

## **MGMT 2726**

### **Business Ethics and Sustainability**

### **Course Outline**

### **Semester 2, 2017**

### **Course-Specific Information**

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline. You must also be familiar with the Course Outlines Policies webpage which contains key information on:

- Program Learning Goals and Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Student Support and Resources

This webpage can be found on the Business School website:

<https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/degrees-courses/course-outlines/policies>

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## COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### 1 STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Position	Name	Email	Room	Phone
Lecturer-in charge  Workshop Facilitator	Mr Shanil Samarakoon	s.samarakoon@unsw.edu.au	BUS School Building, Level 5 (West Wing)	TBA
Lecturer	Dr Tracy Wilcox	t.wilcox@unsw.edu.au	Quad 1038	9385 7153

### 2 COURSE DETAILS

#### 2.1 Teaching Times and Locations

**Lectures** start in Week 1(to Week 12): The Time and Location are:

Tuesday                      11:00 - 13:00                      Tyree Energy Technology LG07 (K-H6-LG07)

**Workshops** start in Week 2 (to Week 11). The Groups and Times are:

Tuesday                      13:00 - 14:00                      Red Centre West M010 (K-H13-M010)  
Tuesday                      14:00 - 15:00                      Red Centre West M010 (K-H13-M010)  
Tuesday                      16:00 - 17:00                      Colombo LG02 (K-B16-LG02)

#### 2.2 Units of Credit

The course is worth 6 units of credit.

#### 2.3 Summary of Course

Over the past two decades, ethics and sustainability have become an increasingly important part of the business conversation. In an interconnected global business environment, the impacts of business activity are coming under more scrutiny from a range of stakeholders. Leaders are increasingly expected to balance short- and long-term needs for economic, social and environmental sustainability, and to question taken-for-granted assumptions and practices.

*Business Ethics and Sustainability* is built on a foundation of sustainable development, corporate responsibility, stakeholder thinking and accountability. This course is interdisciplinary in its approach, and we will draw from a range of disciplines and knowledge bases including organisational behaviour, sociology, business ethics and

philosophy, political economics, ecology, and systems theory. This course will equip you with a set of tools for managing and leading organisations more ethically and sustainably.

## **2.4 Course Aims and Relationship to Other Courses**

An important component of MGMT 2726 is the study of ethics and sustainability in relation to both local and international business contexts. Knowledge gained is very relevant to a range of disciplinary areas including Management, Finance, Accounting, Marketing, and International Business. You will also find connections with COMM1000.

## **2.5 Student Learning Outcomes**

The Course Learning Outcomes are what you should be able to DO by the end of this course if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

On successful completion of the course you should be able to:

- Outline the features of the global business environment influencing current thinking on business-society and business-environment relationships.
- Recognise the interconnections between the economic, social, political and ecological spheres of human activity.
- Consider business decisions in terms of intended and unintended consequences.
- Outline the concepts and philosophies underpinning social and environmental sustainability.
- Discuss contemporary arguments for corporate social and environmental responsibility, values-based management and a stakeholder perspective.
- Outline how the business world can contribute to the greater good
- Recognise the various ethical frameworks that can apply to a situation, and develop a vocabulary for discussing ethical issues.
- Apply the key elements of ethical thinking to business situations.
- Reflect on the internal and external factors that enable or constrain ethical and sustainable practice.
- Critically reflect on your own values and practices and your role as a potential agent of positive change.

The Learning Outcomes in this course also help you to achieve some of the overall Program Learning Goals and Outcomes for all undergraduate students in the Business School. Program Learning Goals are what we want you to BE or HAVE by the time you successfully complete your degree (e.g. 'be an effective team player'). You demonstrate this by achieving specific Program Learning Outcomes - what you are able to DO by the end of your degree (e.g. 'participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams').

For more information on Program Learning Goals and Outcomes, see the School's Course Outlines Policies webpage available at

<https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/degrees-courses/course-outlines/policies>

The following table shows how your Course Learning Outcomes relate to the overall Program Learning Goals and Outcomes, and indicates where these are assessed (they may also be developed in tutorials and other activities):

