



## COURSE OUTLINE

### GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY GOLD COAST CAMPUS

#### School of Marketing & Management

#### MMG7017

#### Organisational Ethics

### 1.0 Identifying Information

Subject	Management
Year of Offer:	2002
Semester of Offer:	2
Credit point value:	10.00
Program for which Course is designed:	Postgraduate

#### Enrolment Requirements:

No pre-requisites. Note that students who have successfully completed the course GSM7013: "Corporate Governance & Business Ethics" are ineligible to enrol in this course.

#### Course Convenor

Name:	Arthur Shacklock
Office:	CBED Room 1.14, Education Bldg, Gold Coast
Telephone:	07 - 5552 8718
Teaching Team:	Arthur Shacklock

#### Lecture & tutorial details

Contact hours	3.00
Grading Basis	Graded

**Status of course within program:** This is an approved elective for the Master of Human Resource Management, Master of Business Administration and Master of Business Administration International programs. It is also available to any other postgraduate coursework student as an elective, with the prior approval of their School/Faculty.



## 2.0 Brief Description

This course introduces students to the essential theories in Organisational Ethics, then takes a practical approach, by exposing them to a wide range of ethical issues in business, the public sector, professional groups and at the individual level.

## 3.0 Course Aims

This course aims to provide students with a better basis upon which to build their own repertoire of behaviours as ethical managers and leaders.

## 4.0 Objectives

The objective is to enhance students' understanding of the potential ethical issues facing modern organisations and those who work in them, the ethical dilemmas that can arise and to suggest ways in which these dilemmas might be more effectively dealt with in the practical situation. It also emphasises the key role of leaders in bringing about an ethical climate within an organisation. In so doing, the subject content will cover ethical perspectives at the individual, group or team, organisational, industry, national and international/global levels. Students will emerge with greater awareness and sensitivity towards ethical issues in their work.

## 5.0 Links With Other Courses

This is a formally approved elective for the MHRM, MBA and MBA (International). However, it has also been successfully undertaken in the past by a variety of other Masters students, for example in Education, Nursing, Information Technology and Criminology.

Organisational Ethics is relevant to any field of endeavour in which organisations, in whatever form they may take, play a part. It therefore has links with almost all other programs and courses taught at University level.

Students who have already successfully completed "Corporate Governance & Business Ethics" (GSM 7013G) cannot take this course.



## 6.0 Course Content

Almost every day, we hear or read about corporate or individual ethical violations in business, government and elsewhere. These include financial fraud, corruption, environmental damage, mistreatment of employees etc. These present complex ethical dilemmas for managers and professionals alike. In this situation, the increased activities of watchdog agencies and media exposure of these violations have become serious business. The study of Organisational Ethics is therefore increasingly important and is now integral within many leading postgraduate University programs across the globe. Indeed, globalisation itself and the need for better cross-cultural understanding is a further ethical pressure to contend with.

All of this presents new and more complex decisions for managers and leaders in business, government, the professions and of course individual employees, in trying to deal effectively with the various ethical challenges within their organisations.

The course will therefore explore the following areas:

- theories and concepts upon which Organisational Ethics, and the ethical behaviour of individuals in organisations, is based;
- types of ethical dilemmas which people (especially managers and leaders) can face in the various organisational contexts, whether private sector, public sector, or other spheres of organisational life;
- the requirements and influences of professional ethics upon these behaviours and the potential conflicts between the various ethical demands on individuals emanating from organisational, personal and professional ethical considerations;
- the issue of corporate social responsibility, what it means in the modern world and how different organisations deal with it, examining various corporate ethical violations and drawing lessons and principles from these;
- the prevalence and impacts of fraud and corruption, and in particular the strategies being used to prevent these;
- the specific challenges which confront managers and leaders in their day-to-day roles, for example in areas such as leadership, equity, human resource management, working relationships, and the ethical decision making processes which these challenges require; and
- cross-cultural and international business issues which have the potential to impose differing ethical standards and requirements on people and the potential to influence and require varied responses to similar ethical dilemmas.

In this context, the content will not simply be Ethical theory, but will emphasise practical applications and provide tools for students to take with them for use in roles as leaders and managers.



## **Weekly Topics Schedule**

The following is the likely content and sequence of seminars:

**PLEASE NOTE:** While this course has been scheduled to run on Wednesday evenings, on three occasions the class will need to be re-scheduled at another time, due to prior commitments of the lecturer. These will likely be held on Saturday mornings to ensure the availability of an acceptable room and to avoid clashes with students' other classes. This will be negotiated with the students in Seminar 1.

