

Business Ethics

- **Instructor:** Prof. Dr. Nils Rauhut (Coastal Carolina University, USA)
- **Language of instruction:** English
- **Admission requirements:** No prior subject-specific requirements
- **Number of ECTS credits:** 5 (corresponding to 3 US credits)
- **Type of examination:** A 15 minute oral examination

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to explore the ethical dimensions of business and managerial decision-making. We will start the course by studying three major ethical theories (utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics), but we will quickly move to the study of specific cases like the VW emissions scandal, diversity training at Google and sexual harassment at Uber. We will explore topics such as rights to privacy, conflicts of interest, insider trading, whistle-blowing, and the rights and duties of agents and fiduciaries.

Module contents

The purpose of the course BUSINESS ETHICS is to familiarize students with various theoretical frameworks that allow them to identify, analyze, and resolve ethical issues in business decision-making. The course will enable students to recognize that nearly all challenging business decisions involve in addition to economic and legal considerations also an ethical dimension. The focus will be on a number of issues such as conflicts between personal values and organizational goals; the role of sustainability in business strategy; and the importance of stakeholder relationships, corporate governance, and the development of ethics programs and an ethical culture in an organization.

At the end of the course students should be able:

- To understand the history and the development of the field of business ethics.
- To utilize methods in moral reasoning, case analysis, and in resolving ethical dilemmas.
- To recognize the ethical obligations and ethical ideals present in the relationship between employers and employees.
- To set ethical boundaries in cases involving marketing, sales, and advertising.
- To understand the challenges of finding universal ethical norms that apply to people and companies in every region in the world.

Methods of teaching and learning within the module

The teaching and learning will take the form of an interactive lecture with group discussions.

Recommended list of literature

- Boatright, J.R., 2009, *Ethics and the Conduct of Business*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 6th edition.
- DeGeorge, R.T., *Business Ethics*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 7th edition.
- Hartman, E.M., 2015, *Virtue in Business: Conversations with Aristotle*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sandel, M.J., 2012, *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Solomon, R. C., 1993, *Ethics and Excellence: Cooperation and Integrity in Business*, New York: Oxford University Press.