Program Learning Goals and Outcomes		Course Learning Outcomes	Course Assessment Item
<i>This course helps you to achieve the following learning goals:</i>		<i>On successful completion of the course, you should be able to:</i>	<i>This learning outcome will be assessed in the following items:</i>
1	Knowledge	<p>Outline the features of the global business environment influencing current thinking on business-society and business-environment relationships</p> <p>Outline the concepts and philosophies underpinning sustainability and its four pillars</p> <p>Recognise the various ethical frameworks that can apply to a situation</p> <p>Discuss contemporary arguments for corporate social and environmental responsibility, values-based management and a stakeholder perspective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newshound Report</li> <li>• Group Project</li> <li>• Open Book Exam</li> </ul>
2	Critical thinking and problem solving	<p>Recognise the interconnections between the economic, social, political and ecological spheres of human activity.</p> <p>Consider business decisions in terms of intended and unintended consequences.</p> <p>Apply the key elements of ethical thinking to business situations.</p> <p>Recognise the various ethical frameworks that can apply to a situation, and develop a vocabulary for discussing ethical issues.</p> <p>Reflect on the internal and external factors that enable or constrain ethical and sustainable practice.</p> <p>Critically reflect on your own values and practices and your role as a potential agent of positive change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newshound Report</li> <li>• Class Participation</li> <li>• Final Exam</li> </ul>
3a	Written communication	Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project</li> <li>• Open Book Exam</li> </ul>
3b	Oral communication	Communicate ideas in a succinct and clear manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project</li> <li>• Workshop Activities</li> </ul>
4	Teamwork	Work collaboratively to complete a task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Project</li> </ul>
5a.	Ethical, social and environmental responsibility	All learning course learning outcomes relate to this Program Learning Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All assessments</li> </ul>
5b.	Social and cultural awareness	Recognise the interconnections between the economic, social, political and ecological spheres of human activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newshound Report</li> </ul>

### 3 LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

#### 3.1 Approach to Learning and Teaching in the Course

In this course we take an active, adult-learning approach that stresses interactive teaching and learning, providing a mix of learning experiences and a hands-on introduction to the various concepts. We expect you to fully participate in this learning journey.

For those of you who are used to the discourses of physical sciences or engineering, ethical arguments may at face value look more like 'opinions' than 'facts'. This is because in the complex world of human behaviour, social relationships, and systems, the 'facts' are always contestable and value-laden – even those gleaned 'scientifically'. You can, however, differentiate between strong and weak arguments, and between sound and faulty reasoning. We can and should consider what we see in organisations from alternative perspectives, even if this takes us outside our comfort zones.

#### 3.2 Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies

Students enrolled in this subject attend classes on campus each week during Semester. **Lectures** build on the weekly learning resources posted in Moodle (but do not simply repeat their content), as we consider the main ideas and conceptual frameworks for the course. Lectures include *interactive* learning processes and will synthesise materials from a range of sources, including your own prior knowledge and experiences.

**Weekly workshops** are also interactive and involve experiential learning and case study analysis as you explore the course material with your peers. We will look for active student contributions through discussion and questioning that reflects your reading and experience. The more conscientiously you participate, the more you will enjoy and learn from workshops.

By actively engaging in class activities, you will increase your confidence and competence across all the areas of the course. The workshops also provide you with opportunities to improve more generic interpersonal skills through interacting with others, working together in diverse groups, forging learning networks, learning about other cultures and learning to understand values and opinions different from your own.

## 4 ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Formal Requirements

In order to pass this course, you must:

- achieve a composite mark of at least 50; and
- make a satisfactory attempt at all assessment tasks (see below).

### 4.2 Assessment Details

Assessment Task	Weighting	Length	Due Date
1. Newshound Report	20%	1000 words	Week 5
2. Group Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Video</li><li>• Report</li></ul>	10% 20%	7 mins 2500 words	Week 10 Week 11
3. Class Participation	15%	n/a	Weekly
4. Open Book Exam	35%	2 hours	Exam period

### 4.3 Assessment Format

#### 4.4 Assessment Format

##### 1. 'Newshound' Report

This assignment requires you to consider **a recent (last 6 months) business related article** from print, broadcast or social media and apply course concepts to critically examine the specifics of the situation. This is an individual assessment task.

Specifically, you will need to use at least two concepts from Weeks 1-4 to analyse the case described in the article or posting. You may choose the concepts that you feel are most relevant, but you must choose two and they **must be related to Weeks 1- 4** of BEaS (not other courses).

More information relating to this assessment task will be provided in class and placed on the course Moodle site.

Your Newshound report should provide an informed and original analysis. Specifically, the assessment criteria will be based on four components:

1. *Quality of analysis and depth of reflection*
2. *Evidence of your thinking about the case and its relation to the conceptual material*
3. *Consistent, clear and well-supported argument*
4. *Structure, written expression, length & presentation*



## 2. Group Project

This assignment involves your investigation of an organisation that is considered to be an 'Ethics/Sustainability Champion'. Full project instructions will be available on the course website by the end of Week 2.

The purpose of this assessment is to apply ethical and critical thinking skills to an actual organisation. The project is designed to enable you to apply the theory and concepts discussed in the course in the setting of real-world examples, and to develop your skills in project management, team work, organisational analysis, presentation skills and report writing. You will need to form project teams of 3-5 students from your workshop. Membership of project teams will be finalised by the end of Week 3.

