Sample
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND LEADERSHIP (PRL)
NYU Stern School of Business
Undergraduate College
SOIM-UB.0012.08
Fall 2013

Instructor Details
Name: Maria Patterson
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Phone: 212-992-6845
Office Hours: Mon, 5:00-6:00pm
Thurs, 10:30am-12:30pm
Email professor to confirm availability
Office Location: Tisch 435

Course Meetings
Meeting time(s): Wed, 11:00am-12:15pm
Location: T-UC-07

The Social Impact Core Curriculum
In the Social Impact Core Curriculum, NYU Stern undergraduate students:
- Become more aware of multiple stakeholder perspectives on important business issues;
- Develop a more nuanced understanding of the many relationships between corporations, governments, NGO’s, market economies and civil society;
- Begin the process of developing professional ethics in harmony with their own personal values; and,
- Learn to articulate, defend, and reflect critically on a point of view.

Course Description
Professional Responsibility and Leadership (PRL) is an interdisciplinary capstone course that builds on prior coursework within the Social Impact Core Curriculum as well as other coursework both at Stern and in other NYU colleges.

In this course, students have the opportunity to pursue the following learning objectives: 1) to become more familiar with the variety of ethical dilemmas that can arise in the course of business practice; 2) to understand the different values and principles that can inform and guide decisions in such ambiguous situations; and 3) to gain experience articulating and defending courses of action that are coherent with their own values.
The format of the course is a discussion seminar. Each class session may include a variety of activities, including: discussion, in-class reading and writing, role-playing, and other participatory exercises. These various activities will be designed and facilitated by the instructor in order to allow students to engage in reflective dialogue with each other.

The overarching themes of this dialogue include: 1) the relationship between business and society on a global, national and local basis; 2) the foundations of personal and professional business ethics; and 3) the exercise of leadership in organizations.

These themes are developed in reference to a series of cases that have been either drawn from recent news reports on business practice or drafted specifically for this course by NYU Stern faculty. These cases will typically be provided in class by the instructor to the students, then read and interpreted collectively.

The course readings provide lenses through which to view and interpret the cases. Drawn primarily from classic works of philosophy, literature, psychology, legal studies and theology, these readings inform the class discussions and allow students to synthesize the case material and exercise reflective judgment about how they would act in similar situations. These readings are posted on the NYU Classes site, and students are expected to come to class having read them and reflected on their meaning with respect to the topics addressed in that class session.

The course proceeds cumulatively so that all themes, cases and readings inform subsequent discussions.

**Course Schedule**
Additional readings may be assigned, particularly as a basis for cases or other classroom exercises. Those readings will be announced in class or via NYU Classes or both.

Students in teams of 2 or 3 will be responsible for presenting the readings in most modules, which will include explaining the readings, describing their relevance to the learning objective and stimulating and guiding discussion of the readings. The presentations, including discussion, should take around 30 minutes. The instructor will create teams during the first two weeks of class and then post a signup sheet outside her office so that each team can pick a module on a first come, first served basis. Each student team will need to meet with the instructor no later than the Monday of the week of the particular module to review the presentation.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Module 1**
- Date: Sept. 4
- Learning Objective: To introduce the course themes and to initiate the process of practical reasoning.
• Readings:
  o “Our Schizophrenic Conception of the Business Corporation” from Corporate Governance - William Allen (1992)

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS AND SOCIETY

Module 2
• Date: Sept. 11
• Learning Objective: To frame the relationship between business and society in terms of a basic tension between market mechanisms and moral judgments as means of determining value.
• Readings:
  o An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations– Book 1, Chapters 1-3, Adam Smith (1776)
  o Unto this Last– Essay 1, “The Roots of Honour” – John Ruskin (1860)

Module 3
• Date: Sept. 18
• Learning Objective: To explore how specific types of market imperfection give rise to particular ethical dilemmas for organizations and consumers.
• Readings:
  o Market failure handout - Rachel Kowal

Module 4
• Date: Sept. 25
• Learning Objective: To examine selected aspects of the contemporary crisis (and its historical antecedents) and to reflect on the ethical values that justify particular policy solutions to the crisis.
• Reading:
THE FOUNDATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Module 5
- Date: Oct. 2
- Learning Objective: To introduce and reflect on alternative conceptualizations of the nature and origins of ethical value.
- Readings:
  - The Happiness Hypothesis, - Chapter 4, “The Fault of Others” - Jonathan Haidt
  - “Making an Ethical Decision” – Terry Halbert & Elaine Ingulli

**Paper #1** assigned by or on Oct. 2

Module 6
- Date: Oct. 9
- Learning Objective: To consider how specific ethical values are institutionalized in systems of money, property and wealth.
- Readings:
  - Sermon 50: The Use of Money– John Wesley (1872)
  - Gooseberries– Anton Chekhov (1898)
  - “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” from Leaves of Grass – Walt Whitman (1855)
  - Book of Ecclesiastes (Chaps. 1-4)

