

Argosy University
COURSE SYLLABUS
B6003
Ethics in Business

Faculty Information

Faculty Name:

Campus:

Contact Information:

Office Hours:

Short Faculty Bio:

Course description:

This course addresses the ethical dimensions of management with a special focus on the processes managers may use to raise and resolve ethical dilemmas and conflicts in organizational settings. Policies pertaining to treatment of those raising ethical issues will be considered. The legal and regulatory requirements of ethical conduct will be examined. Policies and codes of conduct established by various organizations and industry groups will be critically examined. The course will feature case studies involving alleged breaches of ethical conduct among publicly held corporations.

Course Pre-requisites: None

Required Textbook:

Hartman, L. P. (2005). *Perspectives in Business Ethics* (3rd ed.). Irwin/McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-288146-1

Technology: Pentium III CPU/ Windows 98; 128MB RAM printer; Microsoft Office; Adobe Acrobat Reader (full version); Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.5 (PC), 5.0 (MAC), or Netscape Navigator 4.08; Norton Antivirus.

Course length: 7.5 Weeks

Contact Hours: 45 Hours

Credit Value: 3.0

Program Outcomes:

1. Communication
 - 1.1. Oral/Written – Present business information orally and in writing using appropriate technology that is concise, clear, organized, supported, and persuasive in a professional manner appropriate to the business context.
2. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
 - 2.1. Critical Thinking – Incorporate and synthesize information, theory, and practice in order to implement appropriate business actions.
 - 2.2. Problem Solving/Decision Making – Given a business situation, diagnose the underlying causes of the situation, evaluate possible solutions, and determine and defend appropriate course of action.
 - 2.3. Information Literacy – Access information from a variety of sources, evaluate the credibility of the sources, and apply that information to solve business problems.
3. Team
 - 3.1. Leadership – Describe the requirements of team members and leaders to work effectively and creatively in achieving team goals.
 - 3.2. Collaboration – Collect, categorize, and consider the views of all stakeholders.
4. Ethics
 - 4.1. Ethics – Identify the ethical principles related to personal and corporate behavior in specific business situations and explain the potential consequences.
5. Diversity
 - 5.1. Diversity – Identify the impact of both cultural and economic factors on the modern enterprise and explain the potential consequences.
6. Analysis/Application
 - 6.1. Applied Technology – Select and defend business technology solutions to typical business problems.
 - 6.2. Integration – Describe the interrelationship of the functional business areas of statistics, accounting, finance, marketing, operations, and strategy within the context of specific organizational goals.

Course Objectives

1. Compare and contrast the various ethical theories and frameworks. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1,4.1)
2. Evaluate the nature and value of business ethics in profit and non-profit organizations. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1,4.1,5.1,6.2)
3. From a management perspective, explore, appraise and apply various alternatives and responses when observing non-ethical practices in the workplace. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2)
4. Assess and evaluate the role of leadership, structure, and corporate culture as mechanisms to develop and maintain a business code of ethics. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2)
5. Examine and appraise the role of ethics in human resources management, sales and marketing, finance and accounting, as well as, the technology field. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, 6.2)
6. Examine current legal and regulatory requirements of ethical conduct. (Program Outcomes: 1.1, 2.1, 4.1)
7. Examine case studies related to ethics in business and write in-depth analyses using APA format. (Program Outcomes: 1.1,2.1, 3.1,4.1,5.1,6.2)

Assignment Table

	Topics	Readings	Assignments
1	Ethical theories & framework and its applications to business decisions.	Read Chapter 1, pp. 1-17	Assignment 1.1: Assume the role of CEO a major life insurance company who has received negative exposure about its deceptive sales practices and has settled a class actions law suit in regard to the matter last month. You receive a call from <i>60 Minutes</i> requesting an interview in regard to the allegations and the pending class action law suit. The corporate legal team does not object to the interview, and you feel that it is important not to “hide” from the public eye at this juncture, so you agree to be interviewed. How would you handle this interview? Would you try to defend your company and rationalize

