

**Development of a Business Ethics Curriculum in Russia**  
Philip M. Nichols  
The Wharton School  
2010-2011 Zicklin Center Faculty Funding Research Project

In conjunction with the Center for Business Ethics (a national NGO in Russia) and a group of universities lead at the moment by the Institute of Finance and Economics, I and a group of Russian economists have been asked to do research on and to help develop a business ethics curriculum for business/economics schools in Russia. The task is much harder than it might seem, not least because education and in particular business education are approached much differently there than here, and because the idea of business ethics as a discipline is in its infancy. The economists with whom I am working are both members of the small group that Gaidar put together during perestroika and who guided the country through its transition; both now have influential government positions and academic positions and are deeply respected throughout the country. I think that their involvement may help this project come to fruition; obviously in Russia it is difficult for any project to realize its completion.

Our initial project is to conduct a (or a series of) two-layer seminar(s). The first layer is to prepare faculty for the second layer. The second layer is to assign students in the universities with which we are working a research assignment: to develop case studies on the methods that a given Russian company uses to deal with social/ethical problems or issues (CFBE is talking to a business association of prominent Russian businesses about obtaining access for students). We hope to realize at least three things from this initial project: 1) in preparing them for it, we will have a door into teaching faculty about business ethics – even in the very best universities in Russia faculty are far more concerned about teaching than research’ this approach comports with how they understand universities; 2) we will coordinate a multi-party dialogue on business ethics – one of the interesting aspects of business ethics right now is a sense among most parties that no one knows what is going on or how to talk about it; 3) we will generate a lot of good information (especially for me, but that is not the point); including case studies for classroom use and data for a more academic treatment of the subject.