



AP/ADMS 3660 Section A SU 2025

Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility

School of Administrative Studies, Faculty of Liberal and Professional Studies

Course Director: Steven Pinter, PhD, jspinter@yorku.ca

Available for meetings: 1 hr prior to class meetings on Tuesdays; email Monday and Wednesday.

Class meetings: Tuesdays at 4pm, Vari Hall D

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to relevant issues and discussions in ethics and social responsibility in business. We investigate three pillars: transparent management, good company conduct and empowered citizenship. In addition to these discussions, we will add: examination of ethics cases in public and private sectors, observations of delivery of corporate values in retail environments, and lastly, we will briefly examine perspectives relating to the changes in contemporary business organization.

After completing this course students will leave equipped with conceptual tools to identify, think critically about, and resolve ethical issues at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. The course stresses critical thinking, group interaction skills and communication skills through a series of expository assignments and a group case analysis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To increase the awareness of the ethical dimension of business and its decision-making process across all functions.
- To become familiar with the social standards, values, ethical principles and moral philosophy that provide criteria for decision making.
- The role of business ethics in the Canadian as well as global business environment and to recognize the challenges of business social responsibility.
- To develop critical thinking skills via the application of concepts and theories to business cases.
- To observe corporate ethical commitments in context.
- To create foundations and supports for effective communication techniques.

COURSE MATERIAL

- Two main volumes for us this summer:
- Joseph DesJardins, 6th Edition. (2020). *An Introduction to Business Ethics*, New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin. There are multiple editions, including online pdfs, of this volume. Please review your options, including library copies.
- Emily Mester, (2025) *America's Bulk: essays on excess*. New York, Norton.
-
- **Additional readings:** as indicated in this syllabus. Most cases are drawn from Canadian and international sources, as well as from government and self-regulating professional associations cases.

- Some material is available on the public internet and linked in this syllabus. Assigned readings that are not linked in this syllabus are scholarly journal articles available through the York University library website. To access them, go to the York University Libraries website and enter the name of the article into the Omni search field.
- Materials for class discussion will be posted on eclass as necessary.

IMPORTANT DATES

Please see York's summer sessional dates for full information. Remember we have a short reading break from June 17 and also Canada Day on July 1. Both of these dates impact our class.

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS

Brief list:

- Personal narrative (10)
- Group observation project* (30)
- Annotation exercise: (10)
- One group case analysis and presentation. Groups choose and prepare analyses of a case. A list of case sources will be provided. Groups must send in case selections and reasons by Week 8 (30)
- Group experience and effectiveness review: (10)
- Participation based on classroom interaction: (10)

*Please see the extensive discussion of assignments in the document called Summer 2025 assignments. This is posted in eclass under the Important Documents heading.

CLASS SCHEDULE

The table below lists weeks and corresponding dates:

Week 1. May 6	Week 5. June 3	Week 9. July 15
Week 2. May 13	Week 6. June 10	Week 10. July 22
Week 3. May 20	Week 7. June 24	Week 11. July 29
Week 4. May 27	Week 8. July 8	Week 12. Aug 5

In-class meetings will be devoted to class discussion and review of themes and issues in context. I won't be lecturing, but we all have to be reading. We'll have questions on themes that you can work on in groups and as a whole. For several classes, we will also be able to debrief on your group work.

For the observation project groups will have opportunities to conduct their work during classtime. We will also debrief after two of your in-store observations. As the term moves along, groups will also have opportunity to meet and work together during classtime to prepare the case analysis.

Brief outline of assignments:

1. Personal Narrative, due week 2.
2. Observation project: due week 7; in-store observations weeks 3 and 4. Debrief week 5. Group work on completing project in week 6.
3. Annotation exercise (individual) due week 9
4. Groups must submit topics for case analysis.
5. Group case analysis, due week 12; in-class worktime weeks 9 and 10.
6. Confidential group effectiveness discussion due week 12.
7. Please note that all assignments are due on eclass at 9p on the Friday of the week in which the project is due. So, for example, if something is due in week 2, it is due on that Friday, which is May 16th. It takes me about 2 weeks to read and grade your assignments. So, please be patient.
8. Late is late; if you are not ready with your project by the due date and time, it is to be sent to the "late work" box on eclass. There will be deductions from late work, up to a maximum of 40%.

