



MLS 515: Leadership and Ethics

Student Syllabus for the Master of Science in Leadership Studies Program

Course Description

This course explores the relationship between leadership and ethics. Beyond just an examination of ethical systems and ethical issues, this course attempts to understand the ways in which ethics is central to the very act and process of leadership.

Course Introduction

This course reflects the commitment of the MSLS program to seek ways of finding meaningful application of course content to the personal and professional lives of its students. To accomplish this, several methods and sources of inquiry will be used in this course.

First, the content of this course will involve exposure to some of the major historical ethical systems as well as principles derived from a biblical model of ethics which can inform the development of a personal ethical perspective. Second, students will learn how to analyze organizational/personal ethical dilemmas by using various ethical decision-making models. Third, students will investigate the extent to which the leadership process, particularly the leader-follower relationship, includes a variety of ethical issues and what the implications of those ethical issues are in terms of leadership character, attitudes, and behaviors.

Throughout the course, students will examine various leadership models in order to determine their “congruence” with ethical behaviors. An important emphasis in this course is the understanding and application of biblical principles of leadership ethics to personal and organizational decision-making. As a result, students have the opportunity to develop more effective ethical decision-making skills.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

1. Examine the strengths and weaknesses of some of the major historical ethical systems.
2. Utilize skills to systematically analyze ethical dilemmas.
3. Assess their own ethical assumptions, character, and behaviors.
4. Identify the ethical implications of various leadership models.
5. Describe fundamental principles of biblical ethical leadership.

Course Texts

Required Texts:

Hill, A. (2008). *Just business: Christian ethics for the marketplace* (2nd ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
ISBN-13: 978-0830826766
ISBN-10: 0830826769

Johnson, C. E. (2015). *Meeting the ethical challenges of leadership: Casting light or shadow* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
ISBN-13: 978-1452259185
ISBN-10: 1452259186

Packer, J. I., Grudem, W., & Dennis, L. T. (Eds.). (2011). *ESV Student Study Bible*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Wilkins, S. (2011). *Beyond bumper sticker ethics: An introduction to theories of right and wrong* (2nd ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
ISBN-13: 978-0830839360
ISBN-10: 0830839364

Articles Provided in Course:

Bakke, D. (1991). Values don't work in business. In M. L. Stackhouse, D. P. McCann, & S. J. Roels (Eds.). *On moral business*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Erdmans.

Bass, B. M., & Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Ethics, character, and authentic transformational leadership behavior. *Leadership Quarterly*, 10(2), 181-217.

Bazerman, M. H., & Tenbrunsel, A. E. (April 2011). Ethical breakdowns. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(4), 58-65.

Bazerman, M. H., & Tenbrunsel, A. E. (Spring 2011). Blind spots: The roots of unethical behavior at work. *Rotman Management Magazine*, 53-57.

Brown, M. E. (2007). Misconceptions of ethical leadership: How to avoid potential pitfalls. *Organizational Dynamics*, 36(2), 140-155.

Feldman, S. P. (2007). Moral business cultures: The keys to creating and maintaining them. *Organizational Dynamics*, 36(2), 156-170.

- Hannah, S. T., & Jennings, P. L. (2013). Leader ethos and big-C character. *Organizational Dynamics*, 42, 8-16.
- Hunt, S. D., & Hansen, J. M. (2007). Understanding ethical diversity in organizations. *Organizational Dynamics*, 36(2), 202-216.
- Rose, C. S., & Sesia, A. (2014). Barclays and the LIBOR scandal. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Shea, C. (2011 June 12). The biology of ethics (Rule breaker). *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <http://chronicle.com/article/The-Biology-of-Ethics/127789/>
- Tenbrunsel, A. E., & Messick, D. M. (June 2004). Ethical fading: The role of self-deception in unethical behavior. *Social Justice Research*, 17(2), 223-236.
- Velasquez, M. (1992). The seven-step Andersen process for ethical decision making. In *Business ethics program*. St. Charles, IL: Arthur Andersen & Co.
- Weaver, G. R., Treviño, L. K., & Agle, B. (2005). "Somebody I look up to": Ethical role models in organizations. *Organizational Dynamics*, 34(4), 313-330.
- Whetstone, J. T. (2002). Personalism and moral leadership: The servant leader with a transforming vision. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 11(4), 385-392.

