



Spring 2018 Syllabus: BUSI 758R: Special Topics in Business: Business Ethics

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Course Description

This course will examine business ethics issues across a variety of business contexts. You will learn to apply a number of ethical theories to business problems, primarily through case studies and discussion. The goal is for you to engage actively with the material and understand the complexity of many ethical dilemmas that businesses and business owners face. Often in ethics there is not one right answer; rather, businesses and individuals must wrestle with ethical principles that may compete and conflict with one another in arriving at a resolution. We will explore conflicts between personal values and organizational goals, ethics as part of a business strategy, and various ethical frameworks businesses may use in understanding and implementing ethical approaches to problems.

Course Objectives

1. Summarize how ethical failures have led to the regulation of business.
2. Recognize how ethical norms, values, and laws governing business have evolved over time.
3. Predict how business ethics can substantially impact credibility, reputation, and profit in the current environment.
4. Analyze how the course topics relate to successful careers in business, non-profits, or government.
5. Demonstrate the importance of teamwork and collaboration in ethics; and to further existing teamwork skills.
6. Develop the critical thinking skills needed to approach ethical issues that may arise over your career.
7. Demonstrate personal creativity in addressing ethical dilemmas.

Required Materials

1. Bernstein, J. (2017). *Secrecy world: inside the Panama Papers investigation of illicit money networks and the global elite*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
2. Jennings, M. (2015). *Business ethics: case studies and selected readings*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
3. Headset with microphone or earbuds with microphone. To prevent issues with Adobe Connect feedback and echo these are required items. Please have these prior to your first live session.
4. Name tag (see below)



Live Session Expectations

My goal is to create as interactive a class as possible. With 88 students it can be a challenge to learn everyone's name in a 5 week class, but I want to know who I am speaking to! Please use a "Hello my name is..." sticker on your upper left shoulder so that we know who is speaking (or your name on a pad of paper to hold up at the bottom of your image.) I know this is low tech and not ideal, but we are stuck with the current technology at the moment. This will help with your participation grade since it is important that I know who you are in order to grade you.

Course Outline

Please follow the specific due dates and times for your section in the course Canvas site.

- **Week 1: Ethical Theory and Decision Making**
- **Week 2: Diversity in Ethics**
- **Week 3: Reporting Wrongdoing**
- **Week 4: Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**
- **Week 5: The Ethical Implications of Social Media and Course Wrap-up**

Major Assignments

Student Team Projects

Each student will be expected to participate in a student team project on **one** of the topics in this course. Presentations will be delivered during the synchronous live sessions. Your instructor will discuss examples of good projects during the first week of class.

Your instructor will determine the size and composition of each team. Team assignments will be published in the course and discussed in class during the first week of class, once class population is final.

Each team will be responsible for the following:

- Submitting a *Team Reading Packet* to include resources on this week's topic in the Team Discussion Forum.
- Uploading a detailed *Written Script* (required) of the entire presentation and any presentation materials (optional) to the Team Discussion Form.
- Leading a 45 minute presentation during this week's Live Session.
- Individually submitting an *Evaluation of Team Members*.

The other members of the class will be responsible for the following:

- Submitting a *Class Evaluation* of teams to include a critique of each reading packet and the team's performance in the weekly live sessions.

Following are some specific guidelines:

Team Reading Packet



Each week's team will create its own reading packet related to the week's topics that the team members think the class should learn more about. If you were preparing a briefing for your boss about this week's topic, what would you include for a briefing? Journals, newspapers, and any other resources on this week's topic can be included. Teams should not write their own report, but use preexisting material on the topics that their classmates would find useful. Students will find resources and list them out and upload one PDF file per group to include links to resources, article references, etc.

Team Written Script & Presentation Materials

Each group must prepare a detailed written script of their entire presentation to the Team Discussion Forum (required). This includes the role play and all other aspects of the presentation. One copy of this script must be submitted before the presentation begins. You can also share your presentation materials on the Team Discussion Forum (optional).

Team Presentation

Teams will begin presenting in the weekly Live Sessions in week 2. Each presentation should be 30-45 minutes in length.

