

Expert to tout business ethics

Peter Eigen to discuss transparency during Friday lecture

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By [Mark Fagan](#)

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An international authority on ethics who has worked to reduce corruption in business, governance and development will offer insights about his work during a lecture Friday at Kansas University.

Peter Eigen, founder and chairman of the Advisory Council of Transparency International, will deliver the 2007 Walter S. Sutton Ethics Lecture at 5 p.m. at the Spencer Museum of Art. The event is free and open to the public.

His topic — “Corruption in a Globalized Economy: The Role of Civil Society Organizations to Improve Governance” — follows what is described to be Eigen’s life work: to push for more transparency and accountability in international development.

The organization he founded, Transparency International, works to reduce corruption globally in politics, public contracting, the private sector, international aid and economic development. The organization’s efforts have included boosting public awareness of such issues.

Two of the organization's own services include compilation of:

- **The Corruption Perceptions Index.** First released in 1995, the annual CPI report ranks more than 150 countries by their perceived levels of corruption, as determined by expert assessments and opinion surveys. Haiti ranks worst among 163 countries (Iraq rates as No. 160) in terms of corruption perceptions, while Finland rates as the most clean. The United States checks in at No. 20, tied with Belgium and Chile.
- **The Bribe Payers Index.** The BPI is gleaned from surveys that evaluate the supply side of corruption — the propensity of firms from industrialized countries to bribe abroad. The United States ranks No. 9, tied with Belgium, among 30 countries rated. India rates as the most corrupt, while Switzerland ranks as the least corrupt.

Eigen has worked in economic development for 25 years, primarily as a World Bank manager of programs in Africa and Latin America. In those capacities he analyzed economic conditions, coordinated sources of financing and development, and managed work programs.

Through two Ford Foundation sponsorships, Eigen provided technical and legal support for the governments of Botswana and Namibia in 1973 and 1991, respectively. In both instances he provided policy advice for economic development and offered expertise in international negotiations, including mining and water projects, taxation, and currency and trade.

Eigen has taught law at the universities of Frankfurt and Georgetown and, from 1999 to 2001, served as an adjunct lecturer at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He still teaches in the School of Advanced International Studies at John Hopkins University.

In 1962 and 1963, Eigen attended graduate school at KU, studying political science and economics. Two years later he earned a doctorate from the University of Frankfurt.

The Sutton Lecture is sponsored by the KU International Center for Ethics in Business and the KU School of Business and is made possible by a gift in 1993 from Betsey G. Sutton in memory of her husband, Walter Sutton.