

BAM 311 Business Ethics
WINTER 2010
Siena Heights University
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The Mission of Siena Heights, A Catholic University
founded and sponsored by the Adrian Dominican Sisters,
is to assist people to become more competent, purposeful, and ethical
through a teaching and learning environment which respects the dignity of all.

- 1. Course Name and Number:** Business Ethics, BAM 311
- 2. Course Times, Dates, Rooms:** Tuesdays. 3/2 --- 4/20
- 3. Faculty Phone and E-Mail:** (269) 372-6469; bbadra1579@aol.com
- 4. Course Description:** This course will describe the moral and religious influences that helped to shape the rise of modern American industry and will explore ethical frameworks for setting corporate social policy, and the setting of objectives for a meaningful social response from the private sector. Students will be helped to become aware of ethical categories for decision making, and to develop critical thinking skills appropriate to making moral judgments in areas of business management.
- 5. Course Outcomes:** (1) By the conclusion of this course students will be able to give a reflective response to the question: What are the values of business life and how do these values fit into the rest of life and society? (2) By the conclusion of this course, students will have given some careful and far-reaching reflection about a certain way of life in which money and profits play a prominent but by no means exclusive part. (3) By the conclusion of this course, students will see more clearly the interconnections between business activities and the rest of life, between business and society, between “free enterprise” and the values that such an enterprise presupposes.
- 6. Program Outcomes:** This course will add both knowledge and nourishment for students in the overall program by leading them to consider: (1) The nature and values of American business life; (2) Positive goals such as justice and social responsibility rather than crises and failures; (3) The history of business from the time when business was seen as Babylon (Rev. 18:11-17) on the fringes of society, to the present time when the values of the business world have come to determine the ethos of our entire society. Having addressed these three considerations, students in this course will contribute to the overall program by reflecting on several connected tissues of that ethos. Among the possibilities: money and the meaning of life, the business of banking, the business of medicine, the business of education, the business of religion, the business of insurance, the business of sport, the business of transportation, the business of accounting, the business of the food industry, the business of journalism, the role of luck, etc.
- 7. General Education Outcomes:** A well-rounded education is vital to success in business. The ability to relate to people, the ability to articulate business goals without sacrificing the human dimension with its social and spiritual

- responsibilities, to see and value the larger picture---these are outcomes that can only contribute to making a life, not just making a living.
- 8. Learning Strategies:** We will use lectures and discussions to help us reach our goals. **Required Text:** *Above the Bottom Line, 3rd Edition* by Robert C. Solomon.
 - 9. Assessment Strategies:** Students are expected to (1) Read the text at their own pace and reflectively. (2) Contribute to class discussion when it is relevant to do so. (3) Submit a significant paper with sources mentioned. *Do your homework!* A paper is significant when it is reflective, demonstrates what you have learned, and reflects your sources, your experiences, your lessons from the text and the class sessions. I will weigh your paper in terms of intellectual and affective lessons learned and **the university level quality of your work!** Use APA style. Use your copy of **A Writer's Resource: A Handbook for Writing and Research** by Maimon, Peritz and Yancey.
 - 9. Grading and Attendance Policies:** Your paper is worth 100 points. Attendance is worth 100 points. Listen to your sources, respect your subject matter, articulate well, respect the language, celebrate what you have learned. Your grade will follow! Superior work=A, Above average work=B, Average work=C, Below average work=D.
 - 10. Academic Dishonesty Policy:** Refer to page 166 in the SHU catalog. Academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, will not be tolerated. The greatest harm, even if your plagiarism is not detected, would be an insult to your own intelligence that you will have to live with for the rest of your life. Be proud enough to demonstrate what you are learning, not what someone else has learned. Give your sources full credit.
 - 11. Disability Statement:** Refer to page 181 in the SHU catalog. I consider each of my students to be academically able. Believe in yourself, trust your mind and heart, and you will succeed. By the way, this advice applies to every student in my class!
 - 12. Course Schedule:** We will begin by considering the history of business ethics, then reflect upon several specific themes.
 - 13. Assignment List:** Read the text reflectively at your own pace.
 - 14. Pre-assignment:** No pre-assignment.

Starting Point: "Once again, modern business is paying the price for conceiving itself as representing an abstract species of 'economic man,' rather than as men and women engaged in a fully human activity. It is this self-delusion that has helped so significantly to create the divorce between the business communities and academic-intellectual communities---a divorce that leaves the business community so defenseless when ideas (about morality or anything else) are used unscrupulously as weapons against it."

Irving Kristol, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 20, 1979

Some Topics: Papers in Business Ethics

About the papers: Do your homework. Choose your topic early. If it is not on this list, that's fine. Suggestion: write about the "business" you have experiences or hope to experience, asking such questions as---Does this business have a code of ethics? What does that code say? Is that code followed? Where are its strengths? Where are its weaknesses? What would you do to improve the practice of sound ethical conduct in that business? How do we know what sound ethical conduct is? Are there too many rules? Do rules made to check abuses actually work? Or do they lead to a certain "craziness"? What rules would you change? Why? Can you identify the human element in the "business" of ethics? Could this lead to ethics, genuine ethics, in business? How do we lose trust? How do we restore trust? Reflect upon such questions and a 10 to 20 page paper will flow smoothly from your hearts and minds. And write well!

Some Topics

The Litigation Business

School Business

Wall Street

The Business of Medicine

The Business of Sports

The Automotive Business

Show Business

The Business of Travel

The Business of Journalism

The Business of Religion

If You Want To Get Specific: Wal-Mart, Mary Kay, Enron, Etc.

Restaurant Business

Real-estate Business

The Cell Phone Business

The Insurance Business