PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY
We want our students to become well-rounded leaders. To contribute to their growth as leaders in whom we will all take pride, the concept and practice of professional responsibility is incorporated into every element of the ILLINOIS experience.

*Business 101: An Introduction to Professional Responsibility* provides the foundation for a lifetime of exercising professional integrity. Core courses in the College of Business build upon that foundation. The life of the College provides additional opportunities to experience how professional responsibility works in practice, from guest lectures and visits by corporate leaders to company internships, study abroad, and involvement in on-campus organizations. Beyond the College of Business, courses across campus and the extra-curricular activities available throughout this great university encourage students to build good habits and strong professional values.

We all belong to many communities, including our families, our college and university, our places of work, and the larger society of which we are all members. We want our students—and our graduates—to distinguish themselves in the world of work and beyond because they make professionally responsible decisions and are recognized for doing so.

Larry DeBrock  
Josef and Margot Lakonishok Endowed Dean, College of Business
BUSINESS 101 OVERVIEW
BUSINESS 101: AN INTRODUCTION TO PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY is a required course for all incoming first year undergraduates—about 600 students—in the College of Business. This unique course, developed in a cross-college collaboration among faculty, the Office of Undergraduate Affairs and the Center for Professional Responsibility in Business and Society, introduces students to the basic principles of professional responsibility and their application through three modules and recurring “two-minute challenges.”

The three-module course is taught in a combination of large lectures and small sections. The large lectures feature experienced faculty who share their perspectives on ways to develop a sense of professional responsibility as an individual, as a member of a profession, and as a member of an organization that plays a critical role in society. The course aims to develop a strong sense of the meaning of participating in communities of various kinds, and to explain why individuals should take on the responsibility and accountability that comes with being a member of those communities. Throughout the course, students practice using a decision-making framework that gives them experience solving the kinds of dilemmas they will face once they join the working world. The small sections are facilitated by experienced undergraduates who have been selected and educated in more depth on various aspects of professional responsibility and are positioned to provide guidance as well as to facilitate discussion with the students.
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Business 101 starts with a discussion of a professional’s personal responsibilities and provides a structured way for students to develop themselves as members of the business community. Students create a formal resume, learn how to use the College of Business online career development tools, enhance their written and oral communication skills, start considering their values and how to match them to those of potential employers, receive advice on how to dress for success, and build relationships with alumni and corporate representatives by participating in a formal career fair.
TWO-MINUTE CHALLENGE: You list on an application and your resume that you are “actively involved in Finance Club.” You did attend a few meetings, but your other commitments presented time conflicts with the club’s volunteer activities and guest speaker events. Are your application and resume accurate?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: What happens if the interviewer was also active in Finance Club and asks you which of the guest speakers was your favorite? What if the interviewer was a guest speaker? What if the interviewer’s niece is the president of the club and says she has never heard of you? How might any of these, or other related scenarios, affect your chances of getting admitted or hired?
Students continue the examination of their personal values in this module, learn about principles of professional responsibility in the workplace, and identify connections between the two. Using a consistent decision-making framework, students explore professional dilemmas and develop constructive ways to approach them.
TWO-MINUTE CHALLENGE: At a family dinner, your recently widowed aunt talks about her plan to invest all of your uncle’s estate in the company he worked for, since he was a lifelong employee and they treated him very well. You are a summer intern for a local accountant. A few weeks ago, you noticed a pattern of the largest local clients moving their money out of the company, which is the area’s major employer. You asked your boss about it and he said there are serious concerns about the company’s viability, so all those “in the know” are moving their money before the company declares bankruptcy. He tells you this is confidential, company-private information and you cannot disclose it. What do you do?
SOCIETAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of a team, students devise business solutions to poverty-based market opportunities to demonstrate ways that organizations and individuals can be professionally responsible to society as a whole. Students are introduced to subsistence marketplaces through a poverty simulation that includes interviews and video analysis, lectures, and virtual immersion exercises. The skills from all three modules are combined as the teams develop a product idea and business plan that emphasizes people, planet, and profits. The capstone project is a poster session demonstrating each team’s corporate governance model, including mission statements and a code of conduct, as well as specific elements of a business plan.
TWO-MINUTE CHALLENGE: You are the manager for a product line at a medical products company. All your financial projections, your bonus, and all the commissions for your sales force are based on a new product going to market this year. The federal government approval process is moving slowly but you have been assured by the company’s lawyers that the approval will come through before the end of the third quarter. Planning ahead, you get the product packaged, to the distribution centers, and ready to go while you are waiting for final approval. You now learn that your sales force is giving out free samples to prime the market. What do you do?
THINKING ABOUT PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY: A FRAMEWORK FOR MAKING DECISIONS

- What issues does this situation present?
- What rules and regulations apply?
- What questions do you need/want to ask?
- What resources are available to you to work through this situation?
- What options do you have? Who will be affected by each?
- What are you going to do?
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON

Business 101:
An Introduction to Professional Responsibility

Center for Professional Responsibility in Business and Society
www.business.illinois.edu/responsibility
312-575-7952

Office of Undergraduate Affairs
www.business.illinois.edu/undergrad
217-333-2740