

University of Puerto Rico  
Río Piedras Campus  
Faculty of Business Administration  
Department of Business Communication

## SYLLABUS

|                                                            |                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>COURSE TITLE</b>                                        | Business Communication and Ethics |
| <b>COURSE CODE</b>                                         | INCO 4101                         |
| <b>CONTACT HOURS/CREDITS</b>                               | 45 hours / Three credits          |
| <b>PREREQUISITES, COREQUISITES, AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS</b> | None specified                    |

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary course linking philosophy, business communication, and ethics. Through relevant philosophical works, students explore, analyze, and contextualize ethics, agency, responsibility, and knowledge; apply communication concepts to ethical business situations; and assess ethical issues involving business, communication, and society. The course may be offered face-to-face, in hybrid format, or online.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Critically assess different approaches to ethics.
- Apply ethical theories to everyday issues.
- Use effective communication strategies to take and support ethical positions.
- Develop analytical skills.
- Relate ethical awareness to decision-making.
- Explain the importance of transdisciplinary ethics and entrepreneurship.

### COURSE CONTENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF TIME

| Topic and content                                                                                                                                                 | Face-to-face | Hybrid                                                                                  | Online |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Course overview<br>Why ethics and communication?                                                                                                               | 3            | 3 hours (0.75 face-to-face: 1 short session of 45 min; 2.25 online)                     | 3      |
| 2. Ethical principles<br>Behavior, judgment, responsibility to self and others, and the knowing subject. Reading: Plato, 'The Allegory of the Cave.'              | 6            | 6 hours (1.5 face-to-face: 1 session of 1.5h; 4.5 online)                               | 6      |
| 3. Performing ethics<br>Decision-making, business, community, happiness, and the will. Reading: Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book III, chapters 1-5.            | 7            | 7 hours (2.25 face-to-face: 1 session of 1.5h + 1 short session of 45 min; 4.75 online) | 7      |
| 4. Moral principles<br>Commitments, ethical communication, technology, and moral action. Reading: Kant, Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, Parts II-III.   | 7            | 7 hours (2.25 face-to-face: 1 session of 1.5h + 1 short session of 45 min; 4.75 online) | 7      |
| 5. Ethics and human existence<br>Society and morality, good and evil, humanism, and ethical definitions of self. Reading: Sartre, 'Existentialism Is a Humanism.' | 7            | 7 hours (1.5 face-to-face: 1 session of 1.5h; 5.5 online)                               | 7      |
| 6. Diversity and difference<br>Multicultural society, inclusive workplaces, culture, and gender. Reading: Anzaldúa, 'La conciencia de la mestiza.'                | 4            | 4 hours (0.75 face-to-face: 1 short session of 45 min; 3.25 online)                     | 4      |

| Topic and content                                                                                                                               | Face-to-face | Hybrid                                                              | Online    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 7. Ethical universalism<br>Race, disability, and avoiding bias in language and behavior. Reading: Walcott, "The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?" | 3            | 3 hours (0.75 face-to-face: 1 short session of 45 min; 2.25 online) | 3         |
| 8. In-class writing and testing<br>Writing exercises and assessment activities.                                                                 | 8            | 8 hours (1.5 face-to-face: 1 session of 1.5h; 6.5 online)           | 8         |
| <b>TOTAL CONTACT HOURS</b>                                                                                                                      | <b>45</b>    | <b>45 (11.25 face-to-face and 33.75 online)</b>                     | <b>45</b> |

*Note: In the face-to-face modality, up to 25% of contact hours may be delivered through an alternate (distance) modality, if necessary.*

## TEXTBOOK

Shafer-Landau, R. (2019). A concise introduction to ethics. Oxford University Press.

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

| Face-to-face                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Hybrid                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Online                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures</li> <li>• Readings</li> <li>• Group work</li> <li>• Individual assignments</li> <li>• Assessment activities</li> <li>• Practice activities</li> <li>• Oral presentations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online modules</li> <li>• Professional articles</li> <li>• Instructional videos</li> <li>• Group and individual work</li> <li>• Assessment and practice</li> <li>• Oral presentations</li> <li>• Asynchronous and synchronous conferences</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interactive modules</li> <li>• Professional articles</li> <li>• Instructional videos</li> <li>• Group and individual work</li> <li>• Assessment and practice</li> <li>• Oral presentations</li> <li>• Videoconferences and synchronous meetings</li> </ul> |

## MINIMUM REQUIRED OR AVAILABLE RESOURCES

| Resource                                               | Face-to-face   | Hybrid      | Online      |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| Institutional learning management system               | Institution    | Institution | Institution |
| Institutional e-mail account                           | Institution    | Institution | Institution |
| Computer or mobile device with high-speed Internet     | Student        | Student     | Student     |
| Word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation software | Student        | Student     | Student     |
| Integrated or external speakers                        | Not applicable | Student     | Student     |
| Webcam or mobile camera and microphone                 | Not applicable | Student     | Student     |

## EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

| Face-to-face                                                                                                                                                                                     | Hybrid                                                                                                                                                                                           | Online                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams and quizzes: 15%</li> <li>• Writing exercises: 15%</li> <li>• Final essay: 20%</li> <li>• Class work: 20%</li> <li>• Oral reports: 20%</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams and quizzes: 15%</li> <li>• Writing exercises: 15%</li> <li>• Final essay: 20%</li> <li>• Class work: 20%</li> <li>• Oral reports: 20%</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exams and quizzes: 10%</li> <li>• Writing exercises: 20%</li> <li>• Final essay: 20%</li> <li>• Forum participation: 30%</li> <li>• Class work: 20%</li> </ul> |
| Attendance and participation: 10%                                                                                                                                                                | Attendance and participation: 10%                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Total: 100%</b>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Total: 100%</b>                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Total: 100%</b>                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The University of Puerto Rico recognizes the right of students with disabilities to an inclusive, equitable, and comparable postsecondary education. Qualified students are entitled to equal participation and reasonable accommodations or modifications. Students who require an accommodation should notify the professor and promptly submit a request to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSEI); disclosure of a diagnosis to the professor is not required.

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRATION AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

Under Academic Affairs Circular 8, 2024-2025, the use of AI tools is permitted in accordance with institutional and course-specific guidelines. Students must disclose and document any use of AI and explain how it contributed to the work submitted. AI may not be used to misrepresent authorship or to submit non-original content without proper attribution.

## **ACT 220-2024: ACADEMIC AGREEMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY ATHLETES**

Act 220-2024 recognizes the right of certified student-athletes to request reasonable academic adjustments during training or competition periods authorized by the Interuniversity Athletic League (LAI). Official documentation and a written academic agreement are required.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Academic Senate Certification 111 (2023-2024), Río Piedras Campus, requires each course to state clear standards for attendance, punctuality, participation, and make-up work. It addresses excused absences, the Attendance Census, appeals, and procedures for extended absences.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Article 6.2 of the UPR General Student Regulations (Board of Trustees Certification 13, 2009-2010) identifies academic dishonesty, including fraud, plagiarism, unauthorized copying, impersonation, and facilitating such conduct. Academic Senate Certification 64 (2022-2023) further affirms honesty, respect, responsibility, and academic rigor in teaching, learning, and research. Violations are subject to disciplinary action. Users must also protect their institutional credentials.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING SEX- OR GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION**

Pursuant to Governing Board Certification 107, 2021-2022, the University promotes a safe environment and establishes procedures for addressing discrimination based on sex, gender, or pregnancy; sexual harassment; sexual violence; domestic violence; dating violence; and stalking.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

A, B, C, D, and F.

## **EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY PLAN**

If an emergency or class interruption occurs, the professor will continue the course through distance or online modalities, in accordance with institutional directives, and will communicate with students through institutional e-mail or other available channels.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Appiah, K. A. (2010). *The ethics of identity*. Princeton University Press.
- Aristotle. (2000). *Nicomachean ethics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Baron, M. W. (2018). *Kantian ethics almost without apology*. Cornell University Press.
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- Casmir, F. L. (2013). *Ethics in intercultural and international communication*. Routledge.
- García, O. A., & Kotturi, P. (2019). *Information and communication technologies for development evaluation*. Routledge.
- Heinaman, R. (2017). *Plato and Aristotle's ethics*. Taylor & Francis.
- Irwin, T. (1995). *Plato's ethics*. Oxford University Press.
- Kaufmann, W. (2016). *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. Pickle Partners Publishing.
- Lipschultz, J. H. (2017). *Social media communication: Concepts, practices, data, law and ethics*. Taylor & Francis.
- Makau, J. M., & Arnett, R. C. (1997). *Communication ethics in an age of diversity*. University of Illinois Press.
- Singer, P. (2011). *Practical ethics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Stevenson, C. L. (1944). *Ethics and language*. Yale University Press.
- Arnett, R. C., Arneson, P., & Bell, L. M. (2006). Communication ethics: The dialogic turn. *Review of Communication*, 6(1-2), 62-92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15358590600763334>
- Ford, R. C., & Richardson, W. D. (1994). Ethical decision making: A review of the empirical literature. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 13(3), 205-221. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02074820>
- Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and ethically important moments in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10(2), 261-280. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800403262360>

Hernández-Ramírez, R. (2017). Technology and self-modification. *Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts*, 9(3), 45-57.  
<https://doi.org/10.7559/citarj.v9i3.423>

Jaggar, A. M. (2017). Feminist ethics. In *The Blackwell guide to ethical theory* (pp. 433-460). Wiley.

## **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy; Purdue Online Writing Lab; Ethics Centre; BBC Ethics; and Foundation for Critical Thinking resources. Electronic resources should be reviewed and updated each semester.

**Last updated: May 2026**