

Syllabus

Business, Society, & Ethics

MGMT 482-01
Fall Semester 2006
M W 4:30-5:45

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Office Hours: Monday, 1:00-3:00,
Tuesday, 1:00-4:00,
Wednesday, 1:00-3:00,
and by appointment.

Course Description & Learning Objectives

The course has four main parts:

1. **Ethical Principles in Business.** What is business ethics? What role should ethics play in business? Is ethics relative, or are there universal moral principles? How can we decide what is ethical in business? Who should be held responsible for unethical actions in business?
2. **Capitalist Market Economic System.** What are the key characteristics of capitalism? Is capitalism ethical? Under what conditions is government regulation of business appropriate? How are the ideas of Adam Smith, John Locke, and Karl Marx relevant today? Are specific business practices ethical, such as bribery or extortion, monopolization tactics, mergers and acquisitions, price-fixing, tying arrangements, and price discrimination? How should intellectual property be handled?
3. **Potential Negative Effects of Business on Society.** How should society deal with the issues of pollution and resource depletion? What ethical duties do businesses have to consumers in terms of product safety and consumer privacy? Under what conditions are marketing practices deceptive?
4. **Relationship Between a Business and Its Employees.** Is job discrimination ethical? Is affirmative action morally justifiable? How should workplace harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or other characteristics be handled? What rights and duties should employees have? What rights and duties should employers have? How should a business handle specific issues involving employees such as drug testing, privacy, conflicts of interest, insider trading, theft, plant closings, and whistle-blowing? What is the ethics of using political tactics in organizations?

Textbook

- ❖ Manuel G. Velasquez, *Business Ethics: Concepts and Cases*, 5th Edition, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2002. ISBN 0-13-093821-1.

Course Requirements

There are three main course requirements:

1. **Class Attendance & Participation.** Class sessions consist of a discussion of the day's reading material. I expect you to attend class and participate in the class discussions. You should also read the *Wall Street Journal* so that we can discuss current business issues in class. I will evaluate your attendance and participation in our class discussions. This is one-fifth (20%) of your grade. See the schedule below for the textbook reading assignment to be completed before each class.
2. **Examinations.** There are three exams. The exams are closed book and closed notes, and are entirely in essay format. Each exam is one-fifth (20%) of your grade. The three exams together are therefore three-fifths (60%) of your grade. See the schedule below for the dates and topic coverage of each exam.
3. **Group Project Paper & Presentation.** Each group should consist of three students. The group project has two elements: (1) a written paper submitted to me and (2) an oral presentation to me and the class that summarizes the key points from the paper.

In particular, the project consists of an analysis of a news article from *The Wall Street Journal* or other legitimate news source (including legitimate Internet news sources). The article chosen by your group to serve as the basis for your group project should be related to the topics covered in the class. The project should use the tools from the class to analyze the issues in the article.

The articles that work best for the project are ones that will allow your group to demonstrate to me the breadth and depth of your knowledge of the concepts from the class. Therefore, I recommend that you select an article that is rich in detail (so you can understand the issues) and that will allow your group to use multiple tools from the class in the analyses (so you can demonstrate the breadth and depth of your knowledge of the class concepts).

The article should be approved by me by the article approval deadline (see the schedule below). Immediately after I approve your group's article, your group should send me an e-mail that (1) lists the names and e-mail addresses of the members of the group and (2) provides the article citation information (title of article, publication source, date of publication of the article, page numbers if it is a print article or web address if it is an Internet article, and so forth) of the article that I approved.

The paper should be of professional quality – both style (i.e., spelling, grammar, organization, a professional look, and so forth) and content (i.e., complete and

correct usage of the concepts from the class in the analyses) are important. There is no fixed length for the paper – the paper should be as long as necessary to cover the issues completely. However, expect that the paper will turn out to be approximately fifteen to twenty pages; this is just a suggested length – it is neither a limit nor a goal.

The paper should be double spaced, in a font no smaller than 11 point. You do not need to use any fancy binding for the paper; in fact, I prefer that you simply staple the pages together with the staple in the upper left-hand corner. The first page of the paper should be a title page that provides the title of your project, lists the names of the group members, and identifies the source of the article used as the basis for the project.

