

ECBA 401: Business Ethics

Prerequisite(s): ECBA 301

Credits: 3



I. Course Description

This course is designed to provide the student with a basis for making business decisions within the framework of social responsibilities, law, and societal customs, values and beliefs. An examination of business activities and their community impact will be analyzed in detail.

II. Course Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Review and develop an understanding about how ethical decisions are made in the workplace.
2. Develop an understanding about the basics of ethical theories.
3. Review and develop an understanding about current issues and ethical dilemmas in society, and how that changes across history and cultural lines.
4. Develop an understanding about what are appropriate ethical behaviors in business.
5. Develop an awareness of your ethical and legal responsibilities related to being an employee in today's workplace, and the potential impact your behaviors and actions can have on peers and co-workers.
6. Develop an understanding about the ethical responsibilities of being a manager/employer, and what it means to be an ethical leader in today's workplace.
7. Develop a perspective on how to apply and adapt the fundamentals of ethics to the rapidly changing workplace to contribute towards a more ethical and egalitarian work environment.

III. Course Textbooks and Reading Materials

****Students must purchase in advance texts and/or materials for this course.***

*****NOTE: The digital copy is offered for free at the link below.***

Business Ethics

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Print ISBN-13: 978-1-947172-56-2 <https://www.amazon.com/dp/1593995776>

Digital ISBN-13: 978-1-947172-57-9 <https://openstax.org/details/books/business-ethics>

Module One – Week 1

Ethics in Business: Why They Matter and The Impact of History and Culture

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 1.1 Describe the role of ethics in a business environment.
- 1.2 Explain what it means to be a professional of integrity.
- 1.3 Distinguish between ethical and legal responsibilities.
- 1.4 Describe three approaches for examining the ethical nature of a decision.
- 1.5 Differentiate between *stockholder* and *stakeholder*.
- 1.6 Discuss the relationship among ethical behavior, goodwill, and profit.
- 1.7 Analyze ethical norms and values as they relate to business standards.
- 1.8 Explain the doctrine of ethical relativism and why it is problematic.
- 1.9 Examine the historical background of ethics and contrast the prominent ethical systems through history and their impact on contemporary business.

Reading

Chapter 1: Why Ethics Matter, pp 7 – 20

Chapter 2: Ethics from Antiquity to the Present, pp 27 – 54

Deliverables

Introductory Discussion (20 points)

Discussion: Historical Ethics through a Modern Lens (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module Two – Week 2

Ethics, Stakeholders, and Corporate Responsibility

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 2.1 Identify key types of business-stakeholder relationships.
- 2.2 Understand why stakeholders' welfare must be at the heart of ethical business decisions.
- 2.3 Categorize stakeholders to better understand the importance of their claims.
- 2.4 Explain the factors that affect stakeholder prioritization and how to prioritize claims when they conflict.
- 2.5 Define corporate social responsibility and the triple bottom line approach.
- 2.6 Explain why CSR ultimately benefits both companies and their stakeholders.
- 2.7 Explain how investors and owners benefit from doing business as a corporate entity.
- 2.8 Define the concept of shareholder primacy.
- 2.9 Discuss the conflict between shareholder primacy and corporate social

- responsibility.
- 2.10 Evaluate the claim that sustainability benefits both business and the environment.
- 2.11 Identify and describe initiatives that attempt to regulate pollution or encourage businesses to adopt clean energy sources.
- 2.12 Identify three public health issues that might warrant government regulation.
- 2.13 Compare constitutional arguments for and against government regulation of industry.

Reading

Chapter 3: Defining and Prioritizing Stakeholders, pp 67 – 83

Chapter 4: Three Special Stakeholders: Society, the Environment, and Government, pp 93 – 117

Deliverables

Discussion: Managers and Ethics (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module Three – Week 3

Leadership and Ethics in the Global Economy

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 3.1 Understand the relationship between business ethics and culture.
- 3.2 Describe the way ethical standards change over time and the impact of technological shifts on ethical thinking.
- 3.3 Understand the impact of geography and religion on global business ethics.
- 3.4 Evaluate the humanistic business model.
- 3.5 Identify specific ethical duties managers owe employees.
- 3.6 Identify Equal Employment Opportunity Commission protections, including those against sexual harassment at work.
- 3.7 Describe how employees' expectations of work have changed.
- 3.8 Understand possible solutions to address equal pay for equal work.
- 3.9 Define codetermination.
- 3.10 Explain the relationship between labor productivity gains and the pay ratio in the United States.
- 3.11 Explain what constitutes a reasonable right to privacy on the job.
- 3.12 Identify management's responsibilities when monitoring employee behavior at work.

