



Lincoln University

BA 309 – Ethics of Business Management

COURSE SYLLABUS Spring 2025

Instructor: Professor Leon Kil
Lecture Schedule: Wednesday 9:00 AM – 11:45 AM
Credits: 3 units / 45 lecture hours
Level: Mastery 1 (M1)
Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM
Faculty Room

e-mail: lkil@lincolnuca.edu

Textbook: Course Reader compiled by the instructor

Prerequisite: *None*
Last Revision: January 6, 2025

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

The course is an advanced review of ethical theories and value systems. Topics include moral issues, codes of ethics, conflict of interest, social and fiduciary responsibilities, the work ethics, and other situations which arise within business management. (3units).

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

What's wrong with giving bribes? What's wrong with asking for bribes? What's wrong with paying money to a lower official if it speeds up bureaucratic regulations? What's wrong with large executive bonuses after company losses? What's wrong with exchanging promotions for sexual favors? What's wrong with giving expensive gifts to get a contract? What's wrong with hiring your less qualified relatives for important positions? What's wrong with using insider knowledge to buy or sell stock in a company? What's wrong with outsourcing jobs if it will increase your company's profits? What's wrong with allowing foreign contractors to hire children to produce your product if it will increase company profits? Should you report on the management of your own company if you know it is hiding or covering up hazardous chemicals if you risk losing your job? What's wrong with selling chemicals to other countries (where it is legal to do so) if it is against the law to sell these same chemicals in your own country? What's wrong with using your company's economic power to lower process to drive competitors out of business? What's wrong with deregulating government rules? What's wrong with opposing government oversight? What's wrong with setting up secret overseas bank accounts? What's gone wrong with the "free market"?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will consider ethical behavior in American and international businesses. Topics will include awareness of ethical issues in organizations, stakeholder interests in organizations, the cultural background of business ethics, the ethics of income inequality, bribery and corruption, corporate dishonesty, corporate social responsibility, global ethics, codes of conduct, responsibility for foreign investors, transparency in global business, child labor, human rights in international business, regulating foreign contractors, business ethics in America, Europe, China, Japan and Islamic nations, developing a global code of conduct, socially responsible investment, ethics and the environment, whether multinational corporations can act in a socially responsible manner, and what is the relationship between ethics and capitalism.

COURSE QUESTIONS

1. Ethics in relation to social responsibility.
2. Values, ethics, and ethical leadership in relation to different situations.
3. Comparison of American ethical business values with those found in other international cultures.
4. Application of Corporate Social Responsibility and Socially Responsible Investing.
5. Ethical questions concerning Google, Shell, IKEA, Walmart, Exxon, Pepsi, GlaxoSmithKline, Nestle, and Siemens.
6. How endemic are bribery and corruption?
7. Income Inequality - how acceptable?
8. Capitalism and ethics.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES¹

	Course LO	Program LO	Institutional LO	Assessment activities
1	Consider the ethical issues in Capitalism.	PLO 6	ILO 3b	Assess concepts such as profit motive, competition, the “Invisible Hand”, Inequality, alienation, Short-term focus, and work ethic.
2	Stakeholder or Shareholder Theory as a model for business ethics.	PLO 2	ILO 1b, ILO 2b, ILO 4b	Assess each theory as providing a base for business ethics.
3	What ethical theories are consonant with Capitalism?	PLO 6	ILO 3b	Assess the ethical theories of utilitarianism, ethics of duties, ethics of human rights, and ethics of justice as they apply to international business.
4	Consider the social and ethical responsibilities of corporations.	PLO 2	ILO 1b, ILO 2b, ILO 4b	Assess codes of ethics, corporate governance, fiduciary responsibility, ethics in advertising, insider trading,

¹ Detailed description of learning outcomes and information about the assessment procedure are available at the [Learning Outcomes Assessment](#) section of LU website.

				whistleblowing, and socially responsible investing.
5	Consider Free Market Capitalism and Income Inequality and the “hollowing out” of the middle class.	PLO 2	ILO 1b, ILO 2b, ILO 4b	Assess the positive and negative aspects of income inequality as an engine of economic growth and the effect of regulation, government spending, and progressive taxation.
6	Evaluate the ethical effects of artificial intelligence and robotization.	PLO 1	ILO 1b, ILO 2b	Assess how secure the middle class is in the wake of artificial intelligence and robotization.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Students are expected to read the assigned chapters and articles and case studies before each class. Case studies and hypothetical problems will comprise a part of each class session. Students will consider the case studies individually and in groups.

