Course: MBA 8111  Business, Government, and Society  
6:00-8:40 Wednesday, SBE50

Prerequisites: MBA student (non-MBA graduate student with college consent)

Professor: Dr. Stephen B. Castleberry  SBE 122  
(218) 726-6314  office phone.  (218) 726-7578  office fax  
E-mail: scastleb@d.umn.edu  
Web home page: http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb

Office Hours: 5-6 pm and 8:40-9:00 pm Wednesdays or by appointment.

Course Description: How cultural, political, global, legal, and economic factors impact business activities. Issues of business ethics and social responsibility.


Trust Us, We’re Experts, 2002, by Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Books. ISBN 1-58542-139-1

Business Week (free subscription provided by LSBE). Save these as we will refer back to them throughout the semester.

Grade Determination:

Course participation 40%  
Personal mission statement 20%  
Case 30%  
WebVista 10%

Values: This is not a values-neutral course. This course is designed to encourage the following character traits: obeying the laws, honesty, integrity, justice, socially responsible behavior that is sustainable.
Course Participation

Purpose. Perhaps the most important aspect of this class, and its most effective learning tool, will be the exchange of information and points of view. While I will encourage you to think critically and listen to the ideas of others, I will not make you value other’s opinions and ideas.

Politically correct. What about being politically correct? This class will be boring and fall far short of the stated goals if students are afraid to express their real beliefs, whatever those beliefs may be. Such behavior (i.e., not expressing real beliefs) negatively impacts: (1) class discussion, (2) those who will never benefit from knowing your real beliefs, and (3) yourself for not standing up for your real beliefs in public. People often improve their thinking by verbally stating their beliefs and sometimes amending them after the fact. Regardless where you stand on various issues, this course should help you understand why you believe what you believe and how to defend your position relative to those with opposite beliefs. If you have strong political viewpoints, this class is a great opportunity to express and explore them as the professor and other students will likely challenge them in a civil manner. (This paragraph adapted from a syllabus by Dennis Collins)

Missed class or part of a class. If you have to miss class, or some portion of the class, for any reason you must do the following:
1. Turn in very complete and detailed answers to the questions at the end of the assigned case(s).
2. Turn in a brief summary on the assigned reading(s).
3. Make yourself available to discuss the case(s) and reading material intelligently in a session with Dr. Castleberry.

Basis of grading. “Participation” does not mean attempting to be the center of attention. I will grade you on the following aspects of participation:

- active listening (including appropriate nonverbal communication)
- treating other students with respect and courtesy
- indicating your desire to participate by raising your hand
- providing depth and completeness in your responses when called upon
- correctly relating material from the text, any readings, and web links provided on the course website
- thoughtfully completing out-of-class assignments and turning in on time
- demonstrating preparedness by doing well on any pop quizzes
- being able to restrain yourself from blurtting out your thoughts when not called upon
- bringing in ideas from other sources (e.g., other courses, your work experience, business press)
- being on time to class (if you arrive late for class, it is your responsibility to insure that your attendance is marked)
- attendance at class sessions
- being an active participant in group exercises
- avoiding engaging in non-class related activities during class (for rules with regard to cell phones and laptops see my policies (http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb/policies.html)
WEB VISTA

Access. To access WebVista, go to https://www.myu.umn.edu, then click on mytoolkit, then login with your UMD login (that you use for your email), then click on the course.

Purpose. It is impossible in our classroom sessions to cover every single ethical topic in business. Also, it will be impossible for us to discuss in class every detail and every issue from every reading. It will be equally impossible for every person to elaborate his/her opinions on all of the material or on every single issue discussed. Web Vista is our solution to this problem, and allows students and the professor to discuss and share outside the classroom.

Confidentiality. The postings that are made in this class are not to be shared with others not in our class, without the written permission of the person who wrote the posting. Please note that I may, occasionally, use a posting from a former class as a discussion starter in our class (but will never include any identifying information at all that would allow someone to know who wrote that posting – gender, name, company name, class attended).

Basis of grading.

• quality of postings. Everyone who makes meaningful contributions should receive full credit. Comments such as “I agree with Mary” or “Don’t blame me” don’t fully reflect your input and won’t be given full credit.
• quantity of postings (see below for details)
• participation consistently over time as opposed to bunching a lot of postings and readings, say, in one time period like at the beginning or end of the semester
• treating others with respect and courtesy in your postings and replies
• using proper posting conventions that easily show threaded discussions
• reading most postings of others

Expectations for number of postings.

• Topical Area Postings. For the topical area(s) covered during a class session, I would expect that you would post at least once after each class session. This posting should be an initial posting (not simply a reply to a posting put up by someone else). The expectation is for you to post one posting after each class session, regardless of the number of topical areas covered during that class session.

• Business Week Posting. I would expect you to post at least four times during the course of the semester, identifying ethical and legal issues that you discovered while reading Business Week. These will tend to be short postings that identify the ethical or legal issue raised, and your thoughts about what you read. These will help you identify an issue which you can write your case about.

Note: If you have a specific question for Dr. Castleberry, please post that in the “Raise Your Hand” Discussion Area.
Your Personal Mission Statement

Goals:
• For you to reflect upon and commit to the mission of your life.
• For you to reflect upon the relationship between your mission, your actual life, and your business ethics.