Reading

Chapter 5: The Impact of Culture and Time on Business Ethics, pp 131 – 149

Chapter 6: What Employers Owe Employees, pp 159 – 184

Deliverables

Discussion: Ethics in a Global Context (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module Four – Week 4

The Ethical Responsibility of the Employee

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 4.1 Define employees' responsibilities to the company for which they work.
- 4.2 Describe a non-compete agreement and the impact of confidentiality on trade secrets, intellectual property, and customer data.
- 4.3 Describe how employees help build and sustain a brand.
- 4.4 Discuss how employees' customer service can help or hurt a business.
- 4.5 Explain employees' responsibility to treat their peers with respect.
- 4.6 Describe employees' duty to follow company policy and the code of conduct.
- 4.7 Describe an employee's responsibilities to the employer in financial matters.
- 4.8 Define insider trading.
- 4.9 Discuss bribery and its legal and ethical consequences.
- 4.10 Outline the rules and laws that govern employees' criticism of the employer.

Reading

Chapter 7: What Employees Owe Employers, pp 195 – 218

Deliverables

Discussion: Good or Bad Company (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module Five – Week 5

Recognizing and Respecting the Rights of All

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 5.1 Explain the benefits of employee diversity in the workplace
- 5.2 Discuss the challenges presented by workplace diversity.
- 5.3 Identify workplace accommodations provided for persons with differing abilities and religious differences.
- 5.4 Explain how sexual identification and orientation are protected by law.
- 5.5 Discuss the ethical issues raised in the workplace by differences in sexual identification and orientation.
- 5.6 Explain why income inequality is a problem for the United States and the world.

- 5.7 Analyze the effects of income inequality on the middle class.
- 5.8 Describe possible solutions to the problem of income inequality.
- 5.9 Explain the concept of agribusiness ethics.
- 5.10 Describe the financial implications of animal ethics for business.

Reading

Chapter 8: Recognizing and Respecting the Rights of All, pp 231 – 252

Deliverables

Discussion: Authentic Diversification (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module Six – Week 6

Business Ethics for the Future Professional

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 6.1 Identify ethical challenges relating to entrepreneurial start-ups.
- 6.2 Describe positive and negative effects of growth in a start-up.
- 6.3 Discuss the role of the founder in instilling an ethical culture.
- 6.4 Discuss how social media has altered the advertising landscape.
- 6.5 Analyze the influence of advertising on consumers.
- 6.6 Discuss whether the underlying business model of the insurance industry is an ethical one.
- 6.7 Identify the benefits of permitting employees to work from home.
- 6.8 Explain the drawbacks of telecommuting for the business and for employees.
- 6.9 Discuss the ethical dilemmas related to telecommuting and some of the solutions.
- 6.10 Describe the business models that have emerged in the new millennium.
- 6.11 Discuss the ethical challenges businesses face in the gig economy.
- 6.12 Discuss the application of robotics and the workplace changes it will bring.
- 6.13 Explain the ethical challenges presented by the use of artificial intelligence.

Reading

Chapter 9: Professions Under the Microscope, pp 265 – 280

Chapter 10: Changing Work Environments and Future Trends, pp 295 – 314

Deliverables

Discussion: Ethics in Automation (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Module 7 – Week 7

The Ethical Modern Professional

Objectives

After completing this module, students should be able to:

- 7.1 Discuss the modern business environment and how ethics apply and impact today's workplace.
- 7.2 Understand real world implications of ethical decision making.
- 7.3 Analyze the differences between ethics today and in the world that their parents were raised.
- 7.4 Discuss the ethical implications around the emergence of cybercrimes and privacy issues.
- 7.5 Understand the role of value commitment in making difficult decisions.
- 7.6 Discuss the important role of ethical top leadership and how the "tone at the top" impacts the ethical decisions many make within an organization.
- 7.7 Analyze internal beliefs to build a values and mission statement.
- 7.8 Describe what it means to be an ethical, modern business leader.

Reading

Chapter 11: Epilogue – Why Ethics Still Matter, pp 325 – 336

Deliverables

Discussion: Ethical Leadership (40 points)

Quiz (75 points)

Final Essay (175 points)