Northwest University School of Business
Master of Business Administration

Moral Leadership: Ethics for Decision-Makers

Fall 2008
BMBA 55__ (2 credits)

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Course Description

A study of the ethical dilemmas typically faced by profit and non-profit managers. This course will assist business professionals in learning to recognize ethical issues and make appropriate judgments congruent with personal values.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to help you recognize the complexity of ethical issues faced by managers, understand the historical theoretical framework that will help you evaluate those issues, and to then be able to articulate reasons to support sound ethical decisions. Since “thoughtful reflection on experience in the light of conceptual ideas is the key to management learning,” this course will also assist you in identifying and responding to the specific ethical challenges that you have and will encounter in your career.

Required Texts

Johnson, Craig E. Ethics in the Workplace. Sage Publications. 2007


Harvard Business Case Studies. Access will be explained in class.
Journal of Business Ethics article. Access will be explained in class.

Wall Street Journal subscription. Student subscription rate available. Register online at http://wsjstudent.com/ or sign up on the first night of class.

Supplemental reading material and power points will be posted on the course website.

Expectations

1. Read and complete the assigned material before class and be prepared to participate in class discussions.

2. Each week, several students will lead the class in a discussion of a current business news event involving an ethical issue, as presented in the Wall Street Journal. Assigned students will turn in a 2-page abstract of the event, briefly summarizing the facts, ethical issues, implications, and questions for class interaction. Assignments will be made during the first class session. One purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to get into the habit of reading the Wall Street Journal on a regular basis. Note that most MBA courses will require Wall Street Journal discussion.

3. Each student will describe and evaluate a real-life “defining moment” ethical issue that you have experienced or observed in the workplace. This 5-6-page paper must discuss the material facts, key ethical issues, an analysis of those issues and a personal reflection on how this event “revealed, tested or shaped” you. Your paper should address either a “Who am I?” , “Who are we?” or “Who is the company?” question, as discussed in the Defining Moments text.

4. A Summary Examination will conclude the course.

Grading and Evaluation

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<th>Points Possible</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Papers/ Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>282 - 300 = A</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSJ paper/ discussion</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>270 - 281 = A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defining Moment Paper</td>
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<td>261 - 269 = B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary Examination</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>249 - 260 = B</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>240 - 248 = B+</td>
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Course Assignments

August 28 – “Managers must make decisions in conditions of extreme ambiguity”

*Ethics in the Workplace*. Introduction and Chapter 1.
Write a 2-page essay response to the Case Study on page xxiii, “Blurring the Line between profits and nonprofits.” Should Nonprofits operate like businesses? What are the potential benefits and harms? You may address some of the questions listed.

Be prepared to discuss your response to the Truro’s DNA Dragnet Case on page 24-5. What rights and values are in conflict?

*Defining Moments*, Preface and Chapter 1.
Be prepared to discuss a “dirty hands” dilemma that you have experienced or observed in the workplace.

September 4 - “Managers are the Ethics Teachers in their Organizations.”

*Ethics in the Workplace*, Chapter 3
Be prepared to discuss the Scenarios for Action on pages 82 – 85

*Defining Moments*, Chapters 2 – 4.
Be prepared to discuss a situation where you used “Sleep test ethics.”

*Harvard Business School Case No. 9-393-111. Kathryn McNeil (A)*
Write a 2-4-page essay addressing the following questions. How would you describe the problem in this case? What are Kathryn McNeil’s responsibilities at Sayer Microworld? What are Charles Foley’s options? What would you recommend to Kathryn? To Charles?

September 11 –“Virtue Ethics is not Geometry”

Access this article through the Hurst Library portal, which we will review in class.

*Ethics in the Workplace*, Chapter 2
Write a 2-4-page essay paper comparing concepts in chapter 2 regarding character development with the “Socratic Questions” article. Describe how one or more of these concepts are present, or developing, in your life situation or career. Illustrate your essay with at least one example from your own experience.
**Defining Moments, Chapters 5 – 7**
Be prepared to discuss a “defining moment” in your career that revealed, tested or shaped you. This episode may be the basis for your final paper.

**Harvard Business School Case No. 5-404-110. Martha McCaskey.**
Write a 2-4 page essay addressing the following questions. As Martha McCaskey, what is your plan of action for finishing the Silicon 6 project? What is troubling Martha about this situation? Do you agree with her assessment? Was this situation avoidable?

September 18 - “How can ethical leaders use power wisely?”

**Ethics in the Workplace, Chapters 4, 5**
Write a 2-page essay response to the “Taking Credit when Credit’s not due” case on page 103. Identify the ethical dilemma Monique faces. How would you advise Monique?

**Defining Moments, Chapters 8, 9**
Be prepared to discuss what a “space of quiet” looks like in your life.

September 25 and October 2 – Management Skills Seminar Our class does not meet.

October 9 – “Am I ready to take responsibility?”

**Ethics in the Workplace, Chapter 7, 9**
Be prepared to discuss the “Sending Mixed Signals at Boeing” case on pages 243-4.

**The Secret Sharer** short story
Peter Drucker has noted that “Leadership is not rank or privileges, titles or money. Leadership is responsibility.” Write a 4-page reflection essay discussing the themes of leadership, responsibility, and ethical dilemmas based upon class reading and discussion and that are illustrated in Conrad’s story. What parts of this story resonate with your career experience? Be prepared to discuss your insights in class.

October 11 (Saturday) – 9:00 – 10:00am

Defining Moment paper due.

Summary Exam.