Brief schedule of activities:

Weeks 1-2 .

Orientation and process: we'll work on setting up groups, group interaction and coordination functions.

We will fully outline the observation assignment and what it involves. Please refer to the extensive written description I have posted on eclass.

Read: Chapters 1, 2 and 5 in Desjardins. Introduction and first 2 chapters in Mester's book. What do these ideas mean and how do we talk about them?

Additional reading: H. Smith (2003) "[The shareholders vs stakeholders debate](#)" *MIT Sloan Management Review* 15 July 2003

W Streeck. <https://newleftreview.org/issues/ii87/articles/wolfgang-streeck-how-will-capitalism-end>

Weeks 3 and 4.

Activity weeks: In-store group observations. There is no in-class meeting on these weeks.

Week 5 is in-class debrief and issues discussion.

Read: Desjardins, Chapters 3 and 4; Mester, pp 23-82

Weeks 5 and 6.

Transition to conceptualization and writing: Whole-class debrief on observations; classtime for preparing project for submission.

Weeks 7 and 8.

Building on understandings of ethics in context: Read: Desjardins, Chapters 8, 9 and 11; Mester, pp 83-136.

E Bernays, Propaganda. Chapters 1 & 5. (ebook available through York library)

Group project topics due in week 7.

Discussions on business ethics and contexts coming from readings.

Prepare for group case analysis. If there are group concerns going into the case, we will deal with them this week.

Weeks 9 and 10.

Group work on case – not in-class.

Week 11-12.

In-class debrief and wrap-up on case analysis; course review and takeaways.

Read: Desjardins, Ch 12; Mester, pp 185-224.

RELEVANT UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

Academic Honesty

The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies considers breaches of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty to be serious matters. To quote the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. The Policy on Academic Honesty is an affirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. As a clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship, the policy recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards. Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated, and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty can be subject to disciplinary action under the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. Lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy and Guidelines on Academic Honesty does not constitute a defense against their application. Some academic offences can also constitute offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, which means that you, as a student, may also be subject to criminal charges.

Students should review the York Academic Honesty policy for themselves at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

Students might also wish to review the interactive on-line Tutorial for students on academic integrity, at:

http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/

A1. Senate Policy on Academic Honesty

The Policy on Academic Honesty is an affirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. As a clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship, the policy recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards.

Academic honesty requires that persons do not falsely claim credit for the ideas, writing or other intellectual property of others, either by presenting such works as their own or through impersonation. Similarly, academic honesty requires that persons do not cheat (attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation), nor attempt or actually alter, suppress, falsify or fabricate any research data or results, official academic record, application or document. Finally, academic honesty requires that persons do not aid or abet others to commit an offence of academic dishonesty, including intentional acts to disrupt academic activities.

Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist. A student who is charged with a breach of academic honesty shall be presumed innocent until, based upon clear and compelling evidence, a committee determines the student has violated the academic honesty standards of the university. A finding of academic misconduct will lead to the range of penalties described in the guidelines which accompany this policy. In some cases, the University regulations on non-academic discipline may apply. A lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy and Guidelines on Academic Honesty on the part of a student does not constitute a defence against their application. Some academic offences constitute offences under the Criminal Code of Canada; a student charged under University regulations may also be subject to criminal charges. Charges may also be laid against York University students for matters which arise at other educational institutions.

2. Senate Guidelines on Academic Honesty

2.1 Summary of Offences Against the Standards of Academic Honesty

The following summary of offences is not exhaustive, nor are the definitions provided for each offence confined to the examples cited.