**Paper #1** - In-class paper development workshop. Prepare and bring 200 word abstract of your paper.

Module 7
- Date: Oct. 16
- Learning Objective: To consider how specific ethical values are institutionalized in the political concept of human rights.
- Readings:
  - “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (1945)
  - “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights” (2011), Section 2
    “The Corporate Responsibility to Respect Human Rights”

**Paper #1** – Due date Oct. 18, Friday, by 11:59pm

Module 8
- Date: Oct. 23
- Learning Objective: To consider how specific ethical values are institutionalized in the form of laws.
• Readings:
  o *The Path of the Law*- Oliver Wendell Holmes (1897)
  o “Concerning New Principalities Which Are Acquired,” from *The Prince* (Chapter 7, excerpt) – Nicolo Machiavelli (1505)
  o US Federal Sentencing Guidelines Outline

Module 9
• Date: Oct. 30
• Learning Objective: To consider how specific ethical values are institutionalized in the form of professional standards and codes of conduct.
• Readings:

THE EXERCISE OF LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS

Module 10
• Date: Nov. 6
• Learning Objective: To consider how people can maintain their integrity as they balance competing interests.
• Readings - excerpts include all that is available on the blackboard site:
  o *Analects of Confucius* (excerpts from Books 2, 4, 6, 8, 12-15, 19, 20) (479-221 BCE)
  o “Callicles" from *The Gorgias* (excerpts) – Plato (380 BCE)

Module 11
• Date: Nov. 13
• Learning Objective: To reflect on the standards of truth and disclosure that pertain to different personal and professional contexts.
• Reading:
  o “The Conflict Between the Right and the Expedient” from *De Officiis*, Book 3, Chapters XII-XX – Cicero (44 BC)

Module 12
• Date: Nov. 20
• Learning Objective: To consider how the virtues associated with leadership can be enacted through words as well as deeds.
• Readings:
  o *The Prince* (Chapters 15-19) – Nicolo Machiavelli (1505)
  o *Rhetoric* (Book 1) – Aristotle (350 BCE)
  o *Nicomachaean Ethics, Book 1* (parts 1-13) – Aristotle (350 BCE)
Module 13
- Date: Nov. 27
- Learning Objective: To reflect on the diversity of leadership styles.
- Reading:
  - *Tao Te Ching,* (#1-3, 8, 9, 13, 17-19, 24, 26, 30, 38, 49, 57, 60, 77, 80, 81)
  - Lao-tzu (600 BC)

CONCLUSION

Module 14
- Date: Dec. 4
- Learning Objective: To conclude the course by reflecting on the students’ personal values in light of their professional trajectories.
- Reading: N/A

**Paper #2** assigned by or on Dec. 4
**Paper #2** – TBD, week of Dec. 9, paper development workshop
**Paper #2** – Due date Dec. 13, Friday, by 11:59pm

**Class Discussion**
PRL helps students develop the capability to articulate, defend and act in accordance with their personal and professional values. In this regard, faculty as well as students are responsible for maintaining a positive and constructive professional atmosphere within the classroom. Each student must engage in discussion during every class session in order to perform well in the course.

Class discussion will be assessed using the following rubric:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>An excellent student comes to class prepared; contributes readily to the conversation but does not dominate it; makes thoughtful contributions that advance the conversation; shows interest in and respect for others’ views; participates actively in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>A better student comes to class prepared; makes thoughtful comments when called upon; contributes occasionally without prompting; shows interest in and respect for others’ views; participates actively in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>A good student comes to class prepared, but does not voluntarily contribute to discussions and gives only minimal answers when called upon. Such students show interest in the discussion, listening attentively and taking notes. They may also participate fully in small group discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>A fair student participates in discussion, but in a problematic way. Such students may talk too much, make rambling or tangential contributions, interrupt others with digressive questions, or bluff when unprepared. Such students also participate actively in small groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>A poor student does not come to class prepared; does not contribute to discussion voluntarily or when called upon; and does not participate in small group discussions. Such students may listen attentively but fail to contribute due to lack of preparation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>A failing student disrupts class discussion, whether actively by being negative or rude to others, or passively by appearing distracted, bored or sleepy.</td>
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**Written Assignments**  
**Essays**  
Students will complete two 5-7 page papers typed in 12-point font and double spaced with 1 inch margins.

- The 1st paper is due on Oct. 18  
- The 2nd paper is due on Dec. 13

Specific topics for these papers will be assigned in class. One class session prior to the due date for the first paper, students will be asked to bring a <200-word abstract of their essays to class for a short, in-class writing workshop. We may follow the same process for the second paper.

