

**GBDA 306: COMPARATIVE ETHICS in a GLOBALIZED WORLD**  
**University of Waterloo – Stratford Campus**  
**Global Business and Digital Arts (GBDA)**  
**Winter Term 2015**

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**Office Hours: By Appointment**

**Description:**

This is an introductory course to a variety of contemporary ethical systems including those associated with major religious traditions, philosophical systems, political ideologies, and economic beliefs. Students will also examine several contemporary efforts to arrive at common ethical frames of reference. This course will primarily focus on current ethical issues associated with global development and business.

**Course Aims/Objectives**

In this course we will examine ethical problems and challenges faced by individuals and organization. The principal objectives of this course are to:

1. Consider a number of ethical issues that individuals must face in the course of doing business;
2. Provide a greater understanding of the strategic impact of the social/ethical context for business;
3. Clarify personal values and attitudes associated with the social/ethical context for business;
4. Become better informed about current debates related to the social/ethical context for business;
5. Analyze frameworks available for responding to the changing social/ethical context for business. Approaches to be covered include, issue management, stakeholder models and social/ethical/environmental leadership;
6. Develop an understanding of what ethical issues are, as distinct from practical, legal, religious or moral issues.

Students will develop a systematic way of expressing ethical opinions, and enhance their ability to make ethical decisions and articulate their justifications for their position. The course is not about teaching right and wrong, nor do we necessarily aim to take positions on what the “right answers” might be in morally ambiguous situations. Instead students will become competent in dealing with ethical dilemmas by interacting with and understanding the viewpoints of others, through discussions, arguing for, and defending their own views, by expanding their perspectives and learning to think about ethical dilemmas in principled and logical ways.

### Evaluation:

Requirement	Nature of Work	Percent of Final Grade
Class Participation	Individual	25
Midterm Exam (In Class)	Individual	30
Team Paper	Team	30
Paper Presentation	Team	15
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

### Method of Instruction, materials etc.:

It is expected that all students will actively participate in classroom discussions. In addition, students are expected to have prepared the text and other readings, and have read/analyzed the case, if assigned for that class. The class session will be interactive, driven by student discussion, debate, critique and exchange of ideas. Each class will be partly devoted to the theoretical/conceptual readings assigned for that day, and partly to a discussion of the cases in the applicable chapter, in addition to the major case that is assigned in several of the sessions. Students should be prepared to state their reasoned opinions about the cases and to debate differences of opinion with their colleagues.

### Deliverables:

#### **1. Class Participation**

Each student is expected to prepare before class any assigned course material and come to class ready to contribute to weekly topics. Regular attendance in class is required, as is participation in class discussions. Marks will be based on overall day-to-day preparedness in class discussions. Consistent, meaningful, insightful class contributions are required to achieve a top grade. Contributions generally fall into three broad categories: marginal/clarification, analysis/conclusions, or integration/synthesis.

You will keep track of your daily class contribution using an assessment form that is provided. Assess your participation using the scale shown on the class contribution sheets. The instructor has the discretion for determining whether your assessment is accurate. You can also help the instructor do this by displaying your name in every class.

#### **2. Midterm Exam**

The mid term exam is designed to demonstrate student's learning and understanding of concepts and tools covered during the term. It will be a closed book test, using short answer questions and delivered during class time. No extra time will be allocated for international students. **All students must complete the mid term exam to receive a final grade.**

An exemption to take the scheduled mid term exam is only allowed if it is supported by a doctor's note. Students who miss the scheduled mid term exam will need a doctor's note to write a make up test. Students can contact their instructor to schedule a time. In the event that a student is sick on the makeup test date, a subsequent make up test date can be scheduled only if the student has a valid doctors note for the mid term exam date and the missed make up scheduled day.

