

COM 367 – Ethical Problems in Mass Communication

Section 01, FALL 2019, 3 credit hours – Online through ReggieNet – August 19 – December 6
School of Communication, Illinois State University

Professor: Dr. Maria A. Moore

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Prerequisites: COM 111, 160 and 297

Email contact with your Professor: My email address is listed above. I review email daily, and should be able to respond to quick questions, concerns or comments within 24 hours.



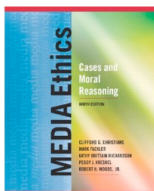
Course Description: This course will empower students with essential skills and theoretical understanding as the foundation for ethical decision-making involved in the creation and dissemination of mass communication content. Through case-based encounters with practical and relevant situations, students will gain deeper ability to recognize ethical issues, develop analytical skills, and appreciate the complexities of ethical issues confronting professionals in the fields of journalism, advertising, political speech, public relations, and entertainment.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the intellectual steps required for moral reasoning
- Describe and differentiate among fundamental ethical theories
- Analyze specific ethical and moral cases in news, advertising, public relations, political speech, and entertainment
- Be aware of the ethical principles ascribed by professionals in journalism, advertising, public relations, and entertainment
- Independently apply critical thinking skills to examine issues of power and persuasion
- Become a more purposeful and ethically aware consumer of media
- Consider the ethical impact of civically engaged media activities
- Create your own personal code of ethics

Text -- you will need the textbook! Used is okay, as long as it is the right edition



Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning, Ninth Edition, Christians, C.G.; Fackler, M.; Brittain-Richardson, K.; Kreshel, P.J.; & Woods, R.H. (2011), Boston: Allyn Bacon. **ISBN-10:** 0205029043; **ISBN-13:** 978-0205029044

Course Policies

Skills for Online Class: As you are registered for an online course, it is assumed that you have the basic computer skills necessary for participating in and completing a class online. Familiarity with your computer, its programs, and its operating system will help you succeed as an online student. Within our ReggieNet site, students must be able to send messages to their instructor, upload attachments, post assignments, communicate with other students, and navigate the course site. Your instructor should not be relied upon as a technical tutor for the course. Motivation and organization are necessary skills required for online learning. Students must organize themselves for every aspect of class, including submitting assignments by the indicated deadlines and scheduling and taking tests within the designated time frames. Although online learning provides a flexible modality of study, the rules for successful completion are rigid. Therefore, accommodations cannot be made when students deviate from the deadline expectations as stated on the course site.

Participation: This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, and most rely on active and prepared participation from all of us. When participating online, be ENGAGED with the elements of each lesson. While you are engaged with the course turn off your cell phones, use your computer for coursework only, don't be tempted by game-playing, email, texting, browsing or chatting.

Time: We will respect one another's time in this course. For each lesson, we will start and end on deadline. We will use our time fully and productively. **You should expect this course to require approximately 9-12 hours of time for each week of this course.**

ReggieNet: Students will be expected to have a working knowledge of ReggieNet and to regularly log into ReggieNet. Inability to use or have access to ReggieNet will compromise your success in this class.

Assignment Due Dates: Deadlines are firm and non-negotiable, as they would be in the professional world. All times listed are Central Daylight Time (CDT). Clear deadlines are essential to the fair treatment of students who do complete assignments on time. Assignments are happily accepted early. Written assignments are to be submitted via ReggieNet.



Tech Problems: Technical issues are not considered valid excuses for handing in late work. ReggieNet can be accessed from any computer with Internet access. If you experience technical problems on your home computer, you have the option of using a colleague's or family member's computer, a public library, etc. It is also your responsibility to be certain assignments are submitted properly and received by your instructor.

Special Needs or Accommodation: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu. Please email me privately regarding any course adaptation or accommodations you may require.

Technical Skills and Requirements: The software and hardware requirements for this course are consistent with what is available on your university computer. Participants are required to have access to and working knowledge of a computer with dependable Internet access. A good wireless connection is sufficient for most of the learning activities; however, a high-speed cable Internet connection may be necessary for some video or other multimedia.



Academic Integrity: Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's placement of his or her name on any academic exercise shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought, effort, and study. Students who have questions regarding issues of academic dishonesty should refer to the University regulation that outlines unacceptable behaviors in academic matters. It is the student and faculty's responsibility to uphold the principles of Academic Integrity. Academic Integrity is an important part of this University and this course. Academic Integrity is required of you the student and myself as the

instructor. Academic Integrity should be used in preparation of this course, in class time, regarding exams, and with regard to written assignments. In certain circumstances (such as cheating or plagiarism) faculty may be required to refer a student(s) to Community Rights & Responsibilities for a violation of Illinois State University's Code of Student Conduct. (*Quoted from "Community Rights and Responsibilities at Illinois State University".*)

Also, please note this particular ISU policy. "Inappropriate use of resources includes any use of ISU Information Technology Resources and Systems that violates state or federal law [such as sharing or selling intellectual property created by faculty members, e.g. notes, assignments, assessments, that are made available to them through enrollment in an online course], University policies or procedures, or interferes with the University mission."