Be creative in how you inspire the class on the topic you cover. Each presentation must include at least one very long role-play that the team develops and then presents. This can be done by video or live as part of the session. A series of short role-plays in addition to this are acceptable. Such a series of role-plays should, if possible, have a common interconnected thread. Teams should meet frequently and carefully plan and coordinate their presentations. It is expected that students work on the acting that takes place in the role-plays. The role-play(s) should be a significant portion of your presentation and will be a significant factor in grading of the group presentation. Each student project team may use other techniques in addition to role-play(s) (e.g., lecture).

A number of factors will be considered in determining the presentation grade including, but not limited to the:

- additional research
- presentation preparation and delivery
- quality of the role-play(s) including the acting
- originality, uniqueness, and creativity of the presentation
- coverage of the issues
- class discussion resulting from the presentation
- quality and completeness of the script of the presentation turned before the presentation

Grades on the student team projects will be determined by your instructor with input from members of the class who are not in the presentation group. Students who are not giving the presentation will be asked to turn in an evaluation form rating the presentation. However, the instructor will determine the actual grade for the presentation.

Each student in the presenting team will receive a grade in the following manner:

- Each member of a team will receive a questionnaire from the instructor that will ask the student to rank her/his fellow team members as *satisfactory* or *unsatisfactory* in the contribution to the



team's presentation. A student's grade will start with the grade for the team determined by the instructor.

- Then, if between 26% and 50% of the team (not including the student being rated) rate a student as unsatisfactory, the student will lose one letter grade. If between 51% and 75% of the team (not including the student being rated) rate a student as *unsatisfactory*, the student will lose two letter grades. If all of the members of the team (not including the student being rated) rate a student as *unsatisfactory*, the student will lose four letter grades.
- Based on comments found on the team rating sheet, the instructor reserves the right to further reduce or increase the grade of any team member as appropriate. It is therefore critically important that each team member participate, cooperate, and attend team meetings.

Reflective Journal

All students must write a reflective essay that can be at least 300 words in length on their personal thoughts on the topic covered each week.

Please take ten minutes to think about the topic before writing anything and then write your **personal thoughts** about the topic. In my grading of your Reflective Journal, I will evaluate your thinking concerning the **key** issues relating to each topic. This is not a place to repeat what was in the readings, but to provide me with your personal thoughts. Grades will be based on your personal thoughts, not repetition. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

These write-ups must be typed (double spaced, 12 point). If appropriate, use footnotes and references

The Reflective Journal component of the course will count for 10% of the final grade.

Assignments

Assignment Categories	Total Points	Weight
Student Team Projects	20	45%
Class Participation	50	25%
Reflective Journal	50	15%
Discussion Boards	70	15%
Total	190	100%

Course Policies

Grading Policy

In Robert H. Smith Online MBA **Foundation 2 courses and selectives**, the proportion of A-, A, and A+ grades lie between 50% and 70% in the event that no “C” or lower grades are given. This recommended target is across all sections of the elective that a faculty member teaches in a given semester. Otherwise stated, we are recommending a class-average GPA of approximately 3.60 as a target. Faculty are encouraged to put these guidelines on their syllabus to help manage student expectations.



Academic Integrity

The student-administered [Honor Code and Honor Pledge](#) prohibits students from cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents and forging signatures. On every examination, paper or other academic exercise not specifically exempted by the instructor, students must acknowledge the following pledge:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (or assignment).

Students with Disabilities

Disability Support Service is available to online students. Students should contact the DSS office directly at dissup@umd.edu or 301-314-7682.

Copyright Notice

Course materials are copyrighted and may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission.

Netiquette Policy

Netiquette is the social code of online classes. Students share a responsibility for the course's learning environment. Creating a cohesive online learning community requires learners to support and assist each other. To craft an open and interactive online learning environment, communication has to be conducted in a professional and courteous manner at all times, guided by common sense, collegiality and basic rules of etiquette.

Discussion Board Criteria

Many assignments in this course use a discussion forum to simulate a traditional classroom academic discourse in an asynchronous environment. These discussion forums are designed to delve into the deep questions that are often raised in the course of a typical on-the-ground class session. To replicate this exchange, students will post comments to a discussion topic, react to other students' comments, post thoughts and experiences related to the topic, and respond to ideas shared by others in the module. Discussions are also designed to demonstrate student knowledge of the readings, videos, and other supplemental materials presented in each module.

Students are expected to respond to other postings by:

- Making references to the text and other readings.
- Bringing in outside research.
- Sharing personal workplace experiences.
- Supporting and challenging one another.