Corporate Ethics and Social Responsibility are relevant themes for the world of education, since one of the universities’ mission is to ensure the flow of knowledge beyond its borders. This action is enhanced by the commitment to promote the dialogue between members of different foreign countries, widening the understanding through the contribution of different perspectives.

Moreover, the present challenges require that universities play an active role regarding ethics. The financial crisis that shook the world in 2008, the ecological disasters, the concern about climate change, corruption, the exploitation of people in the workplace, and other issues, challenge the reflection about ethics in business and social responsibility, not as mere compliance with regulatory standards, but as structural changes in companies and their leaders.

In this process, the training of students should exceed the development of skills and abilities to serve the market, and pay attention to their ethical and responsible training. The need to respond to the present and future generations urges universities to deepen this topic in different forums that bring together actors of society, the State and productive chains.

That was the challenge of BESR International Seminar, held at American University, in Washington DC, that brought together, in July 2011, representatives from Methodist institutions from several countries. The Seminar results from a number of events on business ethics, and was organized with the support of the International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges & Universities – IAMSCU, starting in Australia, in 2005, and moving to Japan, Malaysia and Hawaii between 2007 and 2010.

The articles in this special issue of COGEIME reflect the concerns of researchers whose object of study is business ethics and social responsibility. Each article considers the processes used by different cultures and realities in dealing with issues related to this theme. The presentation of texts includes theoretical challenges, empirical research and experience reports, bringing the different countries’ scenarios to contribute to the understanding of the subject.
The articles contribute with reflections and questionings without attempting to exhaust the debate. This is the field of education: to promote debate and build bridges for dialogue are part of its responsibility.

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