaceuticals do anything ethically wrong in their pricing of the EpiPen? (100-word max). Pose two questions you have regarding the readings.</p>

<p>CLASS 5 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> October 2</p>	<p>Corporate Social Responsibility This American Life – The Competition <a href="#">Monsanto CEO Talks Crops, Pesticides and Farms</a>  <a href="#">Monsanto CEO: Roundup is Not a Carcinogen</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3 – Corporate Social Responsibility</li> <li>• Davos Manifesto</li> <li>• Why Shareholder Value is No Longer Everything - NYT</li> <li>• Roundup Weedkiller Is Blamed for Cancers, but Farmers Say It’s Not Going Away <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/business/bayer-roundup.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/business/bayer-roundup.html</a></li> </ul> <p>eClass <u>Discussion Board Posting #2</u>: Do dominant and important companies like Monsanto have ethical responsibility beyond whatever government regulations are in place? (100-word max). Pose two questions you have regarding the readings.</p>
<p>CLASS 6 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> October 9</p>	<p>The Meaning of Work Is it the corporation’s responsibility to make work fulfilling?  Midterm Overview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5 – The Meaning and Value of Work</li> </ul> <p>Podcast WSJ Article–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Quiet Quitting: Is the Criticism Fair?</a></li> </ul> <p>eClass <u>Discussion Board Posting #3</u>: Is quiet quitting an ethical way to address work life balance? What are your thoughts (100-word max). Pose two questions you have regarding the readings.</p>
<p>October 16</p>	<p>READING WEEK</p>	

CLASS 7 October 23 – <b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>	
CLASS 8 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> October 30	Employee Rights Employment at Will (EAW)  Labor Unions  Should managers be able to fire an employee without due cause? What about matters of conscience that conflict with the corporate mission?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 6 – Moral Rights in the Workplace Electronic Monitoring</li> </ul> <p>Podcast – <a href="https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/podcasts/the-daily/workplace-surveillance-productivity-tracking.html">https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/podcasts/the-daily/workplace-surveillance-productivity-tracking.html</a></p> <p>eClass <u>Discussion Board Posting #4</u>: What are your thoughts on electronic monitoring (100-word max). Pose two questions you have regarding the readings.</p>
CLASS 9 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> November 6	Sustainability  International Business  What is the difference between guilt and responsibility? Why does that difference matter with respect to climate change and sustainability?  What are the implications of decolonization for ethical business globally?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 10 – Business Environmental Responsibilities</li> <li>Chapter 12 – International Business and Globalization</li> </ul> <p>eClass <u>Discussion Board Posting #5</u>: Can environmentally responsible business practices be brought about through the marketplace? (100 word max). Pose two questions you have regarding the readings.</p>
CLASS 10 – <b>ON ZOOM</b> November 13	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion  Formatting and writing Position Papers How to Debate – Debate Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 11 – Workplace Diversity and Discrimination</li> </ul>

<p>CLASS 11 – <b>IN PERSON</b> November 20</p>	<p>Debates 1, 2, 3 Resolution 1: Sex workers should be allowed to form labor unions.</p> <p>Resolution 2: Ethical organizations (e.g., corporations, universities, pension funds) should divest of fossil fuel stocks.</p> <p>Resolution 3: Large corporations (e.g., Global Fortune 500) should pay workers in economically developing countries a living wage.</p>	<p>Individual Position Papers due at 14:00.</p> <p>Persons in Debate 4 (topic for paper is Resolution 3),</p> <p>Persons in Debate 5 (topic for paper is Resolution 2)</p> <p>Persons in Debate 6 (topic for paper is Resolution 1)</p>
<p>CLASS 12 – <b>IN PERSON</b> November 27</p>	<p>Debates 4, 5, 6 Resolution 4: Large, publicly held companies should reduce the level of CEO compensation.</p> <p>Resolution 5: Employers should attempt to make work satisfying (besides paying a fair wage).</p> <p>Resolution 6: Amazon exemplifies how ethical business should be conducted.</p>	<p>Individual Position Papers due at 14:00.</p> <p>Persons in Debate 1 (topic for paper is Resolution 6),</p> <p>Persons in Debate 2 (topic for paper is Resolution 5)</p> <p>Persons in Debate 3 (topic for paper is Resolution 4)</p>
<p><b>TO BE DETERMINED – IN PERSON</b></p>	<p><b>FINAL EXAM</b></p>	

## Course Policies (continued)

### Accessibility

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to achieve excellence, the University recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to perform at their best. The University encourages students with disabilities to register with [Student Accessibility Services](#) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors through their Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Please let your instructor know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. Sufficient notice is needed so that reasonable steps for accommodation can be discussed. Accommodations for tests/exams normally require three (3) weeks (or 21 days) before the scheduled test/exam to arrange.

### Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate [accommodations to adherents for observances of special significance](#). Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for course examinations, tests, or deadlines conflict with a date of religious significance, please contact the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of class. If the date falls within the formal examination periods, you must complete and submit a [Religious Accommodation for Examination Form](#) at least three (3) weeks before the start of the exam period.

### Intellectual Property

Course materials are designed for use as part of this particular course at York University and are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian copyright law. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#), and/or legal consequences for copyright violations.

### Student Conduct in the Learning Environment

York University is committed to fostering teaching and learning environments that are free of disruptive and/or harassing behaviour, are physically safe, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy, civility, and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to

such a relationship. Individuals who fail to adhere to such standards and who violate University or public law may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

For more information, see the policies on [Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations](#), the [Student Conduct and Responsibilities](#), and the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#).

### **Netiquette for eClass and Online Learning**

Students and instructors have a joint responsibility to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Please review and familiarize yourself with behaviours that support “netiquette” in virtual classrooms by consulting the [Guide to Netiquette](#) and [Student Guide to eLearning](#).

### **Health and Safety**

All York students and instructors share responsibility for the safety and well-being of the community while on York's campuses. Please continue to check [YUBetter Together](#) for the latest information on health and safety.

### **Student Support and Resources**

To help you succeed academically, York University offers a wide range of resources and services. Everything from writing workshops and peer mentorship to wellness support and career guidance is available to fulfill our LA&PS students' needs. Explore the links below to access these on-campus resources:

- [Academic Advising](#) is available to provide students support and guidance in making academic decisions and goals.
- [Student Accessibility Services](#) are available for support and accessibility accommodation when required.
- [Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing](#) offers workshops, resources, and counselling to support your academic success.
- [Peer-Assisted Study Sessions \(PASS\) Program](#) provides student study sessions for students to collaborate and enhance their understanding of course content in certain courses.
- [Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele \(SNACK\)](#) supports students in courses involving math, stats, and Excel.
- [The Writing Centre](#) provides multiple avenues of writing-based support including drop-in sessions, one-to-one appointments, a Multilingual Studio, and an Accessibility Specialist.
- [ESL Open Learning Centre \(OLC\)](#) supports students with building proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking English.
- [Learning Skills Services](#) provides tips for time management, effective study and learning habits, keeping up with coursework, and other learning-related supports.
- [Learning Commons](#) provides links to supports for time management, writing, study skills, preparing for exams, and other learning-related resources.
- [Roadmap to Student Success](#) provides students with timely and targeted resources to help them achieve academic, personal, and professional success.

- [Office of Student Community Relations \(OSCR\)](#) is responsible for administering the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) and provides critical incident support.
- [goSAFE](#) is staffed by York students and can accompany York community members to and from any on-campus location, such as the Village Shuttle pick-up hub, parking lots, bus stops, or residences.

**SPECIAL NOTES:**

1. I will not arrange separate final exams for students who wish to be away for various events (family gatherings, weddings, vacations, holidays, etc.) whatsoever. The alternative is a deferred exam. Please do not ask.
2. I will not give attendance points for days that you are not in class or round up grades because you are close to the next grade beyond the following provision. This needs to be done for everyone (in which case there is no real attendance policy). The provision for illness or being close to the next grade is the rounding up of 4's and 9s (e.g., 74 to 75, 89 to 90) provides 5 – 10 points to each student for various contingencies or for no reason at all. I will use this provision for students who attend class regularly. Please do not ask for preference in addition to this accommodation.

For a full list of academic, wellness, and campus resources visit [Student Support & Resources](#).