



**School of Business & Creative Design**

Business Department

**Course Outline – Winter 2014**

**Course Code:** BUS 1013

**Course Title:** Ethics & Critical Decision-Making

*Prepared By:* Lois Nantais

*Date:* December  
2012

*Revised By:* Lois Nantais

*Date:* December  
2013

*Approved By:* Yvonne Clarke, Associate Dean

*Prerequisite:* None

*Corequisite:* None

*Prerequisite for:* None

## 1. Course Description

This interdisciplinary course combines insights from the field of business with social psychology and applied ethics to challenge students with an introspective look at some of today's most important ethical dilemmas.

Students of BUS 1013 learn that the ethical standards employed by businesses and corporations ultimately concern the quality of human behaviours in those organizations. Human behaviour evolves from many influences: our past relationships, the ways we think and feel, how we respond to pressures in various social contexts, and how we deliberate in our daily thoughts and actions. Each of these influences is intimately involved with the quality of our ethical decision making.

## 2. General Education and Essential Employability Skills

<b>This course provides the following provincial Essential Employability Skills:</b>	<b>This course has been approved as a General Education course in some programs in the following areas:</b>
# 1: Communication # 3: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving # 5: Interpersonal # 6: Personal	Social & Cultural Understanding

## 3. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the study of business ethics.
2. Identify the importance of understanding and maintaining personal ethical responsibility.
3. Explain the development of human psychological capacities for moral thought.
4. Identify at least three important social influences on ethical behaviours.
5. Define the situationist approach to ethical behaviour.
6. Describe a postconventionalist stance in ethical decision-making.
7. Outline the four main ethical theories in business ethics.
8. Explain the main challenges for ethical leadership in today's organizational culture.

9. Explain the challenge of today's corporations in balancing the interests of stakeholders with the needs for employee governance and social responsibility.
10. Identify the most significant challenges involved with cross-culture business activities.
11. Identify the importance of cultivating ethical mindfulness and personal key values for everyday ethical decision-making.
12. Demonstrate an application-level awareness of ethical decision-making through critical thinking and group work analyses of case study scenarios.

#### 4. Course Objectives

(The number in brackets at the end of each objective refers to the learning outcome from section 3.)

		Learning Outcome Reference Number
<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>Introduction to Business Ethics</b>	
1.1	Describe the climate of cynicism in business today	[1]
1.2	Explain the value of being ethical and personal responsibility	[2]
1.3	Define values, morals, ethics and trust	[1]
1.4	Distinguish a moral dilemma	[2]
1.5	Identify professional and business ethics	[1]
1.6	Explain if business ethics can be taught	[2]
1.7	Apply knowledge of introductory business concepts to case study learning exercise(s)	[12]
<b>UNIT 2</b>	<b>Human Psychological Capacity for Moral Thought</b>	
2.1	Explain our brain's hardwiring foundation for morality	[3]
2.2	Summarize the development of morality in the mind	[3]
2.3	List the main physiological elements of the moral brain	[3]
2.4	Explain early influences of social-psychological attachment	[3]
2.5	Summarize cognitive moral development	[3]
2.6	Determine "madness" and "badness": moral impairment and Machiavellianism	[3]
2.7	Demonstrate understanding of cognitive-psychological development in interpretation of case study ethical dilemmas	[12]
<b>UNIT 3</b>	<b>Social Influences on Ethical Behaviour</b>	
3.1	Discuss why we can't rely on virtues for ethical decision-making	[4]
3.2	Recognize the power of social groups and conformity	[4]

3.3	Explain famous social studies on unethical behaviour	[4]
3.4	Explain situational ethics	[5]
3.5	Describe the step-wise approach to ethical decision-making	[5]
3.6	Recognize postconventionalism: Autonomous principled thinking	[6]
3.7	Summarize the importance of giving voice to our values	[6]
3.8	Identify moral precepts in religious traditions and spirituality	[6]
3.9	Demonstrate application of step-wise postconventional thinking and judgment to case studies in the context of self-evaluation within course group-work dynamic	[12]
<b>UNIT 4</b>	<b>How to Decide What's Right and What's Not: Ethical Theory</b>	
4.1	Describe modern ethical theory	[7]
4.2	Explain prescriptive approaches to ethical decision-making	[7]
4.3	Explain consequentialist theory	[7]
4.4	Explain deontological theory	[7]
4.5	Determine the value of ethical relativism	[7]
4.6	Defend the appropriateness of using a select ethical theory in evaluation of case study analyses in a course group work dynamic	[12]
<b>UNIT 5</b>	<b>Common Employee Ethical Challenges in the Workplace</b>	
5.1	Question the implications of preferential treatment and discrimination	[8]
5.2	Recognize harassment and bullying	[8]
5.3	Define conflicts of interest	[8]
5.4	List customer confidence issues	[8]
5.5	Explain use of company resources	[8]
5.6	Summarize the experience and consequences of whistleblowing	[8]
5.7	Demonstrate understanding of common employee ethical challenges through evaluation of case study scenarios, using a course group work dynamic	[12]
<b>UNIT 6</b>	<b>Organizational Culture and Social Responsibility</b>	
6.1	Define organizational culture	[9]
6.2	Explain how culture influences behaviour	[9]
6.3	Describe organizational authority structure	[9]
6.4	Recognize ethical organizational systems and policies	[9]
6.5	Determine ethical leadership	[9]
6.6	Recognize trust and loyalty interests for the workplace	[9]
6.7	Recognize the need for taking personal responsibility in organizational climate	[9]
6.8	Discuss the process of developing or changing organizational climate	[9]

- 6.9 Demonstrate the construction of ethical leadership decision-making in analysis of case study scenarios, using a course group work dynamic [12]