Whatever topic the papers address, their contents should show evidence of practical reasoning that integrates three distinct, though interrelated forms of thought (adapted from *Rethinking Undergraduate Business Education: Liberal Learning for the Profession*, Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, William M. Sullivan & Jonathan Dolle (2011):

- **Analytic**, i.e., making sense of particular phenomena in terms of general concepts, abstract rules or principles;  
- **Multiple framing**, i.e., critically synthesizing distinct models or systems by calling into question basic assumptions and creating alternative ways to frame issues; and  
- **Reflective exploration of meaning**, i.e., imagining alternative versions of ‘the good life,’ and exploring their meaning in reference to personal identity, including ethical values, cultural heritage and historical contexts.

The instructor will make comments on the paper’s content in reference to these criteria, take into consideration the quality of the writing, assign a grade, and then return the paper to the student.

All students are required to turn their papers in **Word format** using the **Assignments tab on the NYU Classes site**. Integrated into NYU Classes is an online plagiarism prevention and detection software – Turnitin – that enables faculty to compare the content of submitted assignments to data on the Internet, commercial databases, and previous papers.
submitted to the system. Additional information about expectations regarding academic integrity appears below.

Coaching
A group of professional writing coaches will hold office hours that will be available on a first-come, first-served basis close to paper deadlines to provide interested students with feedback to improve writing skills. Students who are interested in receiving feedback on their writing prior to submitting their assignments are encouraged to schedule an appointment to work with a writing coach. Writing coaches will read and evaluate paper drafts in terms of the following criteria:

- **Structure**: Introduction engages the audience; body logically and concisely advances the argument; closing ties together and synthesizes main point. In general, ideas are easy to distinguish and follow.
- **Coherence**: Paper addresses different ideas in distinct paragraphs with meaningful transitions; within each paragraph, ideas are underscored with supporting details.
- **Style**: The writer establishes a clear, consistent and recognizable voice; prose is concise, avoiding jargon or overblown wording.
- **Syntax and Grammar**: Sentences are grammatically complete and without error. Pronouns, subjects, verbs, tenses, and singulars/plurals all agree. All words are spelled properly.

Coaches will provide comments on the paper to the student and send a summary of the comments to the instructor. Instructors may or may not take these comments about the writing process into consideration as they exercise judgment about the quality of the finished product and assign grades accordingly.

*An email will be sent to all PRL students early in the fall 2013 semester containing information about the writing coach program policies, ground rules and sign-up process.*

Grading
At NYU Stern, we strive to create courses that challenge students intellectually and that meet the Stern standards of academic excellence. To ensure fairness and clarity of grading, the Stern faculty have adopted a grading guideline for core courses with enrollments of more than 25 students in which approximately 35% of students will receive an “A” or “A-” grade. In core classes of less than 25 students, the instructor is at liberty to give whatever grades she thinks the students deserve, while maintaining rigorous academic standards.

**Grade Breakdown**
- Class Discussion 40%
- Written Assignments 60%
NYU Stern Policies

Academic Integrity
Integrity is critical to the learning process and to all that we do here at NYU Stern. All students are expected to abide by the NYU Stern Student Code of Conduct. A student’s responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- A duty to acknowledge the work and efforts of others when submitting work as one’s own. Ideas, data, direct quotations, paraphrasing, creative expression, or any other incorporation of the work of others must be clearly referenced.
- A duty to exercise the utmost integrity when preparing for and completing examinations, including an obligation to report any observed violations.

Please see [www.stern.nyu.edu/uc/codeofconduct](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/uc/codeofconduct) for more information.

Students with Disabilities
Students whose class performance may be affected due to a disability should notify the professor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made, in consultation with the Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, to accommodate their needs.

Please see [www.nyu.edu/csdc](http://www.nyu.edu/csdc) for more information.

NYU Stern Course Policies

- Laptops, cell phones, smartphones, recorders, & other electronic devices may not be used in class unless advance permission is given by the instructor.
- Attendance is required. Absences will be excused only in the case of documented serious illness, family emergency, religious observance, or civic obligation. If you will miss class for religious observance or civic obligation, you must inform your instructor no later than the first week of class. Recruiting activities are not acceptable reasons for absence from class.
- Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay to the end of the class period. Students may enter class late or leave class early only if given permission by the instructor and if it can be done without disrupting the class. (Note that instructors are not obliged to admit late students or readmit students who leave class or may choose to admit them only at specific times.)
- Late assignments will either not be accepted or will incur a grade penalty unless due to documented serious illness or family emergency. Instructors will make exceptions to this policy for reasons of religious observance or civic obligation only when the assignment cannot reasonably be completed prior to the due date and the student makes arrangements for late submission with the instructor in advance.