

**MBA BUSINESS ETHICS AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
JOSEPH M. KATZ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

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**OVERVIEW**

Leaders in business today need to skillfully and responsibly face the challenges of a changing global-business environment. This course examines concepts, issues, and tools related to the management of ethics, social responsibility in business, and the management of diverse stakeholders within global business environments. Participants learn how to recognize and respond to ethical problems, to understand their personal responsibilities as business managers, to evaluate various ethical frameworks, to apply a process of effective decision making to ethical problems, to grasp relationships between ethical behavior and organizational structure and processes, and to manage the ethical and social problems and opportunities arising from organizational, institutional, societal, and global dimensions of the business environment.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

There are several key objectives in this course that include providing students with the opportunity to:

- Apply the basic tools of ethical analysis, enabling students to deal with ethical issues and apply relevant ethical standards to challenging ethical dilemmas;
- Understand the various contextual factors that influence ethical decision making for managers in complex organizational situations;
- Explore the factors that influence the broad context of managerial ethics that include corporate social responsibility, stakeholder management and corporate social performance within a dynamic global context;

- Develop a personal understanding of how to analyse and solve real-world ethical dilemmas that impact managers, employees, peers and key external stakeholders that helps to maximize effectiveness for the organization.

## **COURSE READINGS AND CASE STUDIES**

### **Readings** *(available in course web):*

- Building a Business Case for Ethics – *Institute for Corporate Ethics*
- Ethics: A Basic Framework – *Harvard Business School Publishing*
- Avoiding Ethics Danger Zones – *Institute for Corporate Ethics*
- Ethical Breakdowns – *Harvard Business Review*
- Managing Ethics and Legal Compliance: What Works and What Doesn't Work – *California Management Review*
- Managing for Organizational Integrity – *Harvard Business Review*
- Values in Tension: Ethics Away From Home – *Harvard Business Review*
- The Role of Collaboration in Achieving Corporate Social Responsibility Objectives – *California Management Review*
- Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing Well By Doing Good – *Business Horizons*
- Learning to Navigate the Rough Seas of Ethics – *Harvard Business Review*
- Business Ethics: A View from the Trenches – *California Management Review*
- Role of Global Reporting Initiative and Social Screening of Investing – *Journal of Business Ethics*

### **Case Studies** *(available in course web):*

- “World Class Bull” – *HBR Case Study and Commentary*
- “An Offer We Can Refuse?” – *Berg Center Case Study*
- “Beyond Compliance: Workplace Safety as CSR” – *Berg Center Video Case Study*
- *U.S. Steel in Slovakia* – *Berg Center Case Study*
- Social Impact Investing at Vidimo Finance – *Berg Center Case Study*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are three (3) components that will be used to evaluate your performance in the class:

- 1) **Individual Case Analysis (30%):** Each student will be asked to prepare a 3-5 page case analysis based on the case study as indicated on the course schedule. This is an individual assignment in which you will be asked to apply materials assigned and discussed during our class sessions. Your analysis must integrate the readings, lecture and class discussion materials and also provide both an analysis of the problem along with your recommendations for a solution to the problem(s) identified. The case analysis should be no more than five (5) pages that are typed and double-spaced (excluding tables, figures, attachments, etc.). You must upload all case analysis via courseweb using the assignment tools (upload only Word doc or pdf files). *Cases emailed as an attachment will not be opened or accepted.* Late cases will be assessed a 5 point penalty for each late day (at 5pm per day). The paper is late if posted after due date and time. Your case analysis write up should be uploaded into CourseWeb. Feedback and grading will be provided via the grading rubric in CourseWeb. Details on grading criteria are provided in the course syllabus.
- 2) **Team CSR Reporting Analyses and Presentation (30%):** You will be asked complete a team corporate social responsibility review and analysis within teams of 4-5 students. Keep in mind that this assignment must reflect the combined efforts of all team members. You are to select an organization (excluding BNY Mellon) that issues a formal **CSR Report** and provide a briefing and analysis using concepts, approaches and materials discussed in class. Each team will be asked to provide a 10-minute presentation on their selected CSR company report. The PowerPoint file must given to the instructor prior to the team's presentation. Both the PowerPoint file and team presentation will be evaluated and one grade issued for the entire team. In addition, peer feedback will be collected and included as part of the grade for the team analysis. Instructor grading will count for 90% and peer feedback will count for 10% of the grade for this assignment.
- 3) **Individual Final Examination (40%):** You will be required to complete a final examination that covers all text and lecture materials prior to the exam date. The exam will be a mixed-format exam and will be based on an assigned case study that must be read prior to the final exam. You will be asked to respond to a series of questions that are based on the case material provided. Detailed information along with sample questions will be provided prior to the examination date. Make-up exams are only provided with verified medical or family emergency as approved by the instructor.

