

York University
Liberal arts and professional studies
School of Administrative Studies

ADMS 3660, Section B
Blended
Fall, 2025.
Tuesdays 7-10pm

Course Director: JS Pinter, PhD.
Office hours: 1 hr before start of class. Please make an appointment.
--Please remember that most questions can be answered through consulting the course outline--

Land Acknowledgement.

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.

1. Course descriptions. There are several documentary contexts for the course description; this course “lives” in many documents. Here you have a brief sense of these.

Taken from School of Administrative Studies, Management stream page:

Our students engage with an eclectic group of academics and practitioners, taking a holistic view of organizations and the management of people. We address important issues such [as] strategic management, leadership, managing teams, globalization, sustainability, gender, diversity and inclusivity and entrepreneurship.

Taken from York calendar:

[ADMS 3660] 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.

Adapted course description (ie ours):

Building on the above, I want to underline that the course intends to

- Be engaging
- Present different and eclectic viewpoints
- Be more focused on the practical aspects of ethics
- Develop a holistic view of organizations and their ethical commitment
- Assess the relevance of business ethics in real-world settings
- Outline shifting views of a corporation's responsibility to society
- Develop a diverse understanding of stakeholders and their interests

In brief, we want to develop your interest and engagement with ethics as an integral aspect of business operations. We want to build up the practice of ethical management such that it is understood to be an essential element of business and how it performs its responsibilities in society. It is important to understand that we don't want to say that the maximum value ethical engagement may have is as a screen for other, less-pleasant behaviours, but we want to say that ethical engagement must inform all behaviours. In other words, business cannot be *responsible* if it doesn't embody a meaningful commitment to ethics.

2a. Course Learning Objectives

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

In more detail:

- 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.

2b. Course Format and Organization

We will accomplish this objective through a variety of methods, including readings, current issue briefs, class discussions, presentations, case studies, and quizzes/examinations. Substantial student involvement is required. Participation in class discussions is also essential for success in this course.

As this is a blended class, there are several asynchronous modules. Each will have questions or activities you are asked to complete. It's important to ensure that you participate in these as required.

3. Course text: the cost of the text is \$156.95 + HST.

Required Texts: An Introduction to Business Ethics, 7th edition. AUTHOR: DeJardins. ISBN 9781260548082.

In addition to discussions flowing from this book, we will add: examination of ethics cases in public and private sectors, reading through disciplinary reports compiled by self-regulating professional organizations, and lastly, we will briefly examine perspectives relating to the changes in contemporary social organization. We will work to mirror course plans found in other sections; you might notice some differences but the goal is the same in all cases: to ensure that students leave the course with the same awareness of ethics in business.

4. Assessments

- a. 5 quizzes. 30 points
- b. Personal narrative – a short bio, photo, a person or actor you would consider an “ethical hero”, and a discussion of a situation you’ve been involved with that has ethical implications.
- c. Presentation as a group. 10 points
- d. Group case analysis. 30 points
- e. Individual reflection on how you contributed to making your group better, ie: problem identification and problem-solving. 10 points
- f. Topic/issue reflections. 30 points

Notes: The case is a central aspect of your evaluation for the course. Group members should post building blocks of their case analysis and explorations on forums that I have created for specific groups

The group presentation is based on your reflections and experiences through the course, using readings and their applications to your case analysis, as your anchor point. Each group should take about 30 minutes for the presentation. We have a class set aside for these, but I will also accept video presentations.

The individual reflection is based on how you contributed to making the group work better. This usually involves how you identified problems or obstacles, what specifically you did about this, and how you defined whether your suggestions for changes were successful.

Topic/issue reflections. There are two of these at 15 points each. This is a group exercise. You'll be given a topic to write on coming from the class discussions. Each student writes a comment on the topic, about 500 words. Students from the group write replies to the original comment, about 200 words. Individually then, students reflect on the comments received and write short reflection essays (about 500 words) on how the original thinking may have changed as a result. You are graded on the reflection piece.

5. Assignment submission and related.

Papers must be submitted digitally via eClass. They are normally due on the Friday of the particular week specified. So, for example, if you have a case to submit in Week 9, the paper is due on the Friday of week 9.

Late work is late work if it is submitted after the deadline. Late work is subject to a penalty of not less than 10% of the value of the assignment. Please make use of the "late work" drop box on eclass. I DO NOT accept assignments over email, in any form. I do not use an Apple computer so please export apple files as microsoft office files, ie Excel and Word. When I receive a file I am unable to open, I am unable to accept the work as on time. Please proactively speak to me if you anticipate any challenges.

Missed quizzes: make-ups will be at the discretion of the instructor.

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.

[Grades and Grading Schemes / Notes et système de notation | 2022-23 Undergraduate Academic Calendar | York University](#)

Use Citations!!

Use accepted citation practices; these are very important supports for academic integrity. They help create a "chain of certainty" by linking information back to an identifiable source, title, year of publication and AND PAGE.

You can use any of the following three styles of citation, but you cannot mix them: • SPARK Student Papers & Academic Research Kit • Chicago Style Overview • MLA Style Overview • APA Style Overview •

Review: [SPARK | York University](#)

Drop-in Research Support is available at the Writing Centre

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information: • Student Rights & Responsibilities • Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Academic Integrity. In all courses at York, one strives to maintain academic honesty to the highest extent possible. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of academic integrity by completing SPARK's Academic Integrity tutorial. We'll also spend time discussing these questions in class. In a class on business ethics, it is imperative that we place integrity at the top of our work.

