Syllabus
International Business Ethics
BLBU 3443
Fordham University London Centre
Fall 2018

Instructor: Jacqueline Jung
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course examines the interplay of ethical criteria, moral values and social norms in guiding companies and organizations in the current political and business environment.

Forward-thinking business leaders are recognizing the importance of how a company is perceived by an increasingly sophisticated and active consumer. There is a direct relation between a company fulfilling its responsibilities to that consumer and to the world at large, and its survival in a competitive setting.

Students will work on various cases and current material to examine how companies can most effectively retune themselves in the modern climate. To this end, activities will include examining business practices, discussing examples of proper corporate behavior, researching cases where unethical behavior created a challenge for companies, and looking at how those companies could benefit from the many advantages of establishing and living by ethical guidelines and operating a socially responsible business.

Advantages of Good Corporate guidelines and practices:

- **Marketplace Advantage**: Customers and investors cite corporate practices and values as primary considerations in their decision-making.
- **Superior Employee Performance**: Companies with sound business practices and established values report improved employee morale, reduced employee turnover and increased productivity.
- **Reputation Management**: Once damaged by scandal or unethical behavior, a company’s reputation may never recover - resulting in lost revenue, low employee morale and increased governmental and public scrutiny. Emphasizing responsible business conduct is the surest means of preserving a company’s intangible assets.
- **Powerful Legal and Financial Incentives**: International regulatory developments provide strong legal and financial incentives to corporations that establish standards of conduct and provide ethics education and training to employees. (material from the International Business Ethics website) http://www.business-ethics.org/primer.asp
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
1. Understand the international setting in which companies must operate.
2. Read between the lines of media, reports, and emails and generally understand court decisions and international treaty requirements.
3. Learn what companies must do to be good corporate citizens and how to argue a point persuasively in order to influence future colleagues. Develop a “good” business model.
4. Improve awareness and skills for work in an international business environment.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES
Seminar class with active student participation: Each student is expected to read the assigned material beforehand, and be prepared to participate actively in class discussions, with the instructor providing additional insight as required.

Classes will be divided into sections: discussion of current events related to ethics, required reading and lecture on the topic of the day; computer research on the topic and 20-30 minute break; and student presentations (in groups) of their research and ideas.

Mid-term Presentation (40% of grade along with 10% for participation at midterm)
Presentation theme: Each student will choose a case where a business or organization behaved unethically and research this case to be presented in class. Students will prepare presentations according to the following criteria:
- The first section should describe the company or organization and then report on the ethical breach or scandal.
- The second section will outline the company’s reaction to the transgression: did the company cover it up or did they quickly own up to it and make amends?
- Lastly, and most importantly, students should reformulate the approach of the company to create a different and better outcome. Students should answer the questions: why did the company or organization behave as it did; what were the constraints (time, financial, local culture, e.g.); and how could they ensure better business behavior in future?

Presentation format: Presentations will be given orally. Each student will have 7-10 minutes to present.
- A PowerPoint presentation is good, but not necessary. In any case, be very prepared to make a convincing presentation without it.
- Please email a 1 ½ -2 page (1 ½) space paper giving the details of your presentation (along with sources) to the professor at jjung19@fordham.edu by the beginning of the class. No PowerPoints please.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS
- Lanchester, John. (2010), Whoops, Why everyone owes everyone and no one can pay, First published by Allen Lane, with new material in Penguin Books. This book is available on Hive.co.uk. (Student discount of 10%. Hive benefits local bookshops).
• Students are expected to read the headlines of at least four US/UK newspapers every day and be prepared to analyze current events at the beginning of every class.

OPTIONAL COURSE MATERIALS (links and handouts will be taken from these.)


IMPORTANT WEBSITES

The Professor will send a list of required reading before each class. This will include passages from the books above, links to websites and articles, and some printed material in addition to news. Students will be asked to do research in class to answer questions posed by the professor.