There will be class discussions and group presentations by students on the case studies and articles.

Assignments and projects require students to actively use resources of the library. Detailed guide to business *resources of the library* as well as the description of Lincoln University approach to *information literacy* are available at the [LU Library](http://lincolnuca.libguides.com) website (lincolnuca.libguides.com).

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PRESENTATION

There will be a final presentation on a topic to be decided by the students and the professor. The projects will be presented by individual students one week prior to the final exam. The presentation paper will be submitted before the end of the semester. The presentation will comprise approximately 20 per cent of the final grade. The students will have to discuss their individual presentation topics in advance and get feedback from the instructor.

Students’ work is expected to be original.

TESTING

There will be one mid-term examination and one final examination. Both will be essay examinations. Homework assignments will be turned in. Questions on ethical case studies will be given and answered in class.

GRADING

Grading will be based on the following criteria:

Mid-term	: 30 per cent
Final Examination	: 40 per cent
Class Attendance and Participation	: 10 per cent
Individual Project Presentation	: 20 per cent
Total	: 100 per cent

Grading Standard:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
Points	95-100	90-94	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	74-76	70-72	67-69	60-66	0-59

Classroom Protocol:

Courtesy is expected. This includes no cell phone usage.

COURSE CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS

The assigned material for each date should be read **before** the class with the exception of the first class. Class participation in discussing the material and case studies and hypothetical questions is expected.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
January 29:	Ethics, Interests, and Economic Behavior Max Weber, <u>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</u> (Routledge, 2001), chapters 4 and 5.
February 5:	“Manufactured” Needs and the Psychology of Consumption and Spending Thorstein Veblen, <u>The Theory of the Leisure Class</u> (Graphyco Books, 2021), chapters 1-6.
February 12:	Radical Individualism and America as the Entrepreneurial Nation Ayn Rand, <u>Capitalism: the Unknown Ideal</u> (Signet Books, 1966), chapters 1 and 3.
February 19:	Corporate Power and the Legal System Adam Winkler, <u>We the Corporations: How American Businesses Won Their Civil Rights</u> (W.W. Norton, 2018), chapter 9.
February 26:	Prestige, Employment, and the ‘Virtual’ Economy David Graeber, <u>Bullshit Jobs</u> (Simon & Schuster, 2018), chapters 1, 2, 5, 7.

March 5: Environmental Regulation and International Inequality

Anatol Lieven, Climate Change and the Nation State: the Case for Nationalism in a Warming World (Oxford UP, 2020), chapter 5.

Midterm Exam Questions Distributed

March 12: *INSIDE JOB* (a documentary film by Charles Ferguson)
In-Class Watching and Discussion**Midterm Exam Essays Due in Class**

March 26: Privatization and Decentralization of Force

P.W. Singer, Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry (Cornell UP, 2007), chapters 10-15.

April 2: Neoliberal Globalization and the Control over International Capital Flows

Finn Brunton, Digital Cash: the Unknown History of the Anarchists, Utopians, and Technologists Who Created Cryptocurrency (Princeton UP, 2019), chapters 10-12.

April 9: Economic Nationalism and “Corporate Betrayal of America”

Peter Navarro and Greg Autry, Death by China: Confronting the Dragon – a Call to Action for the Western World (Prentice Hall, 2011), chapters 4-7.

April 16: Technological Sovereignty, International Political and Financial Inequalities

Anu Bradford, Digital Empires: the Global Battle to Regulate Technology (Oxford UP, 2023), chapters 7-9.

April 23: **“Dark Money,” Corruption, and Money Laundering – Part I**

Gabriel Zucman, The Hidden Wealth of Nations: the Scourge of Tax Havens (University of Chicago Press, 2015), entire.

April 30: **“Dark Money,” Corruption, and Money Laundering - Part II**

Gabriel Zucman, The Hidden Wealth of Nations: the Scourge of Tax Havens (University of Chicago Press, 2015), entire.

May 7: **Individual Project Presentations**

May 14: **In-Class Final Examination**