Syllabus
Course description
This course asks the student to consider: 1. the role of business in society, on a local, national, and global basis, 2. economic and ethical aspects of acting as a business professional and the responsibilities that these imply, 3. several models or themes of "leadership" and their application to business. Moreover, this course asks the student to see the relationships among these three topics, and between them and a meaningful human life. This is a course in making connections.

Course materials will be drawn simultaneously from two sources: Each week students will analyze current cases from business practice, and points or issues in current law, many of which will be short readings provided by the instructor in class on the class day. These readings will form the "texts" of the course. Each week students will also read all or part of a classic work (usually from outside business) that explores the same theme from the standpoint of philosophy, psychology, religion, law, or the arts. These readings will form the "subtexts" of the course. (Students are encouraged to utilize their own subtexts - in addition to what is officially assigned.)

Students will be asked to opine on the ethical issues implicit in the "textual" readings. It is not sufficient to provide an opinion without some basis. The basis may be logical or - perhaps for our immediate purposes - based on a subtext that provides a basis for taking a certain position. In discussions and analyses, students and the professor will synthesize the subtexts with the texts to arrive at an integrative and analytic point of view.

This is an interdisciplinary capstone course, building on all the student's prior core coursework, both at the Stern School and in the other colleges. Its goal is to help the student develop a personal sense of what a business professional or leader really is and what it means to be one. Consequently, we shall be concerned with how such a person conducts him- or her-self in ambiguous, uncertain situations, and balances self-interests and those of the firm within the larger context of society, ethics, and law.

Class sessions will include discussion, in-class analyses, role-playing, and a guest speaker or two.

Participation
You will be assessed on participation, which shall largely be determined by what goes on in the classroom. Therefore, questions and comments are encouraged. Students should not fear articulating their ideas or opinions; assessments will be made based on the cogency of your arguments. Do not fear that you may be in disagreement with your classmates or with the professor. Additional attention for contributing texts outside the syllabus and for discussion board entries will also be considered for participation.

Some of you may feel that you do not "get the opportunity to get a word in edgewise" during the class sessions. Others may feel that they did not complete their point in class or that the point may need to be amplified or clarified. Your chance to do this is on the "Discussion Board." Quality entries will be recognized grades-wise. All students are strongly urged to participate in the D-Board and to respond to their classmates' comments. If you wish your D-Board participation to be awarded, you should attach any entries about which you are "proud" to the backs of your journal portfolios. Remember that quality - not quantity - counts.

Submissions and grading
Each student will keep a journal containing analyses and commentaries. After each session, the student should complete his/her journal for that morning. The journal should not be a summary of the morning's discussion. Instead, it should reflect the student's own ideas about any one or two key items discussed that morning and show that s/he has given it substantial thought. You may choose any item or items to discuss - just show that you have thought about it a great deal - and in some
depth. Do not wait until near the submission deadline to write the journal entries. Again, the entries should be written-up as soon after the session as possible, i.e., when the class discussions are still fresh in one’s mind. (The journal "portfolios" will be collected at the end of each of the first two modules - or in about six weeks. The professor will make announce the submission deadline near that time.)

Students are also encouraged to utilize any subtexts, which are not included in the syllabus in order to create their journals and in-class comments. These may include cultural subtexts, such as from the Koran or Gita, etc. There are no rules here, except for cogency and relevance. If you do choose to utilize a source outside any which are assigned in the course, please provide the appropriate reference.

The journals should be succinct and well-written. Journals must be typed and double-spaced. Each daily entry may not exceed two pages; start new entries on a fresh page. To quote Shakespeare: “Brevity is the soul of wit.” Your writing should be lucid, succinct, complete, and organized.

There are two modules for the "Professional Responsibility" portion of the course and a third, brief module for "Leadership." There will be a journal "portfolio" collected for both modules one and two, one each after the completion of the relevant module. For clarity sake, the professor will announce the due dates in class. Thus, each portfolio will be a collection of journal entries from each session. Each submission will constitute two grades, one for the written journal (20%) and one for classroom - and D-Board - participation (20%) for that module. Thus there will be four grades pertinent to the modules, each worth 20%, for a total of 80% of the course grade.

Students are requested to bring to class either a name tag or name tent, with both first and last names clearly marked on it. If I do not recognize your name, which may be attached to a face that positively contributed to the class, it may be your loss!

There will also be a "final" examination. Instructions regarding the nature of this exam will be provided at a later date.

**Time and Place**
Session Days: Mondays
Hours: 11AM - 12:15PM
Room: KMEC 3-130

**A note regarding the syllabus**

It is important that you read and understand the information to be found below, if for no other better reason than the fact that your grade will be affected by your being able to follow the instructions contained therein. Should you have any personal questions, please e-mail Dr. Bigel. Please post any questions, which you would like to share with your classmates, in the course “Discussion Board.” Such questions (and responses) may also be counted toward "participation" credit and may positively affect your grade. (In this connection, it is quality that counts - not quantity.)

It is assumed that the student is fully conversant with "Blackboard." Should one need further information, please consult [www.stern.nyu.edu/deans/edtech](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/deans/edtech).

As the semester progresses, the professor may choose to make changes in the assignments, and, possibly, some of the course requirements, depending on how things are going during the term. The students will be provided with ample notice in order to make any necessary adjustments.

**Attendance Policies**

Attendance is mandatory. An "Attendance Sheet" will be circulated at each session. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that s/he signs it. Excessive absences may result in a penalty to one’s final grade.
Office Hours

Office Hours: Mondays from 10-11AM

Room: KMEC 10-179

Professor's E-mail: kbigel@stern.nyu.edu