Use the headings/subheadings presented in bold below.

I. My mission statement:
   A. Overall Statement of My Life’s Mission (e.g., why you are here, what you hope to accomplish with your life, what will be the results if you accomplish your mission, etc.)
   B. My Guide. Concisely state what guides you as you set your mission, develop your goals, and make decisions in life. You may also wish to state what you will not allow to guide or influence your mission or influence your daily life.
   C. Important Relationships. Write a brief statement that outlines the type of relationship you wish to have with each significant person or group in your life. This may include how you intend to relate to them, how you will spend your time with them, etc. Include a subsection for each of the following:
      1. Spouse or significant other if applicable
      2. Child or children if applicable
      3. Other family members
      4. Friends as a group
      5. Your relationship as an employee within your firm
   D. Learning. Briefly indicate how you intend to develop your mind and gain wisdom.
   E. Self-Esteem and Security. Write a brief statement which indicates where you derive your self-esteem and worth. Indicate how you will maintain that self-esteem in light of life’s ups and downs.
   F. Strength. Write a brief statement which indicates where you intend to draw your strength and power to accomplish your mission. Briefly tell how you will transform weaknesses into strengths.

II. Relationship Between My Mission Statement and My Daily Life
   Briefly discuss the relationship between your mission statement and the life you live daily, particularly in the area of business ethics.

Basis of grading:
• Must turn in one typed copy of the mission statement on time.
• Must provide, at a minimum, the information requested.
• Must not be guilty of plagiarism in any form (see web page).
• Must be free of grammar and spelling errors. Note that if English is not your first language, or you just have trouble writing papers, you should seek help in proofing.
• Must demonstrate correct knowledge of any terminology used in our course (e.g., stage scores, schools of ethics, criteria).

You will find many examples of personal mission statements on my web site.
Your Ethics Case

Goals:
• Help you develop skills in recognizing moral dilemmas in the real world. Please see the Web Vista page for details on how reading *Business Week* can help you in this.
• Help you further develop skills in applying the principles learned in the course to an actual business ethical issue or situation.

Outline of the case:

I. **Title page** (title of the case, your name, the date turned in). This is page one, and is the only page upon which you will identify yourself. The case you write will probably be used in future ethics classes.

II. **The case itself.** The case should be similar to the ones assigned in class, while following these requirements exactly. You are to fully discuss the issues using many direct quotations from individuals, as appropriate. You must convincingly present all sides to the issue. This must start on page two. Put the case title at the top of this page. Number your pages. Use headings and subheadings to help the reader follow your case points. You may want to consider using a 1st person account for at least part of your case. Do not identify yourself in any way on any pages of this assignment except for page one.

III. **Case Questions.** Provide at least ten thought-provoking business ethics questions.

IV. **List of Sources.** List all reference citations that you used to write your case. You must have at least twenty sources, even for issues that come from personal experience. References can be books, magazines, journals, web pages, etc. Use any standard style you wish.

V. **Additional Information** (This must start on a new page) Provide additional information which might be useful for the teacher to know (e.g., what actually happened in real life if you know).

Basis of grading:

• Must turn in case proposal on time and follow my recommendations.
• Must turn in one typed copy and one electronic version (Word file) of the case on time.
• Must follow outline and directions precisely.
• Must include a number of actual quotations, as appropriate and available.
• Must clearly and convincingly relate all sides to the issue.
• Must include at least ten thought-provoking business ethics questions that will stimulate discussion.
• Must list all reference citations with a minimum of twenty sources.
• Must not be guilty of plagiarism in any form (see web page). I will be using TurnItIn.com to check for plagiarism.
• Must be free of grammar and spelling errors. Note that if English is not your first language, or you just have trouble writing papers, you should seek help in proofing.
• Must not have used this case or topic for any other class or any other assignment without prior approval by Dr. Castleberry.
• Expected length of the case itself (not including case questions, list of sources, additional information) is 10 pages, double-spaced, 12 point type, Times New Roman font, with one inch margins.

You will find many examples of cases on my web site.
Note that there will be some overlap of topics and readings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Taking Sides</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/6</td>
<td>2, 3, 4</td>
<td>Introduction to Ethics Social Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13</td>
<td>7 1, 12</td>
<td>Power Exploitation</td>
<td>CEO Compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/20</td>
<td>6, 13, 9</td>
<td>Custom Research Ethics Personal Mission Statement due</td>
<td>Mercy Medical Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Letter of the Law Business and Government</td>
<td>ADM Price Fixing Case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prison Visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11</td>
<td>5, 14, 18, 19</td>
<td>Costs vs. Benefits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>10, 11</td>
<td>Equity, Justice, and Fairness Bias</td>
<td>Off Duty-On Guard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>16, 17</td>
<td>International Issues</td>
<td>The Garment Industry ‘Sweatshop’ case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/1</td>
<td>15, 20, 21</td>
<td>The Environment</td>
<td>GM Foods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8</td>
<td>Trust Us! book</td>
<td>Honesty and Deception</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Case due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For my course policies, see http://www.d.umn.edu/~scastleb/policies.html