



BUSI4601C: Business Ethics

FALL 2025

Instructor	Gloria Karina Sánchez-Cuevas, MA, MBA, Ph.D. (Candidate)
Email Address	gloriasanchez@cunet.carleton.ca
Class Times	Thursday, 8:35-11:25 AM
Modality	In-person
Office Hours	By appointment only ¹
Office Location	N/A
TA Name/Email	N/A

Pre-Requisites & Preclusions:

Prerequisites: Fourth-year standing B.Com. Note that B.Com. concentration in International Business students require BUSI 4705.

Preclusions: Precludes additional credit for BUSI 4705.

Course Description/Instructor's Statement

Carleton Calendar Description

Use of ethical reasoning to analyze business decisions. The ethical content of these decisions. The role of ethics in business situations. Practice in ethical reasoning. Major ethical systems.

Instructor's Description:

What is ethical and unethical in business? This question is relevant to everyone, as almost all of us "do business" or engage in daily market transactions. Business activities shape our world—sometimes slightly, sometimes significantly, sometimes for better, and sometimes for worse. Today's society expects businesses not only to create value through products and services but also to uphold values like sustainability, equality, and fairness. Organizations are no longer merely profit-generating systems; they are also vehicles of societal impact.

This course equips students with the tools to systematically and professionally address ethical concerns. It raises awareness of the ethical dilemmas businesses face today and encourages students to develop a structured reasoning process to navigate these challenges. Students will learn to formulate clear, precise, and constructive questions about business decisions, critically

¹ I am available to meet with you in person or online for office hours. However, I do not have a fixed schedule for these meetings. If you need to ask me anything or want to book a consultation, please send me an email. I will try to get back to you within 24-48 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends. Please be aware that I usually use Brightspace to make class announcements, so make sure that you regularly check your Carleton email or the Brightspace portal to keep up with any updates. The office hours are intended to help you understand concepts and answer any questions that cannot be answered easily by consulting the course outline or by sending an email. Please do not use your personal email and only use your Carleton email account.

analyze their implications, and independently determine ethical responses. They will recognize that ethical consequences arise from all choices—whether acknowledged or ignored—and that even the decision to overlook them is itself an ethical choice.

While primarily focused on business ethics, the course also emphasizes personal moral awareness, providing practical tools to navigate ethical dilemmas in professional roles. Students will learn to apply ethical principles to the complexities of today's business environment, making decisions that align with both their values and societal expectations.

The course consists of two parts. The first part introduces the foundations of ethical reasoning, the language of ethics, and tools for addressing ethical issues. Students will explore the distinction between ethics as a theory and ethics as a way of life, engaging critically with classical and modern ethical frameworks.

The second part examines key ethical challenges in today's business environment and strategies to address them, including environmental sustainability, technological advancements, decolonization, equity, diversity, and inclusion (DEDI), and corporate responsibility. Through analysis and discussion, students will develop actionable recommendations for ethical behaviour and decision-making.

By the end of the course, students will be able to evaluate ethical dilemmas critically, create compelling business cases for ethical actions, and balance organizational goals with societal values.

Course Learning Objectives:

1. Develop a thorough understanding of the main ethical theories and frameworks, enabling their application to complex business scenarios and professional responsibilities.
2. Identify and critically analyze common ethical dilemmas in business, particularly those related to sustainability, technological advancements, DEDI, public health, and labour.
3. Evaluate the factors influencing ethical and unethical decision-making and apply structured reasoning processes to make sound ethical choices.
4. Build clear, rational, and persuasive arguments to justify ethical decisions while balancing organizational goals with societal values.
5. Explore personal values, identify biases, and enhance self-awareness to improve ethical decision-making and foster critical and creative solutions that address social and economic tensions.
6. Create a personal code of ethics to guide professional conduct and develop strategies for promoting responsible management and ethical decision-making within organizations.

Required/Optional Materials & Prices

- Readings: All required and supplemental readings will be posted on Brightspace
 - The coursepack from Ivey Publishing includes the cases required for the course. The link to purchase the coursepack will be posted on Brightspace. You need your own coursepack material, and you cannot borrow/share access to the cases with other students. Additional case studies and other materials will be added to Brightspace.
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Grading Scheme

Contribution to Class Discussion	15
Personal Ethics Reflection	10
Test 1 (in-class): Ethics Toolkit	15
Test 2 Ethics Resolution Case (team)	15
In-Class Exercises (4)	10
Final Group Project	35
<i>Proposal 5%, Presentation 10%, Report: 20%</i>	
TOTAL	100%

Important Dates to Note

Contribution to Class Discussion	Ongoing
Personal Ethics Reflection	September 11 th
Test 1 (in-class): Ethics Toolkit	September 25 th
Test 2 Ethics Resolution Case (team)	October 2 nd October 9 th (individual reflection)
In-Class Exercises (4)	TBD
Final Group Project: Proposal	October 30 th
Final Group Project: Presentation	Nov 27 and Dec 4
Final Group Project: Report	Dec 11

University Academic Calendar: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Policies & Accommodations

<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>

<https://carleton.ca/pmc/current-students/academic-accommodations/>



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Late Assignments:

To ensure fairness for all students, penalties will be applied to late assignments without medical certificates: Failure to submit an assignment on time will result in an initial penalty of five (5) percentage points, followed by an additional (5) percentage points per day thereafter. For example, an assignment that would normally merit a grade of 20% would receive a grade of 15% if submitted after the deadline on the due date, 10% if submitted the following day, and so on.

Deferred Examinations/Assignments:

Requests for extension will be considered in cases of illness, family emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. No extensions will be granted for group assignments, as group members are expected to work together to cover for individual students unable to contribute to any team project components.

Assignment extensions or new deadlines will only be granted at my discretion and on a case-by-case basis. The only exceptions are verifiable illnesses and emergencies. These must be communicated to me directly within three (3) business days following the due date.

If your personal circumstances are negatively impacting your performance in the course, it is essential that you notify me immediately. I am here to support you in meeting the course requirements, but I can only do so effectively if you reach out sooner rather than later. Contacting me after missing multiple classes or assignments will severely limit my ability to assist you.

Deferred Midterm Date:

The ONLY date for a deferred midterm (Test 1) will be held on Monday, Sep 29th at 7:15 am in NI 4030. No other deferral options will be considered. There will be no deferrals for Test 2 Ethics Resolution Case, as this will be an in-class team activity.