

# Ethical Business Behavior

## Course Syllabus

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## Course Information

### Course Description

*Ethical Business Behavior* explores the ethical issues that business decision-makers face and examines the moral principles that can be used to help resolve these issues. Decisions with ethical dimensions can be the most important and memorable of those that are made.

Ethical decisions in the workplace can have tremendous influence on the individuals and the corporations involved. The outcomes of unethical behavior can affect reputations, trust and career path. Results have been as severe as loss of employment, physical harm to individuals, corporate bankruptcy and even impacts to the economy.

The scandals of 2002, including Enron and Worldcom, and resulting regulations have created a cultural shift particularly in financial fields that has renewed emphasis on ethical business behavior. We will evaluate business situations involving financial scandals, harm from poor product safety, truth and deception in advertising, affirmative action, sexual harassment, whistle-blowing, dangerous work environments and international ethics.

Theories that frame ethical decision-making are learned and applied in this course. These include ethical relativism, utilitarianism, Kantianism, rights, justice, virtue and care. Methodologies are applied to help evaluate ethical considerations based on alternative theories and to make moral decisions.

Students are placed in decision-making roles through exercises, case studies and role-playing. Reasoning skills are honed through identification of ethical issues and alternative means to analyze these issues. Ethical behavior is evaluated using analytical skills to apply ethical concepts to business situations.

### Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand major ethical theories and the role that ethics plays in business situations.
- Identify ethical business issues, analyze them using at least two different ethical principles and apply ethical principles to create recommendations.
- Describe characteristics of ethical business behavior and how individuals interact

with organizations to make ethical business decisions.

## Course Competencies

In this course, you will develop the following competencies:

Competence	Competence Statement and Criteria
A4	Can analyze a problem using at least two different ethical systems.
H2X	Can demonstrate an understanding of how individuals interact with organizations in making ethical business decisions.
FX	Can apply ethical theories to assess and make recommendations regarding ethical business behavior.

Students may contact the instructor to discuss development of a customized FX statement, though this is not necessary.

## Course Resources

To buy your books, go to <http://www.mbsdirect.net>.

Hint: type DePaul for name of the school.

[Click here for help buying your books](#)

## Required Reading:

Boatright, J. R. (2009). *Ethics and the Conduct of Business Sixth Edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

## Course Grading Scale

A = 95 to 100	A- = 91 to 94	B+ = 88 to 90
B = 85 to 87	B- = 81 to 84	C+ = 77 to 80
C = 73 to 76	C- = 69 to 72	D+ = 65 to 68
D = 61 to 64	F = 60 or below	INC

Please note: Grades lower than a C- do not earn credit or competence in the School for New Learning.

## Course Structure

This course will explore ethical business behavior and various theories for evaluating ethical issues using one collaborative learning exercise (role-playing and report development), multiple case analyses, evaluation of various advertisements, discussions identifying real-world applications of issues, and internet resources.

The course consists of 5 modules, which include multiple units. Assignments and readings will be provided for each module. Ideas will also be exchanged with other students in structured discussions. Assignment deadlines will be based on estimated time for completion of each subject area.

To see course due dates, click on the Checklist link on the top navigation bar. This page contains module-specific checklists and due dates for the work due in the course.

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## Assessment of Learning

Student learning will be assessed based on participation in discussion forums, a research report, case/scenario analyses, one collaborative role-play, a summary perspective statement and personal credo statement.

Ethical Business Behavior is a graded course. Your final grade will be based on performance and completion of the assignments described below. Weighting for each assignment is provided below.

The learning outcomes for each module will be used to assess achievement of the competencies that you are fulfilling.

## Evaluation Weighting

Category	Percent of Grade	# of Deliverables
Research Case Analysis	20%	1
Participation in Discussions	17%	Throughout the course
Case Studies	58% (4x14%, 1x2%)	5
Collaborative Role Play	3%	1
Personal Credo Statement	1%	1
Learning Reflection	1%	1

## Research Case Analysis Guidelines

Everyone in the class will submit one paper that applies two ethical theories to a business ethics issue of their choice. Please navigate to the "Research Case Analysis" content area in the course menu to read the guidelines and assessment criteria for the analysis.

## Grading Policies and Practices

To complete the course, you must complete each of the assignments as described in the course and submit them to your instructor by the assigned deadline. In addition, you must participate in the course discussion forum by responding to all instructor requests and by interacting with fellow classmates as necessary.

Points are deducted for late work.

## General Assessment Criteria for All Writing Assignments

All writing assignments are expected to conform to basic college-level standards of mechanics and presentation.

Consider visiting the Writing Center to discuss your assignments for this course or any others. You may schedule appointments (30 or 50 minutes) on an as-needed or weekly

basis, scheduling up to 3 hours worth of appointments per week. Online services include Feedback-by-Email and IM conferencing (with or without a webcam). All writing center services are free.

Writing Center tutors are specially selected and trained graduate and undergraduate students who can help you at almost any stage of your writing. They will not do your work for you, but they can help you focus and develop your ideas, review your drafts, and polish your writing. They can answer questions about grammar, mechanics, different kinds of writing styles, and documentation formats. They also can answer questions and provide feedback online, through IM/webcam chats and email.

Obviously, the tutors won't necessarily be familiar with every class or subject, but they are able to provide valuable help from the perspective of an interested and careful reader as well as a serious and experienced student-writer.

Schedule your appointments with enough time to think about and use the feedback you'll receive. To schedule a Face-to-Face, Written Feedback by Email, or Online Appointment, visit [www.depaul.edu/writing](http://www.depaul.edu/writing).

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## **Discussion Forums**

Discussion Forums are an important component of your online experience. This course contains discussion forums related to the topics you are studying each week. For requirements on your participation in the Discussion Forums, please see "Course Expectations" in the syllabus.

A Course Q & A discussion forum has also been established to manage necessary, ongoing social and administrative activities. This is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers throughout the course. Please feel free to answer any question if you feel you know the answer; this sharing of information is valuable to other students.

## **Online Participation Guidelines**

Each student is expected to make at minimum one contribution per discussion in the forum. To maximize your participation grade, address each question in each topic in an insightful manner that builds on the input of others. Your responses to both instructor questions and to other students' comments will enhance the learning experience for all students.

Your contributions to discussions should include a supporting statement(s). Draw from your text readings, magazines, work or any personal experiences, etc. to explain why you agree/disagree with another student or why you have the perspective that you have.

Text does not carry the tone and nuances of face-to-face conversations. Students read messages through their own perceptions, so misinterpretation is both easy and common. Congenial interaction in online conversations facilitates the learning process. Extra attention is needed in online dialogue for these reasons.

These discussions are a place for you to exchange ideas with the others in the class related to specific topics on a weekly basis.

A Q& A discussion forum will be available for you to ask questions about the course. In this way, everyone can benefit from the questions that you have. Contact the instructor by email with any concerns about course performance, personal reasons for late assignments, advising issues or with any matters that should be private from other

students.

In on-line courses, the student is an interactive learner with the instructor providing guidance and mentoring.

## **Electronic Submissions and Communications**

Work must be submitted in the Dropbox area of D2L. Microsoft Word is the supported word processing software. Word revision tools will be used to correct student work. E-mail communications with the instructor are the preferred and primary format. Graded work will not be faxed to students. Students can check grades via the Grades feature in D2L.

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## **Policies**

### **Academic Integrity**

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas.

Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://sr.depaul.edu/catalog/catalogfiles/Current/Undergraduate%20Student%20Handbook/index.html> for further details.

### **Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- Resubmitting one's own previous work from a different course or college, without permission from the current instructor.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If a instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the

instructor's discretion.

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### **For Students Who Need Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability**

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussion will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact your instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week or two of the course). Please be sure to contact the following office for support and additional services:

Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD)  
#370, Student Center, LPC, 773.325.1677

### **Description of Pass/Fail Grading Options**

Students have the option of taking all SNL undergraduate courses as Pass/Fail even if a class is initially structured for a letter grade assessment. In these cases a Pass is awarded when competence is demonstrated at a level that would otherwise earn a grade of C- or higher.

In deciding to select Pass/Fail grading students should be aware that competencies assessed in a course as Pass will earn credit hours toward degree completion but *will not* be included in computing grade point averages. Attempted competence demonstration assessed within a class as Fail will not only be recorded as credit hours attempted but *will* also be included in computing a student's grade point average.

For SNL students, competencies awarded for Independent Learning Pursuits and in the Lifelong Learning Domain do not count toward the university's specification that only twenty credit hours may be earned through the Pass/Fail assessment option.

**Please note:** *There are four SNL courses within the BA curriculum that are always assessed on a Pass/Fail basis: Learning Assessment Seminar (course number LL 102; competence L-1), Foundations of Adult Learning (course number LL 250; competences L-2 and L-3), Advanced Project (course number FA 303; competences F-11 and F-12) and Summit Seminar (course number LL 390; competence L-12). These classes may not be taken for a letter grade assessment. Therefore, work that might otherwise be assessed at grades A through C- will earn a Pass in these classes.*

*There are an additional four SNL courses within the Lifelong Learning Area of the BA curriculum for which instructors regularly use a Pass/Fail grading system which may, instead, be taken for a letter grade assessment if this is a student's preference. These classes are: Academic Writing for Adults (course number LL 150; competence L-4), Critical Thinking (course number LL 155; competence L-5), Research Seminar (course number LL 300; competences L-8 and L-9) and Externship (course number LL 302; competences L-10 and L-11). In addition, SNL's undergraduate Writing Workshop (course number LL 140; competence H-3-J) regularly uses Pass/Fail although students may request a letter grade assessment. In these instances SNL offers undergraduate students the opportunity to request a letter grade assessment from their instructor. Students who need a letter grade for tuition reimbursement may wish to consider this option, as well as those who wish to raise their GPA. Students planning to attend graduate school may also prefer letter grades to Pass/Fail assessments.*

If a student wishes to switch the method of assessment, either to or from the Pass/Fail option, this must be requested from the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of

the quarter. The assessment style may not be changed after this period, with no exceptions.

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## **Protection of Human Subjects**

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>

Demonstrating the acquisition of competencies in this course can involve "interactions" —interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as "research" with "human subjects" and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning's Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

- The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
- You assess and ensure that no "harm"—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
- The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
- If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an "informed consent" document. For information on creating an "informed consent document" see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>

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## **Course Expectations**

### **Time Management and Attendance**

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

### **Your Instructor's Role**

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

### **Your Role as a Student**

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

### **Credits**

This course was designed and produced by Ms. Halina Cowin and staff at SNL Online of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.

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