### **Seminar 1: Introduction to Organisational Ethics:**

An introduction to the subject matter; The meaning and focus of Organisational Ethics in respect of the organisations themselves, the individuals who work in them and the societies in which they operate.

### **Seminar 2: Foundations of Ethical Behaviour:**

Key concepts and theories relating to Organisational Ethics and the ethical behaviour of individuals in organisations. Values and moral focus, as issues in ethics.

### **Seminar 3: Corporate Social Responsibility:**

Its meaning in the contemporary world of organisations, and the moral obligations of organisations operating in a "free market". Fraud, corruption and the advent of ethical investment.

### **Seminar 4: Individuals and Ethical Dilemmas:**

Examination of various ethical dilemmas facing managers and employees as individuals in organisations and their responses to these dilemmas.

### **Seminar 5: Corporate Ethical Violations and Controversies:**

Consideration of some examples of major corporate transgressions in Organisational Ethics and the lessons learned from these.

### **Seminar 6: Public Sector Ethics:**

The Public Sector Ethics agenda, seeking to improve the ways in which public sector employees respond to ethical dilemmas. The roles of national and international PSE agencies.

### **Seminar 7: Institutionalisation of Ethics in organisations:**

The key strategies used, or possible including codes of conduct/ethics/practice, ethics advisers, ethics hotlines, ethics committees etc. Their usefulness in enhancing ethical standards.

**Seminar 8: Fraud & Corruption Prevention:** A coverage of some of the currently developing strategies to reduce ethical risk, through risk assessment and prevention measures.

### **Seminar 9: International Business & Cross Cultural Issues**



The impacts of different cross-cultural perspectives on ethical behaviours in organisations.

**Seminar 10: Professional Ethics:**

Professional values and expectations vis-à-vis those of the organisation and the individual.

**Seminar 11: Ethics Awareness Raising, Education & Training:**

The methods employed and usefulness (or otherwise) of raising awareness, educating and training people in ethical standards and expectations.

**Seminar 12: Information and Ethics:**

The major ethical issues confronting organisations and individuals emanating from advances in information technology. These include E-Commerce, protection of privacy, intellectual property, copyright etc.

**Seminar 13: Future Perspectives and review:**

The emerging imperatives and challenges for organisations and individuals.

**Seminar 14: Review:**

A review of the course content, relating this to other disciplines and subjects studied in student's core programs (eg: MBA, MHRM and other Masters and postgraduate courses)

## 7.0 Organisation and Teaching Methods

Relevant theories and concepts will be covered with illustrative examples being drawn from organisational contexts. To this end, use will be made of a lot of case material, for example corporate violations, situational ethical dilemmas and relevant contemporary issues.

Seminars will comprise short lectures, class discussion of cases / issues, student presentations, and some media (eg: videos). Students are expected to familiarise themselves throughout the course with contemporary ethical issues covered in the media, and through various academic and professional journals which cover management topics, policies and practices of relevance to the subject content. One or two guest lecturers may be invited from the professions, business or public sector, where this would enhance the depth of understanding of a topic and/or assist in linking theory with practice.

The teaching method will be interactive. Active participation in seminars and during group work is essential to effective learning in this course and so adequate preparation is essential for effective student performance in class and to ensure that learning takes place. This preparation should involve:

- carrying out pre-reading around the topic area; (as prescribed each week)
- going beyond this minimal reading to other sources, including the general media, to maintain awareness of topical issues for debate in class;
- giving prior thought and consideration to the topic to be covered and forming personal views, ideas and questions to be raised at the seminars; and



- where possible, considering and raising issues directly pertinent to them as individuals working in organisations, professions etc. In the case of full-time students, who may therefore have no current frame of reference and/or those who are without major organisational work experience, issues related to academic life or personal experiences are also useful here.

Students should read, listen to and watch the news media to gain insights into current topical events, which raise ethical issues or dilemmas of relevance to the course. The first 10 to 15 minutes of each seminar will be devoted to free discussion of current issues, and students should come prepared to raise these issues and to respond to discussions on them during the seminars. Bring along any newspaper or other media cuttings that may be of interest to pass around. Students are always encouraged to share their own ethical dilemmas if they wish to do so.

Students will also find useful and more current and specific information in the various quality management journals, especially the Journal of Business Ethics, Business Ethics Quarterly, Business & Society etc.. Some journals are now available as full text, through the various on-line data bases to which Griffith has subscriptions, via the Internet. Note that a student must be accessing the Internet via a Griffith University login, to gain access to these subscriptions.