Textbook Disclaimer

The textbooks for this course were chosen because their primary content directly relates to the objectives of this course. At times, there may be items or issues that are not presented from a proper Christian worldview. As such, the textbooks do not represent an endorsement by Geneva College or the relevant academic department at Geneva College.

Learning and Physical Disabilities Policy

Geneva College values diversity and inclusion and recognizes disabilities as an aspect of diversity. Our shared goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive, ultimately leading to the success of our students in and beyond college. Therefore, Geneva College complies with the ADA as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act by affording reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations should contact Geneva's Student Success Center (SSC) to arrange a confidential appointment with the Director of the SSC before or during the first week of classes. (Some accommodations may take time to put into place, so it is advised to request this appointment as early as possible.) Legally, no retroactive accommodations can be provided. Accommodations for disabilities are available only as recommended by the SSC. Students whose accommodations are approved will be provided confidential letters which

students should review and discuss with their instructors in relation to course requirements. Students who have questions about their right to benefits or have grievances under these statutes should contact the Director of the SSC. For more details, visit the [Student Success Center website](#) or call 724-847-5005.

The Grading System in the MSLS Program

Letter grades for the MSLS program are A, B, C, and F. Geneva includes pluses (+) and minuses (-) in the determination of the grade point average (GPA). Grade points are assigned for each semester hour of credit earned according to the following grading system:

Letter Grade	Percentage	GPA	Explanation
A	92.00% - 100.00%	4.0	Excellent
A-	90.00% - 91.99%	3.7	
B+	87.00% - 89.99%	3.3	
B	83.00% - 86.99%	3.0	Good
B-	80.00% - 82.99%	2.7	
C+	77.00% - 79.99%	2.3	
C	73.00% - 76.99%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70.00% - 72.99%	1.7	
F	< 70.00%	0.0	No Credit Given
WX, WP, WF			Withdrawal

Policy on Academic Honesty

Geneva College has adopted a campus wide policy on academic honesty; the main portions of which are summarized here. Students should become aware of the fuller policy found in Appendix A of the student handbook.

When an instructor has reason to believe that dishonest behavior has occurred, the parties involved should be confronted as soon as possible by the instructor and notification made to the Department of Professional and Online Graduate Studies (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Sanctions may be levied on the student, which could range from an informal warning to expulsion, based on the seriousness of the student's offense (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students may appeal any disciplinary action by following the procedure laid out in the College's Policy on Academic Honesty (see Appendix A of the student handbook).

Students are encouraged to visit www.plagiarism.org in order to clarify what constitutes plagiarism as well as a number of other academic standards. This website also provides directives as to how to avoid committing this act and how to properly cite academic sources.

Turnitin Policy

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Students must agree to the End User License Agreement (EULA) for Turnitin. Use of the Turnitin service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on Turnitin.com. Assignments that are not submitted through Turnitin will not be graded and will not receive credit.

Course Evaluation

Criteria	Points Breakdown	Points
Discussion Forums (8)	30 points each	240 points
Barclays and the LIBOR Scandal Case Study	One Submission	60 points
Leadership Ethics Project Case Study Selection	One Submission	20 points
Leadership Ethics Project Parts 1-3	60 points each	180 points
Personal Application Paper	One Submission	60 points
Siemens Case Study	One Submission	100 points
Leadership Ethics Final Project	One Submission	190 points
Total		850 points

Assignment Descriptions

Discussion Forums

Class participation is monitored by postings and responses in the discussion forum. Typically, class participation is composed of two parts:

- a. Part 1 – Requires you to go to your discussion forum and post a response to a question or prompt that is written in your syllabus by Wednesday at 11:55 pm (EST) of your scheduled session week. Your instructor will generally respond to your post within 24 hours. Depending on the nature of the assignment, the instructor may have a follow up question for you, ask you for

clarification or further details, or direct your conversation to someone else for rebuttal.