			<p>what happened in order to down play the ill effects, or would you openly admit to a lack of stringent sales compliance procedure in your company and offer a public apology? Evaluate both approaches, then outline your approach to the interview and finally explain why you would take one approach over the other. Present your results in a 3 – 5 page paper citing references to support your response.</p> <p>Assignment 1.2: Submit a 4-6 page paper comparing and contrasting Teleological and Deontological Ethical Systems. Discuss your opinion as to whether or not, religion should play an important role in shaping corporate ethical codes. Use examples or references to support your position.</p>
2	Corporate ethical leadership, social responsibility and reporting	Chapters 3 & 4, pp.183-198	<p>Assignment 2.1: What is the difference between bribery and extortion? Is there an ethical difference between the two? Would you ever summit to an act of extortion? Would you consider bribery, if payoffs are an accepted way of doing business in a particular culture or country? Explain and defend your position in a 1 -2 page paper.</p> <p>Assignment 2.2: Submit a 4-6 page paper in reference to the following topic: Do you perceive Wal-Mart as a “Corporate Bully”? In what ways has Wal-Mart violated certain ethical business behavior? Can you find proof that Wal-Mart of today is trying to be a benevolent organization? Explain and defend your position based on your</p>

			research.
3	Ethical analysis & applications	Read Chapter 2, pp. 87-99	<p>Assignment 3.1: Where corporate self-monitoring and self-compliance fails, the government has an obligation to step in and implement laws directed at reducing incidences of unethical behavior or fraud in order to protect the public. The laws also provide the mechanisms and procedures necessary to punish the perpetrators. In other words, it can be said that laws such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act or the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act are in essence a form of government-imposed code of ethics. Discuss and explain some of the compliance issues and laws governing <u>your</u> line of work (i.e: Banking, real estate, securities, human resources, finance, accounting, etc...). Do you feel that your industry is basically capable of ethical behavior and that the various compliance laws it must adhere to are costly and not necessary or, do these laws have a legitimate and effective role at policing and regulating your industry? Provide specific examples and references in your 2 – 3 page summary.</p> <p>Assignment 3.2: Group Project: Work in groups of three or four with other classmates to brainstorm and submit a 4-5 page paper on the following topic: “Puffing” is generally considered as a mild exaggeration in selling or advertising. Over the decades, consumers have gotten used to seeing advertising/marketing claims with some level of skepticism-“<i>It’s New and Improved!</i>”, “<i>A Super Value</i>”, “<i>A Leaner Body in just 30 Days!</i>”... where should a marketing campaign draw the line? Based on</p>

			your group feedback, construct a set of guidelines for ethical marketing and/or advertising for a generic firm. Submit a preliminary outline and a reference list by end of week four. Submit your final output in week five.
4	Ethics in marketing	Read Chapter 6, pp.514-532	<p>Assignment 4.1: From a marketing standpoint, do you feel that there is an ethical difference between promoting cigarettes and promoting alcoholic beverages or high cholesterol fast foods? If it is acceptable for a Burger King or McDonald to give away free fries and burgers as part of a store grand opening? If so, is it also acceptable for a convenience store to give away cigarettes (with proof of age) as part of its grand opening promotion? Discuss your position and explain your rationale behind it in a 1 – 2 page paper citing references..</p> <p>Assignment 4.2: Playing the devil’s advocate, what possible arguments (economic, political, social or ethical) can you offer that cigarette manufacturers ought to be given less restricted marketing freedom in targeting their sales effort in the U.S., as well as, lesser developed countries? Present your findings in a 1 – 2 page paper, citing references.</p> <p>Assignment 4.3: Submit group project initial outline. Continue working on the group project.</p>
5	Ethics & Human Resource management	Read Chapter 5, pp. 349-363	<p>Assignment 5.1: What are some factors that are used commonly in order to determine which divisions are to be shut down in a company? Do you see any ethical problems with a heavy</p>

			<p>downsizing of an unprofitable company? How about one that is low profit or one that is not optimally profitable? Submit your findings in a 1 – 2 page paper citing references.</p> <p>Assignment 5.2: Complete the group assignment and Submit group project.</p> <p>Assignment 5.3: Submit final paper proposal. Must include your proposed topic, as well as, a preliminary outline and a reference list. Review the guidelines below for specific information regarding the final project.</p>
6	Ethical considerations in finance & accounting	Read Chapter 7, pp.613-635	<p>Assignment 6.1: Within the past two decades, an increasing number of U.S. Firms have moved their corporate headquarters to Caribbean Island nations in order to avoid U.S. taxes. In your estimation, is this an example of good business strategy and sound tax planning or unethical corporate behavior and tax evasion? Explain and defend your position in a 1 – 2 page summary citing references.</p> <p>Assignment 6.2: Conduct a literature research on the <i>Foreign Corrupt Practices Act</i> and submit a 4-6 page paper explaining the major stipulations of the Act. Also, explain and argue the reasons why the Act may place American companies at a distinct disadvantage in countries where bribery is an accepted way of doing business. Cite references</p>

