

Seminar in Business and Society

Business Administration 403

Section: D100

Term: 2005 Spring

Instructor: Dr. Mark N. Wexler

HC 2426

(604)268-7846

wexler@sfu.ca

Discussion Topics: Seminar Objectives

The \204Seminar in Business and Society\211 this semester will focus on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and business ethics. In the post-Enron business climate, corporate managers are attempting to mend the broken fences between themselves and their boards of directors, banks, stockholders, auditors, the media and their clients and customers. In discussions of ethical business missteps\230Conrad Black at Hollinger, John Gutfreund at Salomon Brothers, Neils Hoyvald at Beech-Nut, Kenneth Lay at Enron\230we attend to how to detect and remediate ethically problematic behaviours and reputations.

The seminar will employ case discussions to probe why and how giant corporations \204fall\211 when they are unable to correct ethical missteps. The ten basic questions guiding our enquiry are:

1. Why does corporate social responsibility matter?
2. What is reputational capital and how does it have a bottom line impact?
3. How can we employ a stakeholder approach to make sense of corporate social responsibility?
4. Why does unethical behaviour occur in organizations?
5. What are the four principle solutions for dealing with groups, organizations and industries that are seen as acting socially irresponsibly?
6. What is the \204triple bottom line and how does it relate to corporate social responsibility?
7. What is \204sustainability\211 and how does it relate to increased calls for corporate social responsibility?
8. What is \204transparency and how is this related to increased calls for social responsibility?
9. What is \204workplace diversity\211 and how does it relate to calls for corporate social responsibility?

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10. How can firms and organizations become more socially responsible while retaining their economic competitiveness?

Grading: Project (one of Feb. 9/16/23) 25%

Take home exam (March 2, due March 12) 35%

Research paper (due March 30) 40%

Required Texts: Sims, Ronald R., 2003, *Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility: Why Giants Fall*, Westport, CT: Praeger.

Recommended Texts:

Materials/Supplies:

Prerequisite/Corequisite: 90 credit hours, BUS 360

Notes:

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