In view of the large amount of useful information on the Internet, this source will be utilised extensively in this subject. A list of generally useful Web sites will be provided and more topic specific sites will be used, and provided for students, at each seminar. This is a good source of additional information to expand your knowledge, through interest groups, articles etc. However, it is important to learn to differentiate between legitimate and reliable Internet sources and those that are not, and to properly acknowledge these sources of information, if used in your assignments. These issues will be discussed in Seminar 1.

## 8.0 Assessment

There is no examination in this course. Assessment is based upon students doing a balanced amount of work, of the required standard, throughout the semester. Grades will be determined based upon the following four assessment items. Percentage of the total marks are shown, as are submission deadlines. A more complete explanation then follows.

No	Type of Assessment Item	Percentage	Group / Individual	Due
1	Individual Case Study: (1500 words) to be distributed in Seminar 3	20% of total	Individual	End of Week 6
2	Minor Individual Assignment (1500 words). Topic(s) to be provided in Seminar 6	20% of total	Individual	End of Week 10
3	Major Individual Project (Max 3500 words). Topics to be approved by Seminar 5	50% of total	Individual	End of Week 13
4	Student contribution in Seminars	10% of total	Individual	Ongoing throughout Semester



All assignments must be submitted by placement in the assignment boxes located in the Level 2 foyer of the Business 1 Building, outside the School of Marketing & Management offices.

Detailed written guidelines will be provided with each item, outlining in detail the specific assessment criteria for each piece of assessable work. These guidelines will also be placed on the course web page. The following provides some limited guidance at this stage:

**Individual Case Study (20% of total marks)**

As their first piece of assessment, students will be required to address a set case in Organisational Ethics, to which they will be expected to respond within three weeks of its distribution. The paper should be approximately 1500 words in length. The precise requirements will be discussed during Seminar 1.

**Minor Individual Assignment (20% of total marks)**

Students will be required to research and write a paper, of approximately 1500 words, on a specified topic (or choice of topics). The topic(s) chosen will usually be those which are given only limited coverage in the seminar program content. The precise requirements will be issued at the time, but this will follow the customary requirements for an academic paper. Referencing guidelines and other expectations will be specified at that time.

**Major Individual Project (50% of total marks)**

Each student is required to submit a major individual written project of approximately 3,500 words, chosen either from a list of topics provided or another topic of similar scope and challenge as negotiated with and pre-agreed to by the lecturer.

In view of the range of potential issues in this course, there will be some flexibility in the nature and treatment of topics. However, one definite stipulation is that students cannot submit an individual major project which is in the same topic area as either their Case Study or Minor Individual Assignment.

In addition, if a student wishes to submit for approval a topic which is very closely related to their current or past employment, they will need to ensure that the major emphasis is on Organisational Ethics and does not rely on excessive amounts of pre-written internal material from their organisation. To ensure that there are no surprises, all major individual projects will need to be previously approved by the lecturer. This will be done by students submitting to the lecturer, by no later than Seminar 5, a brief summary of their chosen or proposed topic (just a paragraph or two), together with the approach they plan to take. A separate paper will be distributed indicating exactly by what criteria this project will be assessed. Students should study this very carefully before commencing their work on their project and revisit it before they submit it, to ensure that they have complied with the assessment guidelines.



### **Marking Guidelines**

For written projects and assignments, students will be given a detailed paper showing precisely how these are marked. Essentially this indicates that marks will be allocated according to the following guidelines, each of which is covered in detail in the paper provided:

Presentation and structure	10
Scope and coverage of topic	10
Research and use of literature	30
Treatment of issues & argument	30
Conclusions and recommendations:	20
<b>Possible marks:</b>	<b><u>100</u></b>

Case study requirements may differ, but case work will always be prefaced by a clear and explicit written statement of requirements and how marks will be allocated.

### **Student Seminar Contribution Assessment (10% of total marks).**

As indicated earlier, the teaching method will be interactive. Active participation in seminars and during group work is essential to effective learning in this course. There should always be some reward for high levels of quality contribution and the criteria for a higher mark here will relate to the degree to which individual students:

- display subject knowledge and evidence of preparation;
- make useful comments which are relevant to the subject under discussion;
- generate ideas which stimulate useful discussion and responses from others;
- show leadership in generating and managing group discussions; and/or
- display insights and judgement relevant to the subject under discussion.