### 3. Team/Group Paper

In Class #2, self-select teams/groups of 4-6. All teams will prepare a major paper that analyzes and comments on a current or recent ethical issue faced by a firm, organization, government or industry. Examples recently in the news might be; privacy concerns on the internet, government or regulatory officials that may be in ethically ambiguous situations (too many example to list), advertising etc. Teams should write a brief (half page maximum) proposal and bring it to the instructor, for approval, before the start of Class #3. Proposals should include the course code, all team members names/student ID, group number from LEARN and the topic title. Topics will be approved on a first come first served basis and cannot be duplicated with other groups.

The paper should present an even-handed analysis of the situation you have chosen, based on ethical frameworks and models discussed in the course. "Even-handed" does not mean that you should avoid expressing an opinion. On the contrary the paper will probably be much strengthened if you have a point to make. However, the point, or opinion, needs to be expressed in the context of an intellectually honest consideration of all sides of the question, in a way that acknowledges competing viewpoints even though you may disagree with them. Any sources or ideas employed which are not your own must be adequately referenced. All the papers are due by Class #9, regardless of your teams scheduled presentation date.

In Class #5 topics will be finalized for the team assignment. The report will be a maximum of 8 pages (excluding Cover Page, Executive Summary, Table of Contents and Bibliography) plus a maximum of 4 pages of exhibits. Teams are expected to research the assigned topic and a minimum of ten sources are to be cited (excluding the textbook). The report is due at the beginning of Class #9 and must be submitted both electronically and in hard copy. In addition self and peer evaluations can be submitted in hard copy with the report.

### Peer Evaluations

Teams are expected to manage all of its organizational and work assignment tasks with fairness and respect. Peer evaluation forms are optional, however in some cases a peer evaluation form may be preferred. The template form for Peer Evaluations will be provided on LEARN. If a team chooses to submit a peer evaluation form, then one sheet from every member is required with a brief explanation of any discrepancies. At the discretion of the instructor, a group meeting may be required with all group members to resolve any issues. **Please note that an individual's mark for the Group Assignment, and/or Team Presentation may be adjusted below the team mark based on the peer evaluations and is at the discretion of the instructor.**

### 4. Team Paper Presentation

Using the paper as a point of departure, teams are expected to lead a discussion about the ethical dimensions of the topic they have chosen. Each team is expected to make a maximum 20 minute presentation (plus 10 minutes for questions from the class) on the subject/ethical dimensions they have chosen. The presentations will be delivered in Classes #11 and #12. Depending on the number of groups in the class, the presentations should have the following timed components:

- 1) A 20 minute formal summary of the facts, issues and the group's analysis to provide others with the information needed for a discussion
- 2) A 10 minute Q&A allocated to questions by the class and answers by the group
- 3) If time permits, a 10 minute debate/discussion

The professor will evaluate each presentation on the basis of clarity, relevance and class engagement.

**Accommodations for Missed Assessments:** Students are expected to complete all assignments as regularly scheduled; however, there may be circumstances where accommodating a missed deadline/assessment is approved. Accommodation is not automatic upon the presentation of documentation. Instructors will use the documentation along with all information available to them, when determining whether accommodation is warranted.

Based on an approved absence, the weighting of the course requirements may be adjusted to make up for an excused absence from an assignment or any other component of the course.

### **Required Material and Text:**

- Boatright, John R., *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*; Seventh Edition, Pearson Education Inc. 2012
- Additional cases, articles, documents & information will be required throughout the term and where possible will be posted on LEARN. Students are responsible for registering and purchasing cases online (individually) where case codes are indicated on the schedule. Cases can be purchased through the Ivey website.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES:**

#### **Academic Integrity**

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Refer to the following for information:

Academic Integrity Office (UW): [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)

Academic Integrity (Arts): <https://uwaterloo.ca/arts/current-undergraduates/student-support/ethical-behavior>

#### **Grievance**

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

#### **Discipline**

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

## **Appeals**

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline, may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

## **Avoiding Academic Offences**

The Faculty of Arts has prepared a website dealing with ways to avoid academic offences. [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

## **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

*Note for students with disabilities:* The AccessAbility Services office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

## NOTE ON AVOIDANCE OF ACADEMIC OFFENSES

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**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/)] to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals) [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

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