Stern School of Business

Professional Responsibility (B02.3101.23)
Markets, Ethics & Law

SYLLABUS

Term: Spring 2009 (1st Half)  Professor: Roy C. Smith
Time: T/TR 1:30-2:50 pm  Office: KMEC 9-93  Phone: 8-0719

About This Course:

There are several of us who teach in the Professional Responsibility program because we think it is an important course for students. However, the last many years of surveys and student ratings indicate that students in general do not agree – they usually give the course low marks no matter who is teaching it.

So, I have adjusted the course content from time to time to try to capture whatever it is that students are looking for, though they are not all looking for the same things. Last spring, I asked a student to assemble a panel of colleagues to see what advice the group would have for me on the content of the PR course, and I received a lot of good suggestions.

This course will incorporate several of those suggestions – mainly to make the course more inclusive of current thinking in sociology and psychology about ethical conduct and to try to relate this to the kind of business situations that students can relate to personally. As we are neither sociologists nor psychologists we will be exploring the subject matter together entirely as laymen. The main learning in the course will be to understand better what others think about ethically tight spots to see how your own judgment holds up in comparison. Thinking about ethical conduct is a big improvement over just reacting to it viscerally.

So, here’s this year’s offering. You can always take the course taught by someone else. You might prefer that and I encourage you to shop around a little, though I do hope someone will show up to take the course I am teaching.
SYLLABUS

PART I  ABOUT OURSELVES

1 Jan 27, 2009  Course Introduction and Orientation

Discuss: What do we mean by “ethics” and why is it important (or not?)

2 Jan 29   Lying

Read: Albert Carr, “Is Business Bluffing Ethical?”

Peter Elkind, “You Have the Only Hard Copy.”

Arthur Levitt, “The Numbers Game”

3 Feb 3   Cheating

Read: David Callaghan, “The Cheating Culture”

Tara Parker-Pope “Love, Sex and the Changing Landscape of Infidelity”

Philip Delves Broughton “MBA Students Swap Integrity for Plagiarism.”

4 Feb 5   Stealing (Misappropriation)

Read: Mark Gimein, “You Bought, They Sold”

Bruce Buchanan, “Stockbroker’s Story”

William M. Carley “Fare Game.”

5. Feb 10   Personal Ethics and Morality

Read: Ann Tenbrunsel, et al, “Why We Aren’t as Ethical as We Think We Are:”

Max Bazerman and M. Banaji “How (un)Ethical Are You?”

Bruce Buchanan, “Buynow Stores”

PART II   BUSINESS AND LAW

6. Feb 12   Fiduciary Duty

Read: Roy C Smith “The Role and Duties of Corporate Directors.”
7. Feb 17  Law and Enforcement

   Roy C Smith, “Martha Stewart”

8. Feb 19  Corporate Management of Ethical Conduct

   Read: Roy C. Smith, “Citicorp 2005”
   Ingo Walter, “Marsh McClennan”

9. Feb 24  Ethics and Business

   Read: Milton Friedman, “The Social Responsibility of Business ins to
   Increase Profits.”
   Jeffrey Seglin, “The Right Thing: When Good Ethics Aren’t Good
   Business”

PART III  BUSINESS ETHICS AND OURSELVES

10. Feb 26  Whistleblowing

   Read: Charles Haddad, “A whistle-Blower Rocks an Industry”
   Priscilla Buderiri, “The Return of Qui Tam”

11. March 3  Sales and Marketing Ethics

   Read: Ingo Walter, “West Virginia Consolidated Investment Fund”

12. March 5  Discrimination

   Read: Thomas Dunfee and Diana Robertson, “Foreign Assignment”
   Roy C. Smith, “Penelope Flynne”

13. March 10  Final Exam