- b. Part 2 – Respond back to your instructor’s post. In addition, post a response to at least two of your fellow classmates’ postings, using 1 or 2 paragraphs. Your response should further the discussion (e.g., ask a question, provide further information or examples, or introduce a different opinion). In particular, one response to a classmate **MUST** be in the form of a question that seeks to further the conversation. Your question must be posed by 11:55 pm (EST) Friday of the scheduled session week so that your classmate has adequate time to answer it.

Likewise, if a question is posed to you by Friday night, you are also required to answer it.

Part 2 of these online activities (response to instructor, response to classmates’ questions of you, and responses to your classmates) must be completed by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of each session.

NOTE: How to earn full credit in graduate-level discussion forums:

1. Become familiar with the discussion forum rubric, which is available to you in all of your Moodle classroom discussion forums.
2. Be thoughtful in your responses and incorporate examples from your personal and professional experiences and references to the course material (e.g., readings, lecture, videos, audio clips, scripture, etc.) when appropriate. Remember to cite all sources and references according to proper APA style.
3. Incorporate outside, individually sought research in all initial discussion forum postings. These outside sources’ content should relate to the discussion prompts and the week’s course materials. The source(s) that you select can either provide further support for or a different opinion on the week’s course materials. Furthermore, the source(s) must reinforce and add clarity to the points you are making in your initial discussion forum posting.
4. Do **MORE THAN THE MINIMUM**. Responding to the discussion contributions of 2 peers is **REQUIRED** as the minimum in all discussion forums. Doing the minimum does **NOT** guarantee full credit. In order to earn full credit, you will have to do **MORE** than the minimum 2 responses to classmates’ posts (see the rubric for more detail).

Your posting and responses will be graded by your instructor. For a detailed discussion of your responsibility in discussion forum postings, please see the “Guidelines for Graduate Students in Online Discussions” document in your Moodle orientation course.

Written Assignments

Throughout this course, students will complete three written assignments that will require them to respond to and apply some of the key course concepts. Specific instructions for completing these written assignments can be found in the course outline below.

- Session 1: Barclays and the LIBOR Scandal Case Study

- Session 4: Personal Application Paper
- Session 5: Siemens Case Study

Each of these written assignments will be graded on content, style, and timeliness. They should adhere to all page length requirements and typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations, etc.).

All written assignments are due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday of the designated session week.

Leadership Ethics Project

The Leadership Ethics Project will present students with an opportunity to address an ethical situation or dilemma that they face within their profession or organization. The project requires the development of a "case study" focusing on this chosen ethical issue in order to apply concepts, principles, and processes studied throughout the course.

The following is a description of how this project will be completed in several parts:

Case Study Selection:

The Leadership Ethics Project will provide you with an opportunity to address an ethical situation or dilemma that you face within your profession or organization. This project requires you to develop a "case study" of an ethical issue or dilemma that you identify and to apply concepts, principles, and processes studied in this course to your case study.

In this forum, you will submit a short description (1-2 paragraphs) of the ethical issue/dilemma that you wish to address in your Leadership Ethics Project case study. This assignment will be completed in a discussion forum, but it is intended to only be an exchange between each individual student and the instructor.

In total, your initial posting to your instructor should be at least 250 words. This posting must be made by 11:55 pm (EST) Wednesday Session 2. You will receive approval responses from your instructor and some potential additional direction.

Leadership Ethics Project Part 1:

Case studies should always include information about the background and context of ethical issues or dilemmas so that readers can understand the nature of the dilemma and why it exists. In this first section of your Leadership Ethics Project, you need to include the following information:

1. Historical information regarding your organization
2. Facts regarding the organization's purpose/mission and/or what services or goods the organization produces
3. Size of the organization (in terms of the number of employees, students, amount of annual sales, etc.)

