Course Description:

This Mason Core Seminar Course will acquaint undergraduate students with the impact of business on the contemporary western social, economic, and physical environment. Business and Society is a multidisciplinary course that provides students a broad foundation of the nature and history of business enterprise, the social context of business, and the interactions of individuals with businesses. The course will develop students’ critical thinking and writing skills through analyzing the role of business in society. Students will gain an understanding of the cultural traditions that have contributed to the growth of the business enterprise, analyze the factors that contribute to cultural and social norms as related to business, and evaluate the extent to which business influences society, and vice versa.

Analysis of the nature and impact of current events in Business will be used to develop these skills. Using quantitative and qualitative information, analyses of empirical observations in relation to theory, and deductive and inductive reasoning, students will be expected to discuss, debate, and discern the ethical and practical impacts of current and recent historical events and the value of business in society.

This course explores the relationship between business and society. Consequently, the focus is on examination of the development of the social benefits and costs of contemporary business practice, business institutions, and business regulation and on the role of Business Ethics.

Course Learning Objectives:

Through successful completion of the course, students will learn about the societal context of business and will be able to articulate, orally and in writing, their perspectives on the following:

- Business’ influence on society and how social and cultural values shape business
- The institutions that play a role in regulating the business enterprise
- The role of stakeholders in the relationship between business and society
- Applicable individual and organizational ethical principles and responsibilities
**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

- explain how individuals, groups, and institutions are influenced by business
- identify important current events in business and discuss, debate, and critique the impact of these events on society
- identify key features of American culture and how those cultural attributes contribute to and conflict with features of the business enterprise historically and currently
- describe the role of business in the development of society
- uncover and assess the social costs and benefits of free enterprise
- identify and explain the role of regulation in business practice
- define stakeholder groups in business and society and evaluate stakeholder perspectives
- identify, analyze, and compare ethical demands and social responsibilities that fall upon individuals and organizations
- use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral concepts, terminology, and theories in the analysis of the role of business in society

**Student Preparation:**

You are asked to come to class prepared. This means you should have done the assigned reading and other homework before class so that class time may be used to explore and discuss course content and current events. Class time will also be used for reading, writing, critical thinking, and building presentation skills.

**Text:**

Students should buy or rent the printed version (not e-book version) of the following text:

*Business and Society: Stakeholders, Ethics, Public Policy*

Anne T. Lawrence, James Weber, and James E. Post, 2014

Publisher: McGraw-Hill

ISBN: 0078029473

***Other readings will be assigned throughout the semester and posted on Blackboard***

**Assessment:**

Participation 30% (Blackboard quizzes 10%, Blog Entries 10%, Attendance 10%)

Group Case study presentation 15%

Group Case study Memo (First Draft 3%, Second Draft 7%)

Midterm 20%

Final 25%

**Grading Scale:**

A+= 98+   A = 97-93   A- = 92-90   B+= 89-87   B= 86-83   B- = 82-80

C+= 79-77   C = 76-70   D= 69.1-59   F= 58-0
Grading Policies:

This is a graded course. All assignments are graded on a 100-point scale with letter grades assigned. Rubrics will outline specific grading criteria. Please consult assignment sheets and rubrics before submitting an assignment. Each student is encouraged to keep in mind that all grades in this course are earned, not awarded. If you have any questions about grading, you should visit me during office hours. I will not discuss grades before or after class.

Major course components:

--Video/PPT: After class each week, you should view a short video and/or Power Point Presentation that explains the activities and assignments you will be asked to do for the following class. Please contact me with questions or concerns after viewing.

--Blackboard quizzes: You will be asked to complete a quick comprehension quiz on Blackboard after reading each assigned chapter in the textbook. You may take these quizzes multiple times, but they are due by the start of class.

--Discussion Cases: The text provides many interesting case studies, which illuminate the concepts from each chapter. Where noted on the syllabus, we will discuss these cases in class. You will be given 10-15 minutes to read the case, and answer questions in small groups. You may want to review these cases before coming to class.

--Attendance: Attendance and participation in class are vital to success in the course. If you must miss class, please notify me by email before the absence. [mcohen21@gmu.edu] Please see the George Mason University Attendance policy listed in the University Catalog. [http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=1168#attendance]

--Personal Reflection Blogs: You will be asked to write (2) 250-300 word reflections over the course of the semester. The class will be split into 3 Blog groups and assigned specific dates for writing. After blogs have been posted each week, everyone will read at least two blog entries, and provide one comment for each blog read (you are of course welcome to read more than two blogs!). You will then have the opportunity to work in small groups in class to address the comments/questions posted about your blog. Please refer to the Personal Reflection Blog assignment sheet and rubric for more detailed information.