**UNIT 7 Corporate Ethics and Social Responsibility**

- 7.1 Discuss the importance of corporate social responsibility [9]  
 7.2 List the types of corporate social responsibilities [9]  
 7.3 Explain the “race to the bottom”: violations of labour standards in free trade [9]  
 7.4 Defend the importance of managing stakeholders [9]  
 7.5 Question employee governance [9]  
 7.6 Explain the “triple bottom line” and environmental sustainability [9]  
 7.7 Defend social responsibility as good business practice [9]  
 7.8 Identify potential ethical strategies in current examples of corporate social irresponsibility, using a course group work dynamic [9]

**UNIT 8 Globalization and International Social Responsibility**

- 8.1 List the main ethical challenges for international business [10]  
 8.2 Explain the need for cross-cultural structure, training, and guidance [10]  
 8.3 Recognize the significance of cultural and language barriers [10]  
 8.4 Describe cultural diversity in ethical standards [10]  
 8.5 Identify ethical relativism and transcultural corporate ethics [10]  
 8.6 Demonstrate an appropriate application of ethical relativism in a case study analysis, using a course group work dynamic [10]

**UNIT 9 Moving Forward: Personal Integrity, Choices and Challenges**

- 9.1 Demonstrate the Socratic rule: “know thyself” and cultivation of key values [11]  
 9.2 Discuss ethical mindfulness in everyday life [11]  
 9.3 Discuss confronting your own moral dragons [11]  
 9.4 Recognize cultural integrity and human rights [11]  
 9.5 Prepare a self-study analysis that describes and appraises the challenges of applying consistent personal ethical behaviours while working within a course-based group dynamic [12]

**5. Resources and Supplies**

**a. Required Text**

Trevina, L. K. & Nelson, K. A. (2014). *Managing Business Ethics* (6th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

**b. Required Apps**

- i. Nearpod, Panarea, Nearpod, Inc. 2013
- ii. StudyRoom, Luma Education, Inc. 2013

**c. Supplemental**

NIL

**6. Methodology (Teaching/Learning Methods)**

The course utilizes a hybrid form of learning, using a two-fold approach:

- 1. In-class component
- 2. On-line component

The in-class component will consist of a two-hour weekly series of topic-based lectures, with interactive experiences throughout, where students will be encouraged to engage in both large and small group discussions. The in-class component of the course may also include oral presentations, experiential activities and guest speakers.

The on-line component of the course utilizes a web-based interactive program with activities designed for the third hour of the course.

**7. Student Evaluation**

The following elements will determine the student’s final grade:

Test # 1	20%
Test # 2	20%
Test # 3	20%
1 Assignment	20%
10 On-line Weekly Activities @ 2% each	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Tests**

There are 3 tests in this course. Each test is worth 20% of the final mark, for a total of 60% overall.

## Assignment

There is 1 assignment in this course, worth 20% of the final mark. It is a reflective essay designed to engage the student's ability for ethical self-analysis.

## On-line Weekly Activities

There are ten on-line components to the course, worth 20% of the final mark. The on-line component comprises a weekly commitment to on-line activities involving group-work case study analyses associated with course materials.

The on-line activities are an integral part of the written assignment in this course, so that if on-line activities are not completed satisfactorily, the results will significantly impact the results of the assignment.

Students require an overall grade of D (50%) in order to pass the course. Round-off mathematical principles will be used. Percentages are converted to letter grades as follows:

Mark (%)	Grade	Grade Point	Mark	Grade	Grade Point
94-100	A+	4.0	67-69	C+	2.3
A 87-93	A	3.7	63-66	C	2.0
80-86	A-	3.5	60-62	C-	1.7
77-79	B+	3.2	50-59	D	1.0
73-76	B	3.0	0-49	F	0.0
70-72	B-	2.7			

## 8. Academic Integrity

Lambton College is committed to high ethical standards in all academic activities within the College, including research, reporting and learning assessment (e.g. tests, lab reports, essays).

The cornerstone of academic integrity and professional reputation is principled conduct. All scholastic and academic activity must be free of all forms of academic dishonesty, including copying, plagiarism and cheating.

Lambton College will not tolerate any academic dishonesty, a position reflected in Lambton College policy. Students should make themselves familiar with the [Students Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#), located on the MyLambton website for details concerning academic dishonesty and the penalties for dishonesty and unethical conduct.

Questions regarding this policy, or requests for additional clarification, should be directed to the [Lambton College Centre for Academic Integrity](#)

## 9. Related Items

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with a disability in need of accommodations in the learning environment or in testing protocol, please identify your needs to the professor and/or the Accessibility Centre so that support services can be arranged. This can be done by making an appointment at the SSD, Room L103 ext.3427 or by arranging a personal interview with the professor.

### **Student Rights and Responsibility Policy**

Acceptable behaviour in class is established by the instructor and is expected by all students. Any form of harassment or violence will not be tolerated. Action will be taken as outlined in Lambton College policy.

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offences subject to disciplinary action. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the cheating policy as described in the Lambton College Student Rights and Responsibilities policy. For further information on all of these policies, links may be found on the Lambton College website.

### **Prior Learning Assessment Statement**

This course is eligible for Prior Learning Assessment

Yes                       No

If yes has been selected, you may choose to contact the Counselling Department for advice on Prior Learning Assessment.

### **Date of Withdrawal without Academic Penalty**

Please consult the Academic Regulations and Registrar's published dates.

### **Waiver of Responsibility**

Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information as of the date of publication. The content may be modified, without notice, as deemed appropriate by the College.

Note: It is the student's responsibility to retain course outlines for possible future use to support applications for transfer of credit to other educational institutions.