4. Circumstances that contributed to the development of the ethical dilemma (i.e., What events have led to the current situation; who is involved; what caused the situation; etc.?)
5. Description of the ethical issue or dilemma (the object of your project)
6. Any other information relevant to understanding the case background

You can be creative in terms of the way that you organize the content of this section and in the way that you title the case study. Essentially, this section of your project should consist of a narrative about an organization in which an ethical dilemma exists.

In total, your paper should be 2-3 pages in length and adhere to typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations and headings, etc.).

Leadership Ethics Project Part 1 is due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday Session 3.

Leadership Ethics Project Part 2:

Provide an analysis of your case study's ethical issue or dilemma by using the Andersen Seven-Step Process. Describe in some detail the information that you identify for each of the "steps" in the decision-making process. Try to limit your identification of alternatives to one or two major courses of action in order to avoid getting bogged down with numerous alternatives and all of the analysis that goes along with them.

In total, your paper should be 2-3 pages in length and adhere to typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations and headings, etc.).

Leadership Ethics Project Part 2 is due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday Session 6.

Leadership Ethics Project Part 3:

Discuss in some detail your rationale for choosing the alternative(s) that you have identified as those you believe to be the "right" course of action in response to the case study. Develop your argument of support for the recommended course of action by referencing specific ethical systems of thought and/or the principles that flow from the ethical system(s) that most significantly influenced your decision. Include a discussion of how Hill's model (holiness, justice, and love) influenced your decision regarding which alternative(s) you chose. Discuss how you or your organization could minimize the chances of the ethical dilemma occurring again in the future (if it is relevant to your project).

In total, your paper should be 2-3 pages in length and adhere to typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations and headings, etc.).

Leadership Ethics Project Part 3 is due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday Session 7.

Leadership Ethics Final Project:

Part A: Revise Leadership Ethics Project Parts 1-3 using instructor feedback and corrections. Be sure to include transition sentences/paragraphs where appropriate in order to connect each of the revised paper parts so that they flow together as one comprehensive document.

Part B: After revising Leadership Ethics Project Parts 1-3, craft the final section of your paper by responding to the following:

Reflect on your experience in this course, particularly as it relates to how you approach or frame the whole issue of ethics and resolving ethical dilemmas. What impact has this course had on your ethical "outlook"? How have you expanded your knowledge in terms of engaging in moral or ethical reasoning? In what ways have you been challenged personally as you considered your own ethical frame of reference? How has the issue of the character of the leader, as it relates to you being a leader of integrity, authenticity, etc., influenced your thinking? This section of your paper should be approximately 2-3 pages in length.

Next, add an introductory paragraph to your Leadership Ethics Final Project. This paragraph should precede Part A of your final paper. Additionally, add an overall conclusion paragraph to your final paper. Your conclusion should summarize the purpose and findings of your paper as a whole.

In total, the Leadership Ethics Final Project should be 8-12 pages in length (not including cover sheet and reference page) and adhere to typical APA style and formatting (double spacing, proper APA citations and headings, etc.).

The Leadership Ethics Final Project is due by 11:55 pm (EST) Saturday Session 8.

Professional Skills in Your Online Courses

All courses in your Geneva College Online program will provide you with an opportunity to develop valuable skills that can positively influence your professional and career development. Each course at Geneva provides numerous opportunities to develop skills employers desire in their employees and job candidates in areas including, but not limited to, written communication, research, critical thinking, and decision-making. However, targeted skill sets are also developed through the learning in particular courses.

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to add these particular skills to your bank of professional assets:

Decision-Making Skills



Skilled in initiating, structuring, and carrying out steps to complete projects and tasks

Categorizing/Classifying Skills



Skilled in compiling, organizing, and using data to enhance planning and effectiveness

Conflict Resolution Skills



Effective in establishing and maintaining productive and positive working relationships

Problem Solving Skills



Ability to identify and define problems and solutions

Written Communication Skills



Ability to organize knowledge and beliefs into convincing arguments and to convey meaning through well-constructed text

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