After the title page, the paper should have four sections (with headings):

- (1) *Background Information*: summarize the important facts from your article (approximately 3 pages).
- (2) *Issues*: clearly define the issues raised by your article and discuss their significance (approximately 1 page).
- (3) *Analyses*: analyze the issues in your article using the tools from the class; be specific and detailed, and use sub-headings to help organize your analyses (approximately 12 pages – this is the heart of your paper, where you want to demonstrate to me the breadth and depth of your understanding of the course concepts).
- (4) *Conclusions and Recommendations*: discuss your conclusions and recommendations (approximately 2 pages).

The paper should flow together logically; if different members of your group write early drafts of different parts of the paper, then the early drafts should be carefully edited by the group as a whole to ensure that the submitted version of the paper does not read like several different papers that have been merely stapled together; rather, the submitted paper should read as one well-organized, unified paper in both style and substance. See the schedule below for the due date of the paper.

The class presentation should briefly summarize the key facts, issues, analyses, and conclusions from the paper. The presentation should be of professional quality in both style and substance. The presentation should be no longer than 7 minutes in duration – this is a firm limit (there is a penalty for going longer than the limit). See the schedule below for the date of the presentations.

The group project (both paper and presentation considered together) is one-fifth (20%) of your grade.

Grading

There are five graded activities: class attendance and participation, three exams, and the group project. Each of the five activities will be graded on an A to F scale using the following standards:

- A Work is of outstanding quality. It shows that you have a complete grasp of the material and there are no omissions or errors.
- B Work is of excellent quality. It shows that you have grasped most of the key points, but there may be some minor omissions or errors.
- C Work is of acceptable quality. It shows that you have grasped many of the key points, but there are some important omissions or errors.
- D Work is of poor quality. It shows that you have grasped only a few of the key points and there are numerous important omissions or errors.
- F Work is of unacceptable quality. It shows that you have failed to grasp the key points.

To identify correctly different levels of student performance, on the five graded activities I actually use 12 grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and F. Your final letter grade will be determined by averaging your five grades. In averaging your five grades, I count the +/- adjustments. However, MSU does not allow +/- in final grades. As a result, if your final average is A or A-, then your final grade will be an A; if your final average is B+, B, or B-, then your final grade will be a B; and so forth. Each of your five grades will be given equal weight (20%) in determining your final letter grade.

Class Website

The address for the website for this class is:

<http://krypton.mnsu.edu/~schumann/www/teach/mgmt482.html>

The class website contains information that you should find helpful:

- ❖ **Class Syllabus.**
- ❖ **Gradebook.** You can check your grades and verify that your grades have been entered correctly into the gradebook.
- ❖ **PowerPoint Slides.** This class is *not* a lecture class. However, I have prepared a set of PowerPoint slides to help you learn the material. You can access these PowerPoint slides on the class website. Each chapter has a PowerPoint slide file. You can open each PowerPoint file directly from the class website in your Internet browser, or you can download each PowerPoint file from the class website to your computer's hard-drive and open the file in PowerPoint.

- ❖ **Announcements.** I will post class announcements on the class website as necessary. You should frequently check the class website for announcements.

Honor Code & Classroom Etiquette

You should display professional behavior at all times. This includes being respectful of me and of your fellow students by behavior that includes the following:

- ❖ **Be honest in all your work.** You should not lie, cheat, or steal. You should do your own work. You should not copy the work of others (whether the work of fellow students or the work of others that you find in the library, on the Internet, or other source) and submit it as your own. When you use the work of others, you should give proper citation to the source. You should not falsify any work records. (In most businesses, to falsify a work record is grounds for immediate dismissal.)
- ❖ **Attend all classes on time.** You should attend every class. If you need to arrive late to class or leave early, you should do so quietly so as not to disturb the class.
- ❖ **Make appropriate contributions to classroom discussions.** You should ask questions and contribute your ideas and experiences to class discussions, but you should not seek to dominate or control the class.
- ❖ **Complete all class activities on time.** This includes the assignments and the homework readings.
- ❖ **Eliminate cell phone distractions.** You should set your cell phone so that it does not ring during class. You should not answer your cell phone during class unless it is a true emergency, in which case you should quickly and quietly exit the classroom to respond to the emergency call.
- ❖ **Eliminate laptop computer distractions.** You should only use your laptop computer during class for class-related purposes. You should not use your laptop computer during class for any other activities, including playing games, listening to music, downloading files, visiting websites unrelated to class activities, doing e-mail unrelated to the class assignments, instant messaging your friends, and so forth.
- ❖ **Eliminate other distractions.** During class, you should refrain from disruptive eating, disruptive side conversations with fellow students, or any other behaviors that are distracting.
- ❖ **Use professional language.** You should use correct business language and terminology. You should not use offensive or other unprofessional language.
- ❖ **Be respectful of the classroom facilities.** You should help maintain the appearance of the classroom by carefully discarding all trash, not writing on the desks, and being careful not to spill food or beverages.