Breaches of academic honesty. Depending on severity, these may be reported to the appropriate University authorities and be dealt with according to the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

Responsible AI use. More information on this will be coming shortly. Critical and responsible AI (better to call it Machine Intelligence) is going to be a fundamental aspect of the work we do in class. A few informal thoughts: Remember that machine intelligence is not embodied, not embedded in experience. Even though it learns, we learn differently. Vastly differently. While you represent the very flower of humanity, machine intelligence is the leading edge of a sweeping technological change that may very well, according to experts, have profound implications on our futures. Make no mistake—using this technology irresponsibly makes one subject to its imperatives.

This particular instruction is subordinate to the school's policy on machine intelligence.

The above list is not exhaustive. Issues and events may emerge that we will have to deal with as they come up. Please remember that in all aspects of our work, responsible use of material and sustaining academic integrity are determining values.

6. Class Schedule and assignment dates.

The table below lists week numbers and corresponding dates:

Week 1. September 9	Week 7. Oct 28
Week 2. Sept 16	Week 8. November 4
Week 3. Sept 23	Week 9. Nov 11
Week 4. Sept 30	Week 10. Nov 18
Week 5. October 7	Week 11. Nov 25
Week 6. Oct 21	Week 12. December 2

Assignment due dates:

- a. 5 quizzes: distributed over the term, dates TBA
- b. Group case analysis: Week 11
- c. Individual reflection on contributions: week 11
- d. Reflection essays: week 4,9
- e. Presentations: week 12

--Note that some dates may have to be shifted.

In the schedule below, JD refers to Joseph DesJardins *An Introduction to Business Ethics*. You can expect in-class meetings to be devoted to discussion and review of themes and issues. As the term moves along, groups will also have opportunity to meet and work together during classtime.

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Week 1. In-person.

Review online course documents; prepare autobiography. I will create groups for the case analysis.

Week 2. Asynchronous and online. Introduction to ethics and ethical theories.

- JD chapters 2 and 5
- Check group member lists; I will discuss case sources.

Week 3. Asynchronous. Corporate social responsibility.

- JD chapter 3
- Report of the Berger commission, "Letter to the Minister."
<https://caid.ca/BergerV1let.pdf>
- [Trudeau II Report](#) from the Federal Ethics Commissioner.

Additional reading:

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

Week 4. In-class Looking at cases.

Reading

J. Heath (2006) "[Business Ethics Without Stakeholders](#)," *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 16(3): 533-557 (read from the last paragraph of p. 537 to the middle of p. 552.

Robert Bullard, [Dumping in Dixie](#). Race, class and environmental quality, 3rd ed. Available electronically from the York U library. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/10.4324/9780429495274>

Ch 1.

Review:

Bullard, op cit. Ch 3.

Business Ethics Cases – Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

- Arthur Andersen cases: read minicases 1-3
<https://johnhooker.tepper.cmu.edu/ethics/aa/arthurandersen.htm>

- Report of the Berger Inquiry
https://irc.inuvialuit.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/BergerV1_Report.pdf

Week 5. Asynchronous. Corporate culture and ESG (environmental, social, corporate governance) reporting. Online.

- JD chapter 4
- R Bullard, op cit. Ch 2.
- See Berger report. Vi Ch1, The North.
<https://caid.ca/BergerV1ch1.pdf>
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, Hearings and Outcomes. [OPSDT: Outcomes](https://opsdt.ca/hearings/outcomes)

Additional readings:

Business Roundtable (2019) “[Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation](#)

A. Raghunandan and S. Rajgopal (2021) “[Do socially responsible firms walk the talk?](#)”

N. Buck (2023) “[The Climate Blockers: BASF quietly lobbies against strong climate policy while talking a big game](#)” *Corporate Knights* 25 Jan 23

Week 6. Asynchronous. Medicine, pharma and ethics. The example of Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family.

- https://samgroupil.org/uploads/3/5/3/4/35342423/opioid_crisis_-_new_yorker_10-30-17.pdf
- Self-regulating professions and discipline:
<https://opsdt.ca/hearings/outcomes>

Week 7. Asynchronous. Rights, retail and care.

Employee rights. Ch 6 in JD.

Costco, big-box retail and an ethic of care.

[A daughter, a father and a family's struggle with 'American Bulk' | On Point](#)

Week 8. Catch-up week.

Use the time to work on your cases, catch up on reading or start preparing your reflection paper.

Week 9: Asynchronous. Sustainability

JD chapter 10

W Streeck, take 1.

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

Zizek on capitalism: [Slavoj Zizek: What is the Question? - Open Source with Christopher Lydon](#)

Additional reading:

P. Ekins and D. Zenghelis (2021) "[The costs and benefits of environmental sustainability](#)" *Sustainability Science* 16:949–965

Banking on Climate Chaos [Fossil fuel finance report 2022 summary](#).

E. Ellmen (2023) "[Stronger climate regulations for banks might not actually cut emissions](#)" *Corporate Knights* 14 March 2023

N. Buck (2023) "[The Climate Blockers: BASF quietly lobbies against strong climate policy while talking a big game](#)" *Corporate Knights* 25 Jan 23

Week 10. Online. Group case discussion – final Q&A

Week 11: Group case discussion due; individual reflection due.

Week 12. In-class. Course review, presentations and concluding issues.
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7. Concluding comments.

I anticipate the School will be producing additional materials on policies and conduct relevant to our course. When these materials become available, I will share them with the group.

Thank you for your attention.