

Master Syllabus
College of Business & Economics, University of Hawaii at Hilo
(Revised February 3, 2012)

MGT 423
Business & Society

I. Catalog Description:

1. Impact of business upon society and the impact of the societal environment on business operations and decision making.

2. **Prerequisites:**

Admission to Professional Business program, BUS 240 and MGT 300 or consent of instructor. (PHIL 323 may be substituted for this course in the professional core.)

II. Course Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Comprehend management concepts that underlie the theory and practice of corporate social responsibility, principal/agency and stakeholder approaches to corporate governance, legal and regulatory controls, business ethics, and sustainable management methods, including triple bottom line accountability and social auditing.
2. Develop critical thinking skills by evaluating and analyzing case-based or contemporary problem situations where business operations or decisions raise societal or environmental concerns. By bringing critical thinking skills to the application of relevant management concepts to problematic business & society contexts, business students will learn how to make more socially responsible, ethical, or sustainable decisions that can build their firm's reputation/brand image, improve relationships with stakeholders, and enhance the firm's social and environmental, as well as financial performance.
3. Communicate their analysis and recommendations on how to address controversial, problematic business contexts clearly, logically and persuasively.

III. Course Materials:

The current text is Thorne, Ferrell & Ferrell (2011) *Business and Society: A Strategic Approach to Social Responsibility & Ethics*, 4th edition. Southwestern/Cengage Learning.

IV. Teaching Methods:

Strong emphasis is placed on class discussion to apply concepts drawn from textbook to controversial, newsworthy issues laid out in written or video cases and role-playing exercises. Instructor distributes handout that highlights key concepts and questions to be considered, so that students can engage with issues rather than focus on note taking.

Integrative group projects, such as a debate on a controversial issue or critical evaluation of a firm's web-based social or environmental performance report promotes development of critical thinking and writing skills. Class discussions are open-ended in that they do not attempt to prescribe learning outcomes.

V. Evaluation Tools:

Several short-answer chapter quizzes are required to assure that students keep current on their reading and that they are capable of defining and applying key concepts. A take home mid-term and final essay exam require students to demonstrate critical thinking and problem-solving skills in relation to issues raised in the class (e.g., corporate corruption or malfeasance, employment discrimination, product safety and liability, environmental sustainability, public vs private perspectives on health insurance coverage, etc.). Group projects are evaluated in terms of writing, critical thinking, and oral presentation skills.

VI. Course Content:

1. Typical major course topics will include:

1. Narrow versus broad definitions of corporate social responsibility
2. Corporate governance approaches– agency theory vs stakeholder theory
3. Different philosophical approaches to ethical decision-making
4. Features of legal and ethical compliance systems and how to implement them
5. Approaches to government regulation (market failure perspective; industry-specific vs social regulation; command and control vs market process regulation)
6. Business and politics (lobbying and the “capture thesis”; campaign finance reform; public affairs and issues management, should corporate “persons enjoy full free speech rights?)
7. Addressing Social and Ethical Issues
 - a. Product liability
 - b. Discrimination and affirmative action
 - c. Stereotyping, sexual harassment, and the glass ceiling
 - d. Bribery, corruption, conflicts of interest, moral hazard, and white collar crime.
 - e. Leveraged buyouts and the “market for corporate control”
 - f. How to deal with the mortgage meltdown?
 - g. Marketing ethics
 - h. Strategic philanthropy and community relations
 - i. Environmental issues
8. Corporate citizenship and “triple bottom line” accountability to guide sustainable business practices. How to prepare and evaluate a social or sustainability audit.

Support of Program Learning Objectives

Program Learning Objective	Course Learning Objective(s) Supporting	Targeted Course Performance Level*	Possible Contributions to Program Assessment
Objective 1. Comprehend the fundamental principles of business administration	1	D	ETS score for social and ethical issues should be above national average
Objective 2A. Communicate clearly, logically, and persuasively in Writing	3	M	CLA Writing Assessment, supplemented by embedded evaluation of student writing assignment in #2, based on writing rubric.
Objective 2B. Communicate clearly, logically, and persuasively orally	3	D	CLA Writing Assessment, supplemented by embedded evaluation of student writing assignment in #2, based on writing rubric.
Objective 3. Evaluate and analyze source information, subsequently draw conclusions, and present an argument based upon that analysis			CLA Critical Thinking Assessment, possibly supplemented by an embedded evaluation of a major student written assignment, based on a critical thinking rubric
Objective 4. Identify, analyze, and decide on courses of action to resolve complex, unstructured problems, using appropriate tools and technology	2	M	Course embedded evaluation: multiple choice questions and problems; pre-post tests
* I = Introduced, D = Developed & Practiced with Feedback, M = Demonstrated at the Mastery, Blank=Not Treated in this Course			

Definitions of Student Mastery Levels set performance levels that are somewhat parallel to Bloom's Taxonomy.

I = the student can identify examples (and non-examples) of the desired outcome, name the elements involved, and answer "objective, multiple-choice, fill-in-the blank" type of test questions showing awareness. (Objective tests are not necessarily simple, but they are most likely to be used at this introductory level.)

D = the student can describe, demonstrate or construct an example of the desired outcome but with guidance about each step. In some cases, the steps to learn the outcome may be spread among more than one course or activity within a course. Also included here is evaluation of existing examples of the outcome (pro's and con's, etc.) Essay questions and short projects would be used as evidence.

M = the student can demonstrate the outcome given a problem statement and appropriate data and tools. The student would need to synthesize skills learned previously in isolation. The skill demonstration would be sufficiently rigorous that an outside stakeholder (future employer) would be satisfied with it for an entry level position after graduation. Term papers, senior projects and research papers, senior portfolios, and capstone coursework would be used as evidence.