--Textbook Case Study Presentation and Memo: You will work in small groups to present one of the case studies in the back section of the textbook. You should provide an overview of the case, its key events, the various stakeholders, and outcomes. You should provide discussion questions for the class, and lead a discussion of the case. You will then write, as a group, a 2-page memo outlining the details of the case, and offering an analysis of the case, with possible recommendations for the stakeholders involved. Please see refer to the Textbook Case Study presentation and memo assignment sheet and rubric for more detailed information.
--**Midterm:** You will have an in-class midterm exam that asks you to identify, explain, and evaluate the material that we have covered in class. The midterm will include multiple choice and short answer questions. A study guide will be posted in Blackboard.

--**Final Exam:** The exam will require you to synthesize the material you have learned throughout the semester and apply it to various contexts. You will be asked to identify terms, define concepts, and write short answers. You will also be asked to read a short case study and analyze it based on the terms and concepts we have learned throughout the semester.

**School of Business Standards of Behavior:**

The mission of the School of Business at George Mason University is to create and deliver high-quality educational programs and research. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni who participate in these educational programs contribute to the well-being of society. High-quality educational programs require an environment of trust and mutual respect, free expression and inquiry, and a commitment to truth, excellence, and lifelong learning. Students, program participants, faculty, staff, and alumni accept these principles when they join the School of Business community. In doing so, they agree to abide by the following standards of behavior:

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in dealing with all members of the community
- Accountability for personal behavior

Integrity is an essential ingredient of a successful learning community. Ethical standards of behavior help promote a safe and productive community environment, and ensure every member the opportunity to pursue excellence. School of Business can and should be a living model of these behavioral standards. To this end, community members have a personal responsibility to integrate these standards into every aspect of their experience at the School of Business. Through our personal commitment to these Community Standards of Behavior, we can create an environment in which all can achieve their full potential.

**Honor Code and Academic Honesty:**

By choosing to take this course, you agree to uphold the George Mason University Honor Code. Please refer to academicintegrity.gmu.edu for further details.

In your work on all written assignments, keep in mind that you may not present as your own the words, work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. You also may not borrow the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.

**Please note:** Faculty are obligated, without exception, to submit any Honor Code violations or suspected violations to the Honor Committee.
## School of Business Recommendations for Honor Code Violations
*Adopted by the faculty May 2012*

### UG-Freshman Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violation</th>
<th>First Offense</th>
<th>Second Offense</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plagiarism—failure to cite/attribute sources</td>
<td>A zero on the assignment; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance</td>
<td>An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism—representing someone else’s work as the student’s own</td>
<td>A zero on the assignment; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance</td>
<td>An F in the class; multiple visits to the Writing Center required; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance (at times of hearing and reenrollment if relevant); dismissal from the program; and possible suspension or expulsion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheating on an assignment, homework, class participation, or minor project</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance</td>
<td>An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; dismissal from the program; and at least one semester suspension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheating on a major project, test, or exam</td>
<td>An F in the class; and Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance</td>
<td>An F in the class; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; dismissal from the program; and expulsion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egregious Violation [e.g., stealing an exam; submitting coursework from another class as original work; lying to an employer about academic performance]</td>
<td>An F in the Class; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; dismissal from the program; and at least one semester suspension</td>
<td>An F in the Class; Academic Integrity Seminar Attendance; dismissal from the program; and expulsion</td>
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Email policy:

I am happy to correspond with you via email, but please make sure to do the following before emailing me:

1. Reread the syllabus and assignment sheet/rubric before submitting a question about procedures.
2. Please check the discussion board to see if your question has already been answered.
3. Please use a formal greeting and closing if you do need to email me.
4. Please include your full name and class name, day, and time.
5. Please consider whether speaking face-to-face might be more fostering of a professional relationship, and request a meeting during office hours.

**Business Library Liaison Information:**
Jo Ann J. Henson, MLIS  Business and Economics Liaison Librarian
Fenwick Library Fairfax Campus:  [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/business)

**Disability Services:**
If you have a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. Please take care of this during the first two weeks of the semester. More information about ODS is available at [http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc](http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc).

**Religion:**
Students who will miss class for religious reasons should inform me of their anticipated absences at the beginning of the semester.

**Counseling Center:**
George Mason University has a counseling center that can provide assistance if you find yourself overwhelmed by life, want training in academic or life skills, or the like. More information is available at [http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/](http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/).

**Writing Guidelines:**
All writing assignments should be formatted as follows, unless otherwise specified: double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, and 1-inch margins. To cite and reference professional or academic sources, please use APA style. Specific instructions for in-text citations and referencing are found in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th Edition or at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/).

George Mason University has a writing center that can help you improve your English writing skills. More information is available at [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/).

