TEAM PROJECT ASSIGNMENT--PART #3 OF THE COURSE

Schedule for Part #3

(Note: You are also expected to spend time on the Team Projects during Part #2 of the Course.)

Tu 4/4 Working Sessions – No formal class
Th 4/6 Working Sessions – No formal class
Tu 4/11 Working Sessions – No formal class  PART #2 ESSAYS DUE
Th 4/13 Working Sessions – No formal class
Tu 4/18 ORAL REPORTS FOR PART #3
Th 4/20 ORAL REPORTS FOR PART #3
Tu 4/25 ORAL REPORTS FOR PART #3
Th 4/27 ORAL REPORTS FOR PART #3
M 5/1 INDIVIDUAL “PORTFOLIOS” FOR PART #3 DUE THE 1st

Procedures, Participation, and Course Work

Each team is expected to meet during the working sessions. Team members should attend these sessions, and I will ask the team chairs to take attendance. In addition to these regularly scheduled working sessions, additional sessions–either for the whole team or for sub-teams–will be necessary. I will serve as consultant to the teams, and the teams are responsible for initiating and scheduling whatever consultation they want. In addition, the teams should give the consultant (that is, me) regular updates on the teams’ progress (“regular” means, first, “once at the end of Part #2” and then “weekly during Part #3”). These updates should be in the form of brief written statements.

The Oral Reports will be given in our class room, and all students in the class are expected to be present for the reports of each of the teams. The oral reports will last no more than 15 minutes per team (including 5 minutes for questions).

Each team’s report should be given by one or two persons, since that is the best way to assure a cogent and coherent presentation within the 10+ minute limit. However, every member of a team should play an appropriate role in the research and discussion leading up to the report.

I strongly recommend the following organization for each team. (1) The team should select a chair. This person will be responsible for coordinating the team's work, interfacing with the consultant (including preparation of the regular written updates on the team's progress), and facilitating communication among the members of the team. (2) The team should select a recorder, who will take notes at the team meeting and then distribute these to the team members. (3) The team should also select the person or persons who will make the oral presentation. The
presenter(s) will be responsible for giving the final “polish” to the presentation. Although some team members will have the extra responsibility of being chair or recorder or presenter, ALL team members will conduct the research upon which the oral presentation will be based, and they will also discuss the specific content of the oral presentation (that is, the team members are responsible for the content of the oral presentation). Each team should divide its topic into sub-topics, and persons should be assigned responsibility for researching each of the topics and for then supplying the team with a written statement of their findings and conclusions. These written accounts will provide the basis for the team’s planning of the oral presentation, as well as for the actual presentation.

The first item of business for the teams should be selection of a chair, recorder, and presenter(s). Teams should have identified sub-topics and completed their research plan no later than Friday, March 31.

The team oral reports will be graded. The team grade will be shared equally by all members of the team. See the course web site for presentation guidelines.

In addition to the oral reports, each person is required to turn in a written “portfolio,” or summary, of their contribution to the team study. A copy of the written statement of findings and conclusions which is supplied to the team will be sufficient. See the course web site for portfolio guidelines.

**Topics**

There are eight topics, and two teams will work on each topic. The topics--and each team’s responsibilities within each topic--are as follows. I have also listed the date each team will make its presentation. It is OK with me for teams to switch dates with mutual agreement; however, the switch needs to be made by pairs of teams since both presentations on a case should be made the same day.

**The Crown Center--Hyatt Regency Case (Teams # 1 and # 2) – Present on April 18**

Central ethical problem: The collapse of an aerial walkway that was not constructed as designed and would not have met codes anyway.

**The DC-10 Case (Teams # 3 and # 4) – Present on April 18**

Central ethical problem: The continued flying and subsequent crash of a plane known to be defective.

**The Challenger Case (Teams #5 and #6) – Present on April 20**

Central ethical problem: The launch of the Challenger with a design and under conditions which combined to give a high probability of failure--after persons within the project had given warnings about this.

**The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Case (Teams #7 and #8) – Present on April 20**

Central ethical problem: Putting into operation an automatic train system that had been demonstrated by its own engineers to be unsafe.
The Pinto Case (Teams #9 and #10) – Present on April 25
Central ethical problem: Failing to issue a recall for car known to be defective, and continuing to manufacture it without a redesign to fix the flaw.

The Tacoma Narrows Bridge Collapse (Teams #11 and #12 – Present on April 25
Central ethical problem: Pushing the design parameters beyond the point of safety, and then failing to apply adequate fixes.

The Toxic Vapor Leak at Bhopal, India (Teams #13 & #14 – Present on April 27
Central ethical problem: Operating a chemical plant in India under conditions that violated both company and industry-wide safety standards.

The Three Mile Island Accident (Teams # 15 & 16 – Present on April 27
Central ethical issue: Failing to correct a demonstrated unsafe nuclear power plant design, and responding ineffectively to a failure stemming from these.

As you can see, all eight cases involve disasters, and in all eight, there probably was sufficient knowledge prior to the disaster to have prevented it. The causes of the disaster thus fall into two categories: the technical/managerial causes that actually produce the failure and the ethical causes that stopped the people who knew better from preventing the disaster.

Each Case involves a set of decisions and actions which led to the central ethical issue or problem of the Case. The first teams listed for each Case are responsible for investigating the causes of the central ethical issues or problems. Their presentations should answer such questions as why did the issues or problems occur? and, who was at fault or to blame? The primary task is the analysis of the disaster. The second teams listed for each Case are responsible for exploring ways in which the problems or issues could have been prevented or resolved. Their presentations should answer such questions as how could the problems have been avoided or the issues resolved (that is, what alternative designs and managerial strategies could have been followed)? and, what ethical actions and decisions should have been substituted for the unethical ones which led to the problems or issues? The primary task is the invention of an alternative scenario.

A word about coordination between the two teams for each topic. The teams will be small – most will have five members. The first step for both teams will be to get the detailed facts about the case. The two teams should be able to cooperate during this step, and they should share the factual information with each other. The team chairs should facilitate this. Once the facts are in hand, the teams should move forward separately with their specialized focus.

PLEASE NOTE the following guidelines:

1) Both teams for each Case must start their discussions from the facts of the Case. To rephrase the above point, the teams should cooperate with each other in the collection of these facts, and the chairs of the teams are responsible for coordinating this cooperation.

2) Your projects should focus on the ethical dimensions of the Cases. Although a technical/managerial analysis of the problems and issues is a necessary part of the
projects, the “bottom line” should be a set of ethical judgments. Who acted rightly, and who wrongly? How would ethically correct actions and decisions have prevented the problem or issue?

3) Your ethical discussions and conclusions should explicitly draw on the concepts and theories which were introduced in Part #1 of the course, and our case discussions from Part #2 should be brought in where appropriate. Please note this point. The presentations should make use of such theories as Utilitarianism, Rawls’ justice as fairness, the due care theory of consumer protection, professional codes of ethics, etc.

I will give each team a “jump start” for its Case. This will include material introducing the Case and an indication of where the team can look for further information. This material does not, however, exhaust the information resources, and you should research the Case as thoroughly as possible.