2.1.1 Cheating is the attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation. Forms of cheating include:

- Obtaining a copy of an examination before it is officially available or learning an examination question before it is officially available;
- Copying another person's answer to an examination question;
- Consulting an unauthorized source during an examination;
- Disruption of an academic evaluation by any means;
- Obtaining assistance by means of documentary, electronic or other aids which are not approved by the instructor;
- Changing a score or a record of an examination result;
- Submitting the work one has done for one class or project to a second class, or as a second project, without the prior informed consent of the relevant instructors;
- Submitting work prepared in collaboration with another or other member(s) of a class when collaborative work on a project has not been authorized by the instructor;
- Submitting work prepared in whole or in part by another person and representing that work as one's own;
- Offering for sale essays or other assignments, in whole or in part, with the expectation that these works will be submitted by a student for appraisal;
- Preparing work in whole or in part, with the expectation that this work will be submitted by a student for appraisal.

2.1.2 Impersonation is to have someone impersonate one's self in class, in a test, examination or interview, or in connection with any other type of assignment or placement associated with a course or academic program. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated may be charged.

2.1.3 Plagiarism is the misappropriation of the work of another by representing another person's ideas, writing or other intellectual property as one's own. This includes the presentation of all or part of another person's work as something one has written, paraphrasing another's writing without proper acknowledgement, or representing another's artistic or technical work or creation as one's own. Any use of the work of others, whether published, unpublished or posted electronically, attributed or anonymous, must include proper acknowledgement.

2.1.4 Improper research practices. Academic research includes the collection, analysis, interpretation and publication of information or data obtained in the scientific laboratory or in the field. Forms of improper research practices include:

- Dishonest reporting of investigative results, either through fabrication or falsification;
- Taking or using the research results of others without permission or due acknowledgement
- Misrepresentation or selective reporting of research results or the methods used.

2.1.5 Dishonesty in publication. It is a violation of academic honesty to knowingly publish information that will mislead or deceive readers. This includes the falsification or fabrication of data or information, as well as the failure to give credit to collaborators as joint authors or the listing as authors of others who have not contributed to the work. Plagiarism is also considered a form of dishonesty in publication.

- 2.1.6 Dissemination of information without permission. Information or experimental data that was collected with a member of faculty or another student, and other works that involved the participation of a faculty member or another student, should not be submitted for publication or otherwise disseminated without their permission.
- 2.1.7 Abuse of confidentiality. Taking or releasing the ideas or data of others that were given with the expectation that they are confidential is inappropriate. This includes the ideas or data obtained via the evaluation of confidential grant proposals, award applications or manuscripts that will be or may have been submitted for possible funding or publication. Unless one is authorized to do so, it is improper to obtain a password assigned to another or to copy or modify a data file or program belonging to someone else. Proper authorization means being granted permission either by the owner or originator of that material, or by an appropriate faculty member or administrator.
- 2.1.8 Falsification or unauthorized modification of an academic document/record. It is a breach of academic honesty to falsify, fabricate or in any way modify, either through omission or commission, an application to the University or a program, course student examination or test, transcript, grade, letter of recommendation or related document, a degree, a physician's letter/form or any other document used in support of an academic application, record, petition/appeal or endeavor.
- 2.1.9 Obstruction of the academic activities of another. It is a violation of academic honesty to interfere with the scholarly activities of another in order to harass or gain unfair academic advantage. This includes interference or tampering with experimental data, with a human or animal subject, with a written or other creation (e.g., a painting, sculpture or film), with a chemical used for scientific study, or with any other object of study.
- 2.1.10 Aiding and abetting. Encouraging, enabling or causing others to do or attempt any of the above with intent to mislead an instructor, academic unit, program, office or committee as to a student's academic status, qualifications, actions or preparation, or knowingly aiding or abetting anyone in a breach of academic honesty shall itself be considered misconduct. Taking any action which can reasonably be interpreted as intending to encourage or enable others to commit an offence of academic honesty.