This is not simply a mark for “attendance”, but since there is no examination in this unit, a record of attendance will be kept, and clearly if a student is not present regularly, he/she cannot be regarded as having contributed adequately. So marks will certainly be deducted for unreasonable absences. Where a student knows in advance that they are likely to be unable to attend a particular seminar, they are advised to notify the lecturer beforehand, if at all possible. It should be noted too that these contribution marks are not simply for frequency of talking or loudness, but for quality contribution, as indicated above.

## **9.0 Texts and Supporting Materials**

This course is not taught such that it follows closely a specific text. Instead seminars are designed to supplement and give different perspectives on topics from the ways in which they are dealt with in texts and other reading sources. Therefore there is no one prescribed text for this course. Instead the following texts (in alphabetical order of first author) are suggested as good alternatives, one of which should be purchased by students. Each one is different in its manner of coverage, but all present an excellent overview of the subject of Organisational Ethics. It is suggested that students review them on-line at the publishers' websites before purchasing.



Beauchamp, Tom L. & Bowie, Norman E., **Ethical Theory and Business**, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall, Elmer Minn, 2001.

Bowie, Norman E. (Ed.), **Business Ethics**, Blackwell, Malden Mass., 2002.

De George Richard T., **Business Ethics**, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1999.

Ferrell, O.C. & Fraedrich, John, **Business Ethics : Ethical Decision Making and Cases**, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 2002.

Shaw, William H., **Business Ethics**, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Wadsworth Publishing, Belmont, CA, 2002.

Velasquez, Manuel G., **Business Ethics : Concepts and Cases**, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Prentice Hall International, New Jersey, 2002.

Weiss, Joseph W., **Business Ethics: A Stakeholder and Issues Management Approach**, Harcourt Brace, Fort Worth, 2002.

All of the above texts are available in the Griffith University library, or at least a very recent version, but usually only as single copies. Most of those listed should be able to be purchased from bookshops, although some may need to be individually ordered. If a student has difficulty with their choice they should contact the convenor for advice.

A more complete list of other useful books, journals and other reference materials will be provided during Seminar 1 and on the course website. In addition students will be referred to numerous websites dealing with Organisational Ethics issues, which will contain useful information on the various topics as they are covered.

## 10.0 Administration

1. To be eligible to pass this course, students are required to complete all forms of assessment and must demonstrate competence in the required course objectives as examined in each form of assessment.
2. All examination papers that are failed, and will result in a fail for the course, will be cross-marked.
3. Students may work together in researching their assignments but final submissions must reflect the work and original contribution of each individual student.
4. Full and detailed acknowledgement (eg notation, and/or bibliography) must be provided if contributions are drawn from literature in preparation of reports and assignments. Your written work **must** properly cite/ reference original work, author(s), etc. Citation and referencing must conform to APA (*American Psychological Association*) format both in the body of your paper and its attached reference section.

**EXCERPT FROM GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Full details: [http://www.gu.edu.au/ua/aa/ppm/tal/content/Ac\\_misc.html](http://www.gu.edu.au/ua/aa/ppm/tal/content/Ac_misc.html)

Students must conduct their studies at the University honestly, ethically and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Any form of academic conduct which is contrary to these standards is academic misconduct, for which the University may penalise a student. Specifically it is academic misconduct for a student to:

- present copied, falsified or improperly obtained data as if it were the result of laboratory work, field trips or other investigatory work;
- include in the student's individual work material which is the result of significant assistance from another person if that assistance was unacceptable according to the instructions or guidelines for that work;
- assist another student in the presentation of that student's individual work in a way that is unacceptable according to the instructions or guidelines for that work;
- cheat; (Cheating is dishonest conduct in assessment);
- plagiarise; (Plagiarism is knowingly presenting the work or property of another person as if it were one's own.)

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**Examples of plagiarism include:**

- a. word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources which are the work or data of other persons (including books, articles, thesis, unpublished works, working papers, seminar and conference papers, internal reports, lecture notes or tapes) without clearly identifying their origin by appropriate referencing; [any word for word copying must be shown as a direct quotation within quotation marks followed by appropriate referencing.]
- b. closely para-phrasing sentences or paragraphs from one or more sources without appropriate acknowledgment in the form of a reference to the original work or works;
- c. using another person's ideas, work or research data without appropriate acknowledgment;
- d. submitting work which has been produced by someone else on the student's behalf as if it were the work of the student;
- e. copying computer files in whole or in part without indicating their origin;



- f. submitting work which has been wholly or partially derived from another student's work by a process of mechanical transformation. For example, changing variable names in computer programs.
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### Penalties

On determination that academic misconduct has taken place, the penalty which may be imposed on the student is one or more of the following:

- a. a reduced or nil result for the assessment item affected by the academic misconduct;
- b. a fail grade for the course in which academic misconduct occurred;
- c. exclusion from enrolment in the program for a specified period;
- d. exclusion from the program; readmission to the program is at the discretion of the Dean based on consideration of the student's case for readmission.

