



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course Name:	Responsibility in Business and Decision Making Process
Course Number:	BUSI 2001 PRAG
Programs offering course:	CES/CNMJ
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

This course examines the role of corporate responsibility and encourages students to reflect on their own personal ethical views as they may apply them in complex business situations in culturally specific contexts. The course introduces fundamentals of ethics and responsible decision-making in business and other social contexts in their future professional careers. Students develop complex analytical skills in evaluating the multifaceted contexts to assist them as future leaders and professionals when coming up with innovative solutions and making individual-level and company-level decisions about the proper courses of action considering ethical behavior, social responsibility and environmental sustainability. Students apply theoretical knowledge of concepts (e.g., culture of organizations, leadership styles, corporate governance) when solving real-world cases in culture-specific contexts.

Learning Objectives

By completing the course, students will be able to:

- analyze current ethical questions/issues through case studies and provide innovative recommendations for solutions supported by well-grounded argumentation;
- understand the complexity of the context of ethical and socially responsible decision making, both individual and corporate in broader global dynamics;
- examine and critique the theoretical concepts and of Corporate Social Responsibility, including transparency, board practices and CSR strategy formulation;
- cultivate their own environmentally responsible decision making and develop communication skills to empower other people;
- reflect on their study abroad experiences in Prague in order to propose interculturally sensitive solutions by developing their own cultural awareness as well as team-work and negotiation skills while completing final team project.

Course Prerequisites



No prerequisites.

Methods of Instruction

In this course, students participate in discussions related to the lectures, video clips, and debates. Students gain knowledge and skills through an active learning approach in the class by working in small group activities, team projects and debating different opinions. To be able to do this, students are required do the readings before class each week, analyze case studies and be prepared to contribute to class discussions. Specific examples from corporations and case studies will be examined with different sets of evaluation frameworks and students will apply their theoretically grounded knowledge to specific contexts and problems in the real world.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Individual Case Study Report:	20%
2. Small Team Presentation:	15%
3. Midterm Exam:	20%
4. Final Team Project:	25%
5. Class Participation:	20%

Course Requirements

Case Study Report – Week 4

This case study report is a combination of a benchmarking analysis (based on the corporate responsibility reports and other data sources) and a thorough evaluation of a specific corporate strategy using a variety of criteria in search of specific conclusions about specific organizations and their social responsibility strategies and initiatives. Students are also expected to recognize the complexity and global interconnections of the corporate social responsibility issue and provide an optimal solution of the issue and propose their own way of handling it. Students are required to submit individual case study reports of 1500-2000 words by Week 4 on Canvas. Delivery of the assignment after the deadline leads to a grade reduction 10% for each 24-hour period that it is late.

Assessment Criteria	Percentage
Use of Benchmarking framework	20%
Use of other relevant evaluation criteria	20%



Global interconnection and local context	20%
Creativity of proposed solutions	20%

Small Group Presentation – Weeks 5-6

In small teams of 2-3, students will closely analyze and provide each other with feedback on their individual reports. Subsequently, they will create and deliver a group presentation (PowerPoint) of a particular company case study focusing on comparing their individual corporate evaluations and a team-based proposal of solutions. Presentation in class will take place in Week 5-6.

Assessment Criteria	Percentage
Structure and quality of evaluation	30%
Quality of proposed solutions	30%
Facilitation of discussion, time management	20%
Team work	20%

Midterm Exam – Week 7

The midterm take-home exam, based on the required readings and class lectures, will include essay-style questions requiring two short essay responses (c. 1,125–2,250 words) to questions arising from the first half of the course. It will take place in the second session of Week 7 of the course. Students will be asked analytical questions arising from the lectures and the seminar topics – Seminars 1-6 – of the first half of the course.

