

Statement on the History and Philosophy of Business Ethics Coursework at Kansas State University

The social unrest of the 1960s brought with it a realization that business schools were doing little to prepare their students to live and work in such a rapidly changing society. We did a good job of teaching the functional areas of business and required elective courses in the social sciences and humanities. At Kansas State, we saw a need to integrate these liberal arts subjects into the business curriculum. We did that with a new required course, Business, Government, and Society, introduced under the leadership of our new Dean, Robert Lynn, in 1967. While serving as a vice president of the University, I taught a section of the new course in the fall of 1969. After returning to full time teaching in 1970, I became the lead professor for the undergraduate course and also developed a graduate course, The Legal and Social Environment of Business, required of all our MBA students. As a professor, it was extremely challenging to lead students in discussions about issues which were often shrouded in many shades of gray. My objective was simply to have the students understand that there is an ethical dimension to many business decisions and that they should be aware of the social consequences of their decisions.

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cited in *Toward Assessing Business Ethics Education*,
Diane L. Swanson and Dann G. Fisher, Co-Editors, 2011