Where a student has been found guilty of academic misconduct on more than one occasion and has previously been penalised as set out in above a. - c., the penalty shall normally be exclusion from the program

5. All assignments submitted for marking must be word processed or typed.
6. Students must be able to produce a copy of all work submitted if so requested.

### 7. Submission Deadlines and Extensions

**Submission deadlines will be strictly enforced.** Assessment items must be received by the Convenor (or submitted in the appropriate assignment box) by the due date and time. Extensions will only be granted on medical or compassionate grounds and will not be granted because of work or other commitments.

A request for extension must be made in writing to the unit coordinator **and must be approved** by the coordinator **prior to the submission deadline / due date and time** of the assessment item. Requests outside the above guidelines will not be granted. Extensions may only be granted for periods of five (5) days at a time. Any request for additional time will require another written request and approval for an extension. This policy has been established to ensure fairness to those who complete their work on time, yet accommodate the rare occasion when an extension of time may be appropriate.

An assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised. The penalty is the reduction of the mark allocated to the assessment item by 20% of the maximum mark applicable for the assessment item, for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than five days after the due date are awarded zero marks.



Assignment submission outside advertised date/time must be submitted to the LATE ASSIGNMENT box located adjacent to the School of Marketing and Management reception in the Business 1 Building (GO1), level 2 foyer.

Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** should assignments be placed under doors or in mailboxes unless prior arrangements have been made with your course convenor.

8. Assignments must be submitted with the following information clearly displayed on the cover:
  - Student name
  - Student number
  - Course code and course name
  - Course Convenor's name
  - Assignment due date and time
  - Tutor's name
  - Tutorial day and timeAssignments submitted without this information may not be assessed.
9. Students are expected to spend time outside formal teaching sessions developing their skills and knowledge.
10. **Assignments received by fax or email will not be accepted.**
11. Where appropriate, enrolment in this course is undertaken on the basis that prior assumed knowledge has been gained by the attainment of a grade of "P" (pass) or better in prerequisite course/s. Failure to adhere to this recommendation may result in students experiencing difficulty with the course and not being able to successfully complete it. Additional support or special assistance cannot be expected or requested if students have not completed the recommended prerequisite course/s.
12. Grades are awarded by the Faculty of Commerce and Management, not by your lecturer. Cut-off marks for the various grades in this course as listed below, are determined by the Faculty at the conclusion of the semester.

The following range of grades apply to this course:

#### **High Distinction (HD)**

Exceptional performance indicating complete and comprehensive understanding of the course matter; genuine mastery of relevant skills; demonstration of an extremely high level of interpretative and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the course.

#### **Distinction (D)**

Excellent performance indicating a very high level of understanding of the course matter; development of relevant skills to a very high level; demonstration of a very high level of interpretative and analytical ability and intellectual initiative; and achievement of all major and minor objectives of the course.

**Credit (C)**

Good performance indicating a high level of understanding of course matter; development of relevant skills to a high level; demonstration of a high level of interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the course; some minor objectives not fully achieved.

**Pass (P)**

Satisfactory performance indicating an adequate understanding of most of the basic course matter; partial development of relevant skills; adequate interpretive and analytical ability and achievement of all major objectives of the course; failure to achieve some minor objectives.

**Fail (F)**

Unsatisfactory performance indicating an inadequate understanding of the basic course matter; failure to develop relevant skills; insufficient evidence of interpretive and analytical ability; and failure to achieve major and minor objectives of the course.

**Other grades which may be awarded are:****Fail, No Submission (FNS)**

Did not present any work for assessment, to be counted as failure

**Withdrawal with failure (WF)**

Cancelled enrolment in the course after the final date for withdrawal without failure

13. Students who wish to lodge a grievance about the course or appeal their mark for a specific item of assessment are advised to follow the process outlined below:
- (1) discuss the matter with the course convenor
  - (2) if agreement can not be reached between the student and the course convenor, the student is required to submit a written appeal to the course convenor. The course convenor will appoint a suitably qualified third party to review the appeal (this third party may be a tutor within the course or some other member of academic staff with expertise in the course/ assessment area).
  - (3) if the student wishes to further appeal the outcome of the review of the third party, the student is required to submit a written appeal to the Head of the School of Marketing & Management. The decision of the Head of School is final.