Additional Policies

In accordance with the policies of Minnesota State University Mankato, every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations, and contact the Disability Services Office at (507) 389-2825 (V) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY).

I may need to make changes and adjustments due to unforeseen events, such as classes being canceled due to the weather. In such cases, I will try to post news and updates on the class website.

You are responsible for knowing the contents of this syllabus as well as all announcements made in class or on the class website. I reserve the right to make changes and adjustments of any kind at any time. This includes adding additional graded assignments and exercises.

You should check the class website on a regular basis.

Class Schedule, Topics, & Assignments

Class Session	Topics & Assignments
Monday, August 28, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Introduction to the Class <i>Homework (after class):</i> Read the class syllabus.
Wednesday, August 30, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and Business <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 1 (pp. 1-27).
Monday, September 4, 2006	Labor Day Holiday: No class
Wednesday, September 6, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and Business (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 1 (pp. 27-55).
Monday, September 11, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and Business (cont'd.) <i>Case #1:</i> The Air Force Brake <i>Case Reading (before class):</i> This case is not in the textbook. I will provide instructions on how to access the case.
Wednesday, September 13, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethical Principles in Business <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 2 (pp. 70-105).
Monday, September 18, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethical Principles in Business (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 2 (pp. 105-146).
Wednesday, September 20, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethical Principles in Business (cont'd.) <i>Case #2:</i> Philip Morris' Troubles <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 156-163.
Monday, September 25, 2006	Exam #1 <i>Covers:</i> Chapters 1 & 2.
Wednesday, September 27, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Business System <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 3 (pp. 169-192).
Monday, October 2, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Business System (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 3 (pp. 192-205).
Wednesday, October 4, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Business System (cont'd.) <i>Case #3:</i> Napster's Revolution <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 61-64.

Class Session	Topics & Assignments
Monday, October 9, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics in the Marketplace <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 4 (pp. 220-239).
Wednesday, October 11, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics in the Marketplace (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 4 (pp. 239-249) & part of Chapter 8 (pp. 448-450).
Monday, October 16, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics in the Marketplace (cont'd.) <i>Case #4:</i> Playing Monopoly: Microsoft <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 252-260.
Wednesday, October 18, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and the Environment <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Chapter 5 (pp. 265-308).
Monday, October 23, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and the Environment (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 5 (pp. 308-316).
Wednesday, October 25, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> Ethics and the Environment (cont'd.) <i>Case #5:</i> Genetic Engineering at Monsanto/Pharmacia <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 325-328.
Monday, October 30, 2006	Exam #2 <i>Covers:</i> Chapters 3, 4, & 5, and pp. 448-450 from Chapter 8.
Wednesday, November 1, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Consumer Protection and Marketing <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 6 (pp. 332-355).
Monday, November 6, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Consumer Protection and Marketing (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 6 (pp. 355-369).
Wednesday, November 8, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Consumer Protection and Marketing (cont'd.) <i>Case #6:</i> AIDS and Needles <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 373-379.
Monday, November 13, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Job Discrimination <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 7 (pp. 385-415).
Wednesday, November 15, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Job Discrimination (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 7 (pp. 415-430).
Monday, November 20, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Ethics of Job Discrimination (cont'd.) <i>Case #7:</i> Brian Weber <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 441-442.

Class Session	Topics & Assignments
Wednesday, November 22, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Individual in the Organization <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 8 (pp. 443–463). Group project article approval deadline.
Monday, November 27, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Individual in the Organization (cont'd.) <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read Chapter 8 (pp. 463–496).
Wednesday, November 29, 2006	<i>Topic:</i> The Individual in the Organization (cont'd.) <i>Case #8:</i> The Gap <i>Textbook Reading (before class):</i> Read pp. 503–509.
Monday, December 4, 2006	Exam #3 <i>Covers:</i> Chapters 6, 7, & 8.
Wednesday, December 6, 2006	Group project papers due at beginning of class (4:30 PM). Special work day for group project presentations.
Monday, December 11, 2006 2:45–4:45 PM	Group project presentations