7	Ethical implications of technology	Read Chapter 8, pp.717-728	<p>Assignment 7.1: While whistleblowers continue to be on the news, according to an August 1, 2005 <i>USA Today</i> article, only two of the hundreds of whistleblowers who thought they are protected by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act have actually been able to reach an agreement with their employer to go back to work. Do you think you could ever be a whistleblower? Under what circumstances? What if the whistle blowing could entail losing your job or be marked as a “black sheep” in your line of work or industry? Would you put your principles ahead of the salary that pays the mortgage and puts food on the table? Discuss the various factors you would take under consideration and justify the rationale behind your decision.</p> <p>Assignment 7.2: Conduct an internet-based research and submit a 5-6 page paper identifying a company in the technology sector that seems to be functioning in an ethical and socially responsible manner. In your submission, include the company’s code of ethics and its whistle blower policy (if applicable). Also, discuss the role and influence of the management and leadership of the organization in the implementation and adherence to its ethics code. What lessons can other organizations learn from your subject company?</p>
8	Final Reflections		<p>Assignment 8.1: Reflecting back on the course readings, peer to peer interactions and personal research, discuss and argue</p>

			<p>why adherence to a strong code of ethics is a sound long-term business practice in the U.S. corporate structure. On a personal level, were there any valuable ideas or concepts that you learned from this course? If so, what are they and how can you implement and apply them in your personal business career?</p> <p>Assignment 8.2; Submit final paper.</p>
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Final Paper Suggested Topics

Students are encouraged to consider the following two general topics for their final papers. All other topics and deviations must be pre-approved by the course facilitator before submission.

- Explain and discuss the term “financial shenanigans” and how they affect the financial health of a company in the long run. Research the Internet and discuss one specific case by providing details of what transpired, and how were shareholders and stakeholders affected? What were the attitudes of the company’s management in dealing with the issue? Recent examples include: Enron, WorldCom, Fannie Mae, HealthSouth Corp., and Computer Associates International, and American International Group Inc. just to name a few. Your discussion should also be tied into the major stipulations of the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX) and how the Act aims at reducing instances of financial shenanigans, such as the one you are discussing in your paper. Submit a 10-12 page, APA format paper discussing your findings.
- Choose 3 or 4 essays from the text book relating to your area of experience and expertise (Finance, Accounting, H.R, Technology, etc.), and submit a 10-12 page, APA format paper analysis and critique of your chosen readings. Provide the reader with a literature review of your chosen essays, starting out with a synopsis of the major ideas and themes in each essay. Next conduct an in-depth critique of the essays by comparing and contrasting the essential points discussed in each work. Finally in the conclusion phase of your paper, provide the reader with a reflective assessment of what lessons one can learn from the points brought up in the essays and how they can effectively be implemented in a typical business setting. The following is a checklist that you can use in analyzing/ critiquing your chosen essays:

Each piece of writing is different; but, in most cases, the majority of these questions are applicable. Use these questions as a point of reference for your critique. Students may also cover other relevant aspects of an essay, not addressed by the critique question list below.

- Is the essay's title a clear depiction of its content? Why or Why not?
- How is the author qualified to write about the subject matter?
- What is the purpose of the essay? Is it stated clearly?
- Identify the problem statement in the essay. Does the introduction and conclusion focus clearly on the problem statement?
- Are statement of facts (beyond common street facts) supported by appropriate citations in the text and/or references?
- Which ideas in the essay need further development?
- What ideas in the essay are practical enough to be implemented in a business setting? Which ones are rather impractical? Why?
- Does the essay contain discursive or irrelevant sections? What are they?
- Is the work biased in any way? Examine the author's biases.
- Is there an idea that is common to all essays?
- How is the essay different from the other one(s) you are also critiquing?

Grading Criteria

Grading Scale

A	100 – 93
A-	92 – 90
B+	89 – 88
B	87 – 83
B-	82 – 80
C+	79 – 78
C	77 – 73
C-	72 – 70
F	69 and below

Grading requirements

<i>Attendance/participation</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Weekly Assignments</i>	<i>20%</i>
<i>Final paper</i>	<i>35%</i>
<i>Optional</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Optional</i>	<i>10%</i>
	<i>100%</i>

Library:

All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosyu.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosyu.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosyu.edu/infolit/>

Academic Policies

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through “Turnitin,” (www.turnitin.com), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student’s responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.