Final Team Project – Weeks 12-13

Team project focuses on designing innovative solutions to a selected topic (e.g., MNC, complex ethical problem) through structured and well-planned team work. The project evaluation also includes the quality of its presentation to the class. The project will be assessed in subsequent stages according to the following criteria:

Assessment Criteria	Percentage
Project structure and team roles – Week 9	5%
Use of relevant BE data for analysis and solution – Week 10	5%
Accountability and effectiveness of teamwork – Week 11	5%
Quality of presentation – Week 12/13	10%

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing



the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks via Canvas Participation Assignment, including comments on their progress and achievement, and suggestions for improvement

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and **all absences are treated equally regardless of reason** for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

90-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 90-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one to two 90-minute classes	up to 10%	no penalty
three 90-minute classes	10.1–15%	reduction of the final grade by 3%



four 90-minute classes	15.1–17%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
five 90-minute classes	17.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning
six and more 90-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

180-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 180-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one 180-minute class	up to 10%	no penalty
two 180-minute classes	10.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
three and more 180-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student’s home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a **course failure**, and **potential program dismissal**. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. **Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.**

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student’s presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, **make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances**, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor’s note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor’s notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however **the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.**

Should a truly **extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted



automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), **always contact the Academic Assistant** to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. **Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records.** In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant **within one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one's own.

The first principle is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an "open book" basis).

The second principle applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

The third principle is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a



course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another’s work or including information told to you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

Class information/Discussion on class expectations/ Introduction to Business Ethics

- Week 1**
- Class 1**
- Reasoning why ethical behavior is important in business and society
 - Understanding of legal, ethical and moral perspective of concepts
- Class 2**
- Analysis of companies with ethical/non ethical behavior and understanding of differences
 - Discussion of consequences for companies with ethical/non ethical behavior

Theory of ethics/Values as basis for ethical decisions

- Week 2**
- Class 1**
- Introduction to the theory of ethics
 - The importance of values for individuals and companies?
- Class 2**
- Drivers to corporate responsibility
 - Reflection own set of values

Required readings:

Mohin, Ch 1-2.

Corporate social responsibility

- Week 3**
- Class 1**
- Comparison and critique of CSR programs
- Class 2**
- Understanding of the gap between policy and reality of CSR programs at MNC
 - Importance of CSR programs for sustainable business

Required Readings:

Ferrell, Fraedrich and Ferrell, Ch 1- 3.

Business Cases related to responsibility/ethics in business

Class 1

- Detailed and complex analysis of 2 examples (Bernard Madoff, Nike)
- Understanding the internal controlling system and external context and consequences in failing to recognize the unethical behavior
- Understanding why these business cases failed in ethical and responsible behavior

Week 4

Class 2

- Proposing countermeasures for future solutions
- Reasoning and prioritizing in own decision making process

Required Reading:

Hřebíček, Jiří et al. *Corporate Governance and CSR*. Mendel University Papers, 2012

Kolk, *online*

Due: Case Study Report (2nd class session)

Role of leadership in business and influence of the leadership style on company culture

Class 1

- Introduction to leadership styles

Class 2

Week 5

- Leadership as part of company culture
- Reflection on our own leadership styles

Required readings:

Quigley, *online*

Due: Small Team Presentations

Change management and ethical decisions

Class 1

- Analysis of the change processes
- Inner understanding of own responsibility in the change process

Week 6

**Midterm
Exam
Period**

Class 2

- Ethical decision making in a critical phase of a company
- Application of a responsible people management

Required Readings:

Mohin, Ch. 4, 8



	Due: Small Team Presentations
Week 7	Class 1
Midterm Exam	Midterm Exam
Exam	Class 2
Period	Group Reflection and Interactive Team Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Project Design
	Managing ethics internally
	Class 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The role of compliance in a responsible decision making process● Analysis of real business cases/examples
Week 8	Class 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Major HR processes and relationship to the executive management

Required Readings:

Pfeffer.

Governing organizations

	Class 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Defining corporate governance and its key features● Aligning national (local) and international (global) aspects of governance● Finding solutions for intercultural dilemmas and conflicting dimensions● Reflecting on study abroad experiences in Prague in order to propose interculturally sensitive solutions and developing own cultural awareness
Week 9	
	Class 2
	Guest Speaker: Adriana Dergam, Director of Social Responsibility, Vodafone CZ

Required Reading:

Scherer and Palazzo, 1096–1120.