Your group will upload a 7-minute video overview (PowerPoint recording) of your findings to the course Moodle site in Week 10. The final analysis should be presented in the form of a written consultant-style report of approximately 2500 words length that will be submitted in Week 11.

You will be given a handout in class which will explain the report format and assessment criteria in more detail.

### 'Quality Assurance' of team processes and project planning:

In your **Week 6 workshop**, your team will provide your facilitator with a **planning contract** in which you clearly specify the main responsibilities involved in the project and the allocation of those responsibilities among team members. You need to ensure every group member has signed the contract. This contract will be returned for amendment if your facilitator feels tasks have not been planned and allocated appropriately.

If, subsequently, your team substantially changes its allocation of tasks, you must provide your facilitator with an amended (and signed) contract. Each team member needs to also sign the final team report to demonstrate that the team has carried out the project as agreed in the contract.

**Every student is expected to honour their commitment to their team. If this does not occur, the remaining team members may request a reduced (or higher) grade for the non-contributing (or especially hardworking) team member. Please use the *Peer Assessment Form* (see course website) for this purpose.**

## 3. Class participation

This component entails the assessment of the level of your *informed* contribution to lecture and workshop activities over the whole session. Simply attending classes regularly is a necessary criterion but, without getting actively involved, it is of little value either to you or your classmates and will gain very few participation marks. To participate in an informed way, it is essential that you have **attended the lecture** and read/viewed at least the main reading/media for that week and that you are ready to reflect on it in class. You should also note down issues or concepts that you do not understand and raise them in the workshop.

We will be looking at your contributions to discussion, participation in class exercises and other learning activities in class. You will be expected to offer your own ideas, experience, opinions etc, *as well as* respond to comments and contributions from your fellow students. Students are encouraged to practice effective communication skills with your classmates, including active listening, questioning, positive feedback and empathy. Quality rather than quantity is important – participation does not mean dominating the discussion or discouraging the input of others.

## Assessment Criteria for Class Participation

Assessment guidelines will be as follows:

1. *Level of attendance*
2. *Regular willingness to answer questions, make suggestions and be actively involved in class exercises*
3. *Frequent evidence of reading & engagement with the course material*
4. *Active involvement in classroom group work*
5. *Respectful and supportive dialogue and discussion with other class members.*
6. *Participation in 'Living my Values' online forum*

## 4. Final Examination (open book)

There will be a two-hour open-book examination at the end of Session, during the formal Examination Period. The exam will consist of brief essay-style questions that give you the opportunity to integrate key concepts and issues raised in class. You will be able to bring paper-based material into the exam, but no electronic devices will be allowed.

The aim of the exam is to encourage you to review your course material for the semester and to do so in ways that are analytical, evaluative and problem-solving. The exam will ask you to think creatively about how you could apply concepts from the course to particular situations and to bring together concepts from different topics. More details about the exam format will be provided in class.

Further details of assessment criteria and mark weightings will be provided separately and placed on the Course Website.

### 4.5 Assignment Submission Procedure

You are responsible for submitting all your assessments on time and via the appropriate procedures. You will need to submit all written assessments via the Turnitin tool on the course page on Moodle.

#### Submission Procedure:

All course assessments are due by **9:00am on the Tuesday of the week the assessment is due e.g. Week 5, Week 10 or Week 11.**

An electronic copy of your written assignment must be uploaded to Turnitin via the course page on Moodle. Failure to upload the paper will be regarded as a 'failed to submit' and you will be penalized accordingly. Group assessments will only require a nominated member of group uploading the report to Turnitin via the course Moodle website.

Similarly, for the group video, only one member of a group needs to submit the video on behalf of the group via the Box on the course Moodle site. Further instructions will be available on Moodle and will be discussed in your workshops.

### 4.6 Special Consideration, Late Submission and Penalties

A penalty of 10 percent per day of the marks available for that assignment will apply for work received after the due date. The only exception will be when prior permission for late submission has been granted by the Course Coordinator.

Extensions will be granted only on medical or compassionate grounds under extreme circumstances. Requests for extensions must be made in writing to the Course Coordinator *prior to the due date*. Medical certificates or other evidence supporting your claim must be attached and must contain information that justifies the extension sought.

#### **Quality Assurance**

The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential.

## **5 COURSE RESOURCES**

There are no prescribed textbooks for this course. A range of mixed media resources will be available each week through MGMT 2726 Course Website.