**Inclement weather and campus emergencies:**
Information regarding weather-related changes in the University’s schedule (e.g., closing or late opening) will be provided on the GMU website and via MasonAlert. Students can sign up for the Mason Alert system to provide emergency information of various sorts at [https://alert.gmu.edu](https://alert.gmu.edu). An emergency poster in each classroom explains what to do in the event of crises and that further information about emergency procedures exists on [http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert](http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert).
Other course policies:

- Class is meant for you! Use the time wisely to engage with me and your classmates. In order to be engaged, you must be present and prepared. To that end, you are expected to attend all class sessions.
- The use of electronic devices is not needed, or allowed, during class sessions, unless specifically requested by me. You will need to use that technology in preparing for class, but class time is meant for interaction and discussion.
- Please show me and your classmates respect.
- Please use your official George Mason University email for all correspondence. I won’t be able to respond to messages from other email accounts.
- Please speak with me at any time. If you are confused or are having problems with an assignment, please speak with me well ahead of the assignment due date.
- Generally, late work is not accepted.

Course Schedule/Topics:

This schedule is subject to change. You will be notified if changes are made.

Key:
PPT- Power Point Presentation including information, homework, videos, and discussion questions to view before class
PRB- Personal Reflection Blog and 2 comments
BB- Blackboard
RQ- Reading quiz. Found in Blackboard or completed in class.
DC- Discussion Case

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Reading Due for Class</th>
<th>To Be Done BEFORE Class</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sep. 4</td>
<td>Business and Society</td>
<td>Review Syllabus, Blackboard course, and Assignments</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Corporations and their value</td>
<td>Ch. 1 DC: Disney</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sep. 7-11 (No class Monday, Sep. 7)</td>
<td>Social Responsibility, Disaster, Advocacy, and Working Conditions</td>
<td>Ch. 3 DC: Timberland</td>
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<td>Watch “Triangle Fire” (Link found in BB) Read “US Labor Timeline” (link found in BB)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sep. 14-</td>
<td>Ethics and Business</td>
<td>Ch. 4 DC: Chiquita</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading/Assignment</td>
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<td>4 Sep. 21-25</td>
<td>Organizational Ethics Ch. 5 DC: Alcoa The relationship between employees and employers Ch. 16 DC: Smoking Technology, Organizations, and Society Ch. 12 DC: Online Privacy</td>
<td>PPT RQ in BB</td>
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<td>5 Sep. 28-Oct. 2</td>
<td>Technology and Innovation Managing Stakeholder rights and Corporate Governance Ch. 13 DC: Citibank Breach Ch. 14 DC: Citigroup</td>
<td>PPT PRB Group B RQ in BB</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Oct. 5-9</td>
<td>The role of regulation Sustainable Development Ch. 8: DC: JP Morgan Chase Ch 10 DC: Clean Cooking</td>
<td>PPT PRB Group C RQ in BB --Midterm study guide available in BB</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Oct. 12-16 (Mon. classes meet Tues. Tues classes do not meet.)</td>
<td>Sustainability as Competitive Advantage Ch 11 DC: Gold</td>
<td>PPT PRB Group A RQ in BB</td>
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<td>8 Oct. 19-23 (Midterm grades due Oct. 23)</td>
<td>Midterm Exam Group Case Study Presentation in-class work time Your assigned Case Study</td>
<td>PPT RQ in BB</td>
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<td>9 Oct. 26-30</td>
<td>The Triple Bottom Line Diversity in the Ch 7 DC: Apple Ch. 17</td>
<td>PPT PRB Group B RQ in BB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Course Material</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>10 Nov. 2-6</td>
<td>Peer Review</td>
<td>DC: Chipotle</td>
<td>--Each group member should bring one printout of your memo for peer-review.</td>
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<td>Group Case Study</td>
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<td>Presentation Memos</td>
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<td>Group Case Study</td>
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<td>Presentation work time</td>
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<td>11 Nov. 9-13</td>
<td>Business and politics</td>
<td>Ch 9 DC: Online Piracy</td>
<td>PPT PRB Group C RQ in BB</td>
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<td>Consumer Protection</td>
<td>Ch 15: DC: Fast Food</td>
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<td>12 Nov. 16-20</td>
<td>Group Case Study</td>
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<td>--upload presentation slides/Prezi link to BB before class</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 Nov. 23-27</td>
<td>Group Case Study</td>
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<td>--Final Exam study guide available in BB</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>14 Nov. 30-Dec. 4</td>
<td>Group Case Study</td>
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<td>PPT RQ in BB</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Ch 18 DC: Fidelity</td>
<td>--Case Study Memo (upload to BB by start of class)</td>
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<td>The Corporation and the Community</td>
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<td>15 Dec. 7-11</td>
<td>End of semester wrap up and final exam review</td>
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**Final Exam:** 1:30 PM to 4:15PM    Thursday, December 17, 2015