GRADES AND DISTRIBUTION: The final course grade will be based on:
Class Participation 10% a midterm, 10% at final
Mid-term presentations 40%
Final exam 40%

Grade distribution:
A 93-100, A- 90–92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82
C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72, D 60-69, F below 60

ABSENCES: Because this class meets only once a week, no unexcused absences are allowed. If you must miss class, please inform the office, and notify the professor, who will instruct you on how to make up missed work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: As a Jesuit, Catholic university, Fordham is committed to ensuring that all members of the academic community strive not only for excellence in
scholarship but also for integrity of character. In the pursuit of knowledge and personal development, it is imperative that students present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. As part of this process, each student must acknowledge the intellectual contributions of others. Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful, and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, falsification, unapproved collaboration, and destruction of library materials.

In this course—and in every course—you are expected to abide by Fordham University’s Code of Conduct which includes, but is not limited to, Standards of Academic Integrity. For inclusive information on the University’s policy on cheating, intentional or unintentional plagiarism, falsification and unapproved collaboration among other things, please visit the following website:

https://www.fordham.edu/info/25380/undergraduate_academic_integrity_policy

Sanctions for violations of academic integrity outlined in the Fordham University Student Handbook include a receiving a failing grade on the assignment/examination, and possibly of receiving a failing grade for the course.
CLASS SCHEDULE

September 5 (Week 1): What is International Business Ethics?
   1. Introduction and overview of the course. Professor experience.
   2. Student introductions and experience
   3. Discussion of business ethics climate
   4. Theories of ethics in business
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

September 12 (Week 2): Ethics and the world regulatory system
   1. The World Trade Organization
   2. The United Nations agencies and organizations
   3. International treaties and agreements
   4. Multinational companies—who regulates them?
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

September 19 (Week 3): Are Ethics culturally based?
   1. Different cultures—different ethical views
   2. Individual influences on ethical decision-making
   3. Cultural relativism
READING: Info sent to students by instructor.

September 26 (Week 4): City of London field trip

October 3 (Week 5): Examples of unethical business practices
   1. The Corporate Hall of Shame 2014
   2. Marketing of dangerous products
   3. Marketing to children
READING: Info sent to students by instructor
Lunchtime speaker: Loughlin Hickey, Blueprint for Better Business (12:30-1:30)

October 10 (Week 6): Environmental protection
   1. International environmental talks and treaties
   2. Climate change and how it affects trade
   3. Clear-cutting and extinction for burgers and boxes
   4. The dangers of plastics, the Pacific garbage island
   5. Multinational companies and biotechnology: farmer’s rights and seeds
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

October 17 (Week 7): Midterm Presentations

Monday, October 22 Visit to LSE for “National Populism” 6-8pm (extra credit)

October 22-26 (Week 8): Midterm break no classes
October 31 (Week 9): Whistleblowing
1. Cultural expectations and whistleblowing
2. Protections for whistleblowers
READING: Info sent to students by instructor.

October 31 (Week 9): Lunchtime guest speaker, Mary Inman, on whistleblowers

November 7 (Week 10): Labor and Production Standards/Product Export Controls
1. Respect for worker health: safe working conditions: Rana Plaza, etc.
2. Unsafe use of materials: lead, banned pesticide use, fertilizer, etc.
3. Respect for consumers: healthy and safe products (BPA, Melamine)
4. Traceability and recall, in consumer products and food production
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

November 14 (Week 11): Modern slavery
1. Types of modern slavery and where it occurs
2. How businesses benefit from modern slavery
3. What can be done about modern slavery
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

November 21 (Week 12): Corruption—the biggest problem of all?
1. How corruption begins and how it strangles opportunity
2. Lobbying and the revolving door
3. Anti-corruption efforts and how everyone can do their part against corruption: “we are the ones we have been waiting for” (Hopi Elders)
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

November 28 (Week 13): Corporate Ethics Frameworks
1. Corporate governance emerging guidelines
2. An effective corporate ethics code
3. Sample codes
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

November 28 (Week 13): Lunchtime guest speaker, corporate governance. TBA

December 5 (Week 14): Personal Ethics and Power of the People
1. Personal ethics
2. Managing personal vs. corporate ethics, monitoring mechanisms
3. Citizens’ groups, PACS and NGOs, and certification schemes
4. Consumer boycotts, petitions, protests and individual actions
5. Investment, divestment and shareholder activism: holding corporates to their codes
READING: Info sent to students by instructor

December 12 (Week 15): Final Exam (online)