## Make-Up and Attendance Policies

Class attendance is a mandatory and graded aspect of this course. Students are required to notify the instructor prior to the scheduled class of any absences. Only absences for personal illness and/or medical emergencies will be considered excused absences. Missing one than one session of this course will require that an either and automatic failure or incomplete grade. Incomplete (I) grades are only given for verified health/medical emergencies only and must be approved by the instructor prior to the final class session.

### **Code of Ethics and Academic Integrity**

Any violation of the Guidelines for Academic Integrity will lead to serious consequences. This includes writing of cases and papers as well as exams. Please make sure you are familiar with these guidelines which can be found at <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/sacode>. Also become familiar with the Pitt Promise which can be found at: <http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/conductpromise>. The student code of conduct policy and procedures can be retrieved at: [http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/PDFsandForms/StudentAffairs/2013\\_Code\\_of\\_Conduct.pdf](http://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/PDFsandForms/StudentAffairs/2013_Code_of_Conduct.pdf). If you have any uncertainty about what is acceptable collaboration, please check with the instructor.

### **Important University Resources**

In addition to these policies, there is a tremendous amount of support available within the University of Pittsburgh. These services are made available to students within the following offices:

- **Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS)** (216 William Pitt Union, 648-7890). DRS provides a broad range of support and services to assist students, faculty and staff with disabilities. Such disabilities may include visual impairment, auditory impairment, mobility impairment and “hidden” disabilities, such as ADD, AHD and psychological disabilities.
- **Learning Skills Center** (311 William Pitt Union, 648-7920) This office offers a range of services which are designed to help students develop their skills in areas such as math, reading, study skills, time management and test taking.
- **Writing Center** (501 Cathedral of Learning, 624-6556). As a project course, there is a tremendous amount of writing required throughout the term. While the technical aspects of writing re part of the grade, we will not have the opportunity to provide in-depth feedback and coaching in this area. However, the university writing center is an invaluable resource. Students can make appointments to work one-on-one with a

person who will give patient assistance and valuable advice on a variety of writing concerns.

- **University Counseling Center** (334 William Pitt Union, 648-7930). The Center's staff is dedicated to assisting students in their pursuit of personal and academic growth, to helping students gain a better understanding and appreciation of themselves, and to supporting students as they make important decisions about their lives. They offer counseling in a range of different areas including stress management, conflict resolution, coping with anxiety, and sexual assault services. Both individual and group counseling is available with trained professionals who respect professional ethics of confidentiality.
- **Office of International Services** (7<sup>th</sup> Floor William Pitt Union) is the only office within the University of Pittsburgh that provides immigration-related services, and it does so for the over 4000 international visitors, students, faculty, researchers, and staff members who study, teach, conduct research, and support the many academic pursuits for which Pitt is best known. Our job in OIS is to make sure that immigration issues are handled smoothly, quickly and correctly. In other words, we try hard to lighten the burden of immigration so that international students, faculty, researchers and staff members can concentrate and put their main energy into their studies or work.
- **Student Health Service and Pharmacy** (Medical Arts Building, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor): The Mission of the Student Health Service is to provide high quality prevention, health education, and primary health care and pharmacy services to enhance student living and learning. The Student Health Service will serve as the primary advocate for the health of the University of Pittsburgh students, linking the critical role of college health and mission of higher education with national health priorities.
- **University Policy on Legal Services:** The Office of General Counsel (OGC) sets forth the circumstances under which faculty and staff should consult with OGC for legal advice. OGC should always be consulted when the University receives subpoenas, a notice of the filing of a lawsuit, or in any governmental investigation. Any contractual matters that do not involve a pre-approved contract form (such as the forms that are approved for use by the Office of Research or by Purchasing Department), or in which the other party is represented by counsel, should be reviewed and approved in advance by OGC. OGC should be consulted in advance of any involuntary termination of employment, and in student disciplinary matters where the sanction may involve suspension for one term or any more severe sanction. Departments should contact OGC in advance of any activity which presents legal issues or concerns. For more information: <http://www.ogc.pitt.edu/>

**BSEO 2401: COURSE SCHEDULE, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**Week 1 (3/5 & 3/7): Making the Business Case for Ethics and CSR**