Participants should have the following software installed on the primary computer used for the course:

1. **MS Word.** You can purchase a "home" copy of Microsoft Office from TechZone in the Bone Student Center.
2. A program that lets you read and save PDF versions of documents such as **Microsoft Save as PDF or Adobe Reader.**
3. **Quicktime.** Quicktime is a free program that allows you to listen to audio files or watch video files. You can download Quicktime from the [Quicktime Download Page](#).
4. **Adobe Flash Player.** You download the free Flash Player from the [Flash Player Download Page](#).
5. **Java.** This should also be part of the standard install on your departmental machine, and is likely also installed on your personal computer. You can check for the latest update at the [Java Download Page](#).
6. **Firefox** (for Windows). Firefox is a free browser and can be downloaded from the [Firefox Download Page](#).
7. **Safari** (for Mac). Safari is a free web browser and can be downloaded from the [Safari Download Page](#).

If you need assistance installing software on a departmental machine, please contact your local (departmental or college) tech support person. If you need assistance installing software on a personal computer, you should contact the [Illinois State University Computer Help Desk](#) (309.438.HELP, 7:30AM – Midnight, 7 days a week).

Study Tips

Though Media Ethics can be a formidable and difficult subject, you may find this course to be compelling, interesting and valuable towards achieving your future goals. Purposeful study and critical thinking are more important than mere memorization of facts in this course. Here are some suggestions you might consider:

As you study the assigned readings make margin notes as you read. Think about how you might use the information you've read to participate in online discussion.

Consider forming an informal study group with two or three other members of the class via Facebook or discussion board. Support and challenge one another as you read, study and discuss.

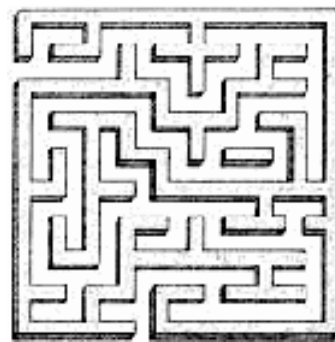
Keep your textbook handy as you engage in each weekly lesson. It may be helpful to refer to it as you participate in the lesson or in discussions.

Netiquette

We agree to interact in a positive, cooperative and supportive manner and display respect for the privacy and rights of others. All course communication should be conducted in Standard American English to ensure understanding among diverse participants.

Core Values

- Deep learning is not passive, it is not easy, and it is not accidental.
- We will purposefully welcome and encourage the consideration and discussion of conflicting ideas without rudeness.
- We will celebrate our different ways of being, learning, and living without judgment or ridicule.
- We will regularly consider the impact of becoming a civically engaged citizen.
- We will interact with one another with grace and civility, recognizing each person's unique value and accomplishments.
- We will recognize enterprise and creativity, but will also value silence and critical reflection.
- We will remember that humor connects us, person to person, and brings out our authentic self.



GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate students are encouraged to take this course for graduate credit and are most welcome in this class. As you encounter assignments in the course, you will note that there are different instructions and grading criteria for the work you submit. Always use the graduate instructions, examples, and rubrics when completing assignments.

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*Note: This syllabus may be amended at any time.
Any changes will be discussed via email with the class and will be confirmed in writing.*

Points:		Quiz	Assignment
Beginnings:	Orientation		
	Foundations	20	25
News:	News Part 1	20	
	News Part 2	20	60
Advertising:	Advertising Part 1	20	
	Advertising Part 2	20	60
PR:	Public Relations Part 1	20	
	Public Relations Part 2	20	60
Entertainment:	Entertainment Part 1	20	
	Entertainment Part 2	20	60
Endings:	Course wrap up	5	50
	Totals:	185	315
	Course Total:		500
Grading:			
	A	450-500	
	B	400-449	
	C	350-399	
	D	300-349	
	F	Below 299	

This is a brief description of the six assignments and projects in this course. More detail and the grading rubric for each will be available to you when you encounter the assignment/project in the various lessons. These descriptions are provided to give you an opportunity to plan ahead and to manage your time as you begin each lesson.

Theory and Theorist Summary: You will become familiar with the primary ethical theorists through reading your text and engaging in the Foundations Lesson on the theorists. The purpose of this activity is to encourage you to know the primary ethical theories we will use in this class by writing a short summary about