The website for this course is on Moodle at: <http://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au>

The following information will be available:

- The course outline and reading/media details;
- Optional additional learning material and useful websites;
- All lecture slides;
- Assessment criteria for assessment items;
- An online forum
- Suggested formats/learning support guides for assessment items;
- Administrative information, such as exam dates/times and locations.
- 

It is your responsibility to check the course website **every week**.

## **6 COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the School and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. This course, MGMT 2726 *Business Ethics and Sustainability*, has been developed through a sustained process of stakeholder consultation, planning and design. In this course we will evaluate and use your course-level feedback, both quantitative and qualitative, to guide our process of continuous improvement through the ongoing review and redesigning of the course. Feedback from previous students indicated high levels of satisfaction with the course, with some students requesting more opportunities for group discussion in the lectures. As a result, the lecture format has been revised to further increase opportunities for small group discussion. We are also bringing in more discussions of the readings/video in class in response to feedback from students.

You can provide feedback on course workshops via a **mid-semester feedback survey in Week 5**. Finally, UNSW's myExperience survey is one of the ways in which student evaluative feedback is formally gathered at the end of the semester.

## 7 COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Lecture Topic	Workshop	Required Viewing/Reading	Assessment
<b>Week 1</b> 25 Jul	<i>Our global future: Why bother with ethics and sustainability?</i>	NO WORKSHOPS	<a href="#">What is Neoliberalism?</a>  <a href="#">Joseph Stiglitz on Globalisation</a>	
<b>Week 2</b> 1 Aug	<i>Ethics, sustainability and systems thinking</i>	- Introductions - Ethical Relativism <b>Case:</b> Classic Containers	<a href="#">21<sup>st</sup> Century Enlightenment</a>  <a href="#">How Wolves Change Rivers: George Monbiot</a>	
<b>Week 3</b> 8 Aug	<i>Shareholder vs stakeholder perspectives and corporate responsibility</i>	- Group Formation <b>Activity:</b> News from a Better World	<a href="#">Business is about purpose: Ed Freeman</a>	
<b>Week 4</b> 15 Aug	<i>Social sustainability and sustainable development</i>	<b>Case:</b> Albina Ruiz <b>Activity:</b> Determining Our Values	<a href="#">On Economic Growth: Vandana Shiva</a>	
<b>Week 5</b> 22 Aug	<i>Environmental sustainability</i>	<b>Activity:</b> WWF Footprint Calculator <b>Case:</b> <a href="#">Interface Net Effect</a>	<a href="#">Addicted to Risk: Naomi Klein</a>	<b>Newshound Report Due (Moodle)</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 29 Aug	<i>Supply chain, operations and employment ethics</i>	<b>Exercise:</b> Supply Chain Analysis	<a href="#">Supply Chain Reaction</a>	<b>Submit Team Contract (in Workshop)</b>
<b>Week 7</b> 5 Sept	<i>Frameworks for ethical thinking 1</i>	<b>Case:</b> <a href="#">Living Wage: Fight for \$15</a> Discussion: Ethical Concepts	<a href="#">Moral Awareness</a>	
<b>Week 8</b> 12 Sept	<i>Ethical thinking 2</i>	<b>Case:</b> Rana Plaza <b>Activity:</b> Review values/change commitments	<a href="#">Soheil Abedian: Human Flourishing through reciprocity</a>	<b>Post Commitments on Moodle</b>
<b>Week 9</b> 19 Sept <b>Tracy</b>	<i>Marketing ethics and the ethics of consumption</i>	<b>Case:</b> <a href="#">Gendered Marketing</a> <b>Activity:</b> Reflection on values/change commitments	<a href="#">The High Price of Materialism</a>	
<b>Mid-semester break:</b> Saturday 23 September – Sunday 2 October inclusive				
<b>Week 10</b> 4 Oct <b>Shanil</b>	<i>Accounting, finance and professional ethics</i>	<b>Case:</b> <a href="#">CommInsure</a> <b>Activity:</b> Intro to Giving Voice to Values	<a href="#">Tax Justice and the SDGs</a>	<b>Upload Project Video and Peer Review (Moodle)</b>

<b>Week 11</b> <b>10 Oct</b> <b>Shanil</b>	Giving Voice to Values: Reflective Experiential Exercise	<b>Activity:</b> A Letter to Yourself	<a href="#">Reasons and Rationalisations</a>	<b>Group Project Report (Moodle)</b>
<b>Week 12</b> <b>17 Oct</b> <b>Tracy &amp; Shanil</b>	<i>Where to from here? Course integration and review</i>	NO WORKSHOPS	NA	
	<b>Study Break</b>			
<b>EXAM PERIOD</b> <b>3- 20 Nov</b>	<b>Exams</b>			<b>Open-book Exam</b>