**Readings:** "Building a Business Case for Ethics"; "Business Ethics: A View from the Trenches"

**Cases:** "World Class Bull" *HBR* case study and "World Class Bull *HBR* commentary"

**Assignments:** Prepare case study for 3/7 - *class discussion only*

**Week 2 (3/12 & 2/14): Spring Break – No Classes**

**Week 3 (3/19 & 3/21): Ethical Policies and Culture: Beyond Compliance**

**Readings:** "Managing for Organizational Integrity"; "Managing Ethics and Legal Compliance"

**Cases:** "Beyond Compliance: Workplace Safety as CSR" – *Berg Center Case Study*

**Assignments:** Video case study – viewed in class on 3/21 – *class discussion only*

**Week 4 (3/26 & 3/28): Ethical Decision Making Approaches for Managers**

**Readings:** "; "Ethical Breakdowns"; "Ethics: A Basic Framework"

**Cases:** "A Offer We Can Refuse" *Berg Center case study*

**Assignments:** Submit 3-5 page case analysis for "An Offer We Can Refuse". **Due on or before 3/28** via courseweb only – *hard copies or email attachments not accepted*

**Week 5 (4/2 & 4/4): Ethics as Corporate Social Responsibility**

**Readings:** "Corporate Social Responsibility: Doing Well By Doing Good"; "The Role of Collaboration in Achieving Corporate Social Responsibility";

**Cases:** "Social Impact Investing at Vidimo Finance" – *Berg Center Case Study*

**Assignments:** Prepare case study for 4/4 - *class discussion only*

**Week 7 (4/9 & 4/11): Measuring CSR and Its Impact**

**Readings:** "Role of Global Reporting Initiative and Social Screening Investing" and "GRI v3.1"

**Cases:** BNY Mellon CSR Report 2011 and GRI Checklist (available in course web)

**Assignments:** Group Presentations on CSR Reporting Assignment (4/11)

**Week 6 (4/16 & 4/18): Global Perspectives on Ethics and CSR**

**Readings:** "Values in Tension: Ethics Away from Home"; "Avoiding Ethical Danger Zones"

**Cases:** "U.S. Steel in Slovakia: Corporate Social Responsibility Challenges" – *Berg Center Case Study*

**Assignments:** Prepare case for 4/18 - *class discussion only*

**Final Examination: TBD**

### ***Guidelines for Case Analysis and CSR Reporting Assignments***

Here are some things to think about as you prepare your individual case analyses for this course. Below are a few of the key points that should be covered in all case analyses:

- What is the central issue or critical dilemma facing this individual/organization?
- What key concepts or tool you have studied in this course help you to understand the situation facing this organization?
- What are your recommendations for addressing key issues you have identified that are facing the individual and/or organization in this situation?

Case analysis and team presentation will be evaluated by the following criteria:

#### **1. Content (40%)**

- a. Use of course concepts that are clearly defined and explained
- b. Correct application of relevant course concepts to specific case details
- c. Action steps and/or recommendations that are specific and concrete

#### **2. Clarity (40%)**

- a. Consistency between the analysis and action steps/recommendations
- b. Focus on critical issues from an ethics/social responsibility perspective with a balance between “breath” and “depth” (focusing more on the latter)
- c. Good structure and logical flow of arguments and adequate technical dimensions of presentation (grammar, style, organization, transitions, etc.)

#### **3. Creativity (20%)**

- a. Different or unique view of problem or analysis of case. Distinctive or innovative approach.
- b. Innovative or create format and/or delivery of information

### Helpful Suggestions:

Keep in mind the following keys to success in preparing all case analyses and team presentations:

- Assume that I have read the case. Avoid re-stating case details except in circumstances where these details are being included as concrete examples of core course concepts, analysis or recommendation.
- Focus on depth of analysis versus breath of coverage. Cover 2-3 key issues or areas of concern and provide supportive concepts, theories and recommendations for these issues. Avoid raising an issue that you are not prepared to address or analyze.
- Don't overlook the technical aspects of your paper/presentation. Remember that lack of attention to the technical aspects can reduce clarity. Organization, grammar, presentation style, and logical flow are keys to the overall clarity and persuasiveness of your work.
- Make sure recommendations are linked to the analysis. Be sure that the analysis of the situation or problem is linked to or logically follows the recommendations presented for change.

In shaping your individual case analysis, consider these few key questions that may help to shape your paper. You do not have to answers all of these questions in your case analysis, they are provided as helpful suggestions for your consideration.

- What is the central issue or critical dilemma facing this individual/organization?
- What key situational factors or context is important to take into account for understanding the current ethical dilemma?
- Who are the critical players or individuals within this dilemma and what role or contribution do they make to the situation/dilemma?
- What are the links between key aspects of the case and material covered within the course?
- What recommendations can I provide based on the application of course material to this situation/dilemma/problem?
- What unique insights can I contribute to better understanding this case?