Students are encouraged to review this policy in its entirety at:

<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69> s a student at York University, you have a responsibility to not only understand, but also play an important part in upholding the integrity of the academic experience. The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies at York University supports the International Center for Academic Integrity's [definition of academic integrity](#). That is, you will be committed to acting in all academic matters, even in the face of adversity, with honesty, trust, fairness, courage, respect and responsibility.

How can you demonstrate academic integrity in the completion of your course?

- Respect the ideas of others: Your course work should represent your own knowledge and ideas. You should not falsely claim credit for ideas that are not your own, by presenting another's work as yours. If you are quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another person's work in order to support your own ideas, identify the work and the author through proper citation practices. For more information about how to cite properly, use the [Student Papers and Academic Research Kit](#) (SPARK). You can improve your writing, research, and personal learning abilities through the [Learning Commons](#).
- Respect your peers: Know when you are allowed to collaborate. Ask your instructor about what group work entails when it comes to the sharing of work. In test situations and assignments, don't steal or give answers to your peers. Cheating and aiding in a breach of academic honesty are both against York University's academic honesty policy.
- Respect your course instructor(s): Understand what the instructors are asking of you in class, in assignments, and in exams. If you are unsure, ask your professor or teaching assistant. They are committed to making you feel supported, and want to assess you fairly and with integrity. Please do not submit the same piece of work for more than one course without your instructor's permission.
- Respect yourself: When you act with integrity, you know that your work is yours and yours alone. You do not allow others to impersonate you on tests and exams. You do not buy or otherwise obtain term papers or assignments. You do the work. As a result, you know that you *earned* the grades that you receive, so you can be proud of your York degree. By acting with integrity in your course work, you are also practicing a valuable professional skill that is important in all workplaces.
- Take responsibility: If you have acted in an academically dishonest way, you can demonstrate courage and take responsibility for your mistake. You can admit your mistake to your course instructor as soon as possible.

York Senate committee policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

- https://www.yorku.ca/unit/vpacad/academic-integrity/wp-content/uploads/sites/576/2023/03/Senate-ASCStatement_Academic-Integrity-and-AI-Technology.pdf

Turnitin:

To promote academic integrity in this course, students will be normally required to submit their written assignments to Turnitin (via the course eClass) for a review of textual similarity and the detection of possible plagiarism. In so doing, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used only for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

Policy on citing AI-generated material:

According to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (see below), all work that you submit for evaluation must be completed by you and you alone, unless otherwise specified.

When using any part of an AI-generated response, you must also cite the AI in your bibliography. When directly quoting text or any other material taken from the generative AI, use an in-text citation using APA style: see "[How to cite ChatGPT](#)". All paraphrased AI-generated material should include the same kind of in-text citation, but without quotation marks.

Religious Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. For more information on religious accommodation, please visit:

<https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

The nature and extent of accommodation shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder. For more information, please visit the Disabilities Services website at <http://www.yorku.ca/cds/>

During regular course delivery York's disabilities offices and the Registrar's Office work in partnership to support alternate exam and test accommodation services for students with disabilities at the Keele campus. For more information on alternate exams and tests please visit <http://www.yorku.ca/altexams/>

Please let the course instructor(s) know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation, so that your accommodation needs can be discussed and considered within the context of this course.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY NOTICE

All materials prepared for ADMS 3600 at York University are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course. This can include the following material: lecture handouts, spoken and written presentations, audio and video recordings, PowerPoint slides, as well as questions and/or solution sets for assignments, quizzes, tests and final exams, among other pieces of intellectual property. As a student in this course, you may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any of this work without the instructor's express permission. Unauthorized or commercial use of these materials is strictly prohibited. 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. Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website, or online sharing of course material with people

outside of the course) may lead to a charge of misconduct under York's Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities and the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In addition, you may face legal consequences for any violation of copyright law.