Due: Project Aim and Structure

Company culture – Communicating Social Responsibility

	Class 1
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Factors determining company culture● The influence of company culture on decision making process● Company culture and HR decisions and empowering people
	Class 2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Communicating values

- Failed Corporate Responsibility Initiatives

Required Reading:

Mazar, 633-644.

Environmental Responsibility

Class 1

- Considering the decision making of company in connection to society and environment and framing the relationship between business, environment and consequences of both
- Comparison of 2 companies (responsible /irresponsible) and its outcome on the environment and finding the balance between environmental sustainability, social needs and economic interests
- Finding solutions to existing environmental issues based on research

Week 11

Class 2

- Reflecting on individual choices and experiences and cultivating own environmentally responsible decision making
- Understanding global and local environmental issues and their inter-connectivity

Required Reading:

Allen and Craig.

Due: Project – Presentation draft

Civil society organizations, Giving back to the society

Importance of civil society, NGOs

Class 1

- Understanding the importance of “giving back” in the business context
- Possible ways of “giving back to the society”
- Comparison of rational and activities of NGO/business/government
- Reflecting on individual volunteering experience / “giving back” to the society
- Reflecting on the intercultural differences in “giving back” in home country v. host country (CZ)

Week 12

Class 2

Guest Speaker: Šimon Pánek, Director of People in Need Foundation

**Final Exam
Week**

Class 1 & 2

Final Team Project Presentations



Course Materials

Readings

- Allen, Maria, Craig A. Christopher. Rethinking corporate Social Responsibility in the Age of Climate Change: a communication Perspective. *International Journal on Corporate Responsibility*. 2016; <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40991-016-0002-8>
- Ferrell, O. C., Fraedrich, John, and Ferrell, Linda. *Business Ethics 2009 Update: Ethical Decision Making and Case*. Cengage Learning, 2009.
- Griseri, Paul, Seppala Nina. *Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility*. Cengage Learning, 2010.
- Hřebíček, Jiří et al. *Corporate Governance and CSR*. Mendel University Papers, 2012 https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jii_Hebicek/publication/230856142_Corporate_performance_indicators_for_agriculture_and_food_processing_sector/links/0912f50669f4a40043000000.pdf
- Kolk, Ans. *Sustainability, Accountability and Corporate Governance – Exploring Multinationals' Reporting Practices*. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 2006. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/bse.511/full>
- Kotter, John. *Our Iceberg is Melting*. Penguin Random house, 2016.
- Kouzes, James M., Posner, Barry Z. *Learning Leadership. The Five Fundamentals of Becoming an Exemplary Leader*. A Willey Brand, 2016.
- Mazar, Nina et al. “The Dishonesty of Honest People: A Theory of Self-Concept Maintenance.” *Journal of Marketing Research* 45. 6 (Dec. 2008): 633-644. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.45.6.633>
- Mohin, Tim. *Changing Business from the Inside Out: A Tree-Hugger's Guide to Working in Corporations*, 2012.
- Open Letter from global CEOs to world leaders urging concrete climate action. Retrieved December 30, 2015. <http://www.dsm.com/corporate/media/informationcenter-pub/2015/04/2015-04-17-open-letter-from-global-ceos-to-world-leaders-urging-concrete-climate-action.html>.
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey. “Assholes are Winning: Money Trumps All.” *Journal of Management Studies* 53. 4 (Jan. 25, 2016)
- Quigley, Doh. *Responsible leadership and stakeholder management*. *The Academy of Management Perspectives*, 2104. <http://amp.aom.org/content/28/3/255.short>



- Scherer, A. G., & Palazzo, G. "Toward a Political Conception of Corporate Responsibility: Business and Society Seen from a Habermasian Perspective." *Academy of Management Review* 2. (2007): 1096–1120.

Films

- The Corporation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y888wVY5hzw>
- Michael D. Burroughs: The Significance of Ethics and Ethics Education in Daily Life. TED x PSU; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8juebyo_Z4
- Jeff Bezos: How to Start a Business. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJeVpl73PA4>