



**PH 210 BUSINESS ETHICS (3)**

**Fall Semester 2004**

**Instructor: Ken Nickel**

410-2000 (ext. 6903)

E-mail: knickel@auc-nuc.ca

Time: Tuesday & Thursday @ 9:45 - 11:00

Location: 714

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is a course in applied ethics. As such, it takes concepts, theories, and moral decision procedures found in moral philosophy and endeavours to apply them, in this instance, to a broad range of issues currently encountered in the North American business context. Examples include employee privacy, whistle-blowing, honesty in marketing, creative accounting, insider trading, affirmative action, and exploitive labour practices.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Students should develop a personal familiarity and comfort level with understanding and applying basic ethical and moral categories to commonplace business practices and problems.
2. Students should deepen their level of moral and legal understanding with respect to the business world and begin to appreciate the moral, political, and legal complexity of the issues that confront employees, managers, owners, buyers, sellers, consumers, and stakeholders.
3. Students should be able to provide preliminary consultation and guidance to a colleague, client, or client group on a variety of ethical and relevant philosophical issues.
4. Students should nurture a personal commitment to justice, fairness, moral conduct, and ethical decision making in the market place.

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Beauchamp, T. L. (2004). *Case Studies in Business, Society, and Ethics*. (5/e). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION**

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|----|---|-----------|-----|
| 1. | Lead two separate class discussions on two different cases  | 2 x 10% = | 20% |
| X  | This assignment entails the oral presentation of the assigned case study and providing commentary, questions, implications, and potential resolutions. In addition the presenter should bring for comparison and analysis current noteworthy or newsworthy examples of the case at hand. In addition to being assessed on these criteria, the presenter will also be assessed on his or her capacity to address questions from the class and/or problematize the issue(s) raised. |           |     |
| 2. | Class attendance & participation  |           | 20% |
| X  | Students are expected to attend each class session with an engaged frame of mind, prepared to contribute meaningful conversation to the topics under discussion. Each absence from class merits an immediate 1% deduction and class participation is assessed on the balance. For example, if a student misses three classes and generally participates excellently in class, he or she generally cannot achieve more than 17/20 for this portion of his or her evaluation.       |           |     |
| 3. | Research paper : Due Thursday, December 2 <sup>nd</sup>   |           | 20% |
| X  | This includes a short abstract identifying the topic and the general line of argumentation. Abstracts must be submitted no later than November 2 <sup>nd</sup> via e-mail.  |           |     |
| 4. | Final exam : Date TBA   |           | 40% |
| X  | Students must pass the final exam to ensure a passing grade in the course. A student who performs well during the term but performs very poorly on the final exam may fail the course.  |           |     |

## **RESEARCH PAPER**

### **SUBMISSION PROCEDURE**

- X Research papers are to be submitted electronically in an e-mail attachment by 4:00 PM on the assigned due date. No hard copy submission is not required. E-mails will be saved as 'official submissions' in the event of dispute over original content.
- X Required word processing formats are either @Microsoft Word or @Word Perfect (i.e., .doc or .wpd files). Files are to be named as follows: (last name)(first initial)(PH210).doc or (last name)(first initial)(PH210).wpd.

### **LATE POLICY**

- X Late submissions (i.e., submissions after 4:00 PM on the due date) are penalized 5% for every 24 hours they are not submitted. Weekend days and holidays are counted the same as typical weekdays. Submissions more than 5 days (120 hours) late receive a failing grade.
- X Papers and grades will be returned electronically to each student's AUC e-mail address.

## RESEARCH PAPER FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

- X 8 Pages in length — roughly 23 lines of text per page
- X Double spaced (not e.g., 1.25, 1.95, 2.5, etc.)
- X 12pt Font (not e.g., 10, 11, 11.8, 12.5, etc.)
- X New paragraphs should be indented with no additional space between paragraphs.
- X Sentences should be separated by two spaces, not just one.
- X 1 inch (or 2.5 cm) margins.
- X Marks will be deducted if format requirements are not followed.
- X Citation guidelines can be found at [www.auc-nuc.ca/pdf/cbc-style-guide.pdf](http://www.auc-nuc.ca/pdf/cbc-style-guide.pdf) .

## MISCELLANEOUS

- X See page 47 of the *AUC Academic Calendar* for a detailed grading scheme. Two major reasons for unrealized grade expectations for written work are (1) failures to proof read, often the result of not giving oneself enough time for multiple drafts, and (2) late submissions.
- X Students should familiarize themselves with all academic regulations found in the *AUC Academic Calendar* (pages 46-51) giving specific attention to the issues of **plagiarism, academic dishonesty, and cheating** found on page 50.
- X Students are responsible to check their AUC e-mail account regularly. E-mail may be used to notify students of cancelled classes or other important details relating to the course.

## COURSE OUTLINE<sup>1</sup>

Sept 9	Introduction
Sept 14	Employee recommendations and grievances
Sept 16	Employee Privacy
Sept 21	Sexual harassment in the workplace
Sept 23	Whistle blowing: The ethics of truth-telling
Sept 28	No Class
Sept 30	Marketing: Selling controversial products
Oct 5	Selling to unethical customers
Oct 7	Confidentiality of financial information

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<sup>1</sup> This course outline is provisional and may, at the discretion of the instructor, require revision over the course of the term. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the outline to accommodate, amongst other things, timely issues or pressing concerns.

Oct 12	Conflict of interest & ENRON
Oct 14	Intellectual property: What is on-line stealing?
Oct 19	Free Speech and state intervention in the entertainment industry
Oct 21	Industry intervention in Government: Corporate campaign contributions
Oct 26	Corporate-Government tensions
Oct 28	No Class
Nov 2	Animal rights and the concerns of shareholders
Nov 4	Environmental protection and government regulation: Natural resources?
Nov 9	Conflicts of interest in competitive markets
Nov 11	No Class
Nov 16	Exploiting trade secrets
Nov 18	Marketing tobacco and alcohol
Nov 23	Nike, "Sweatshops", and third-world labour
Nov 25	Product risk and its social consequences
Nov 30	Health care delivery: The business of selling essential public services
Dec 2	Discrimination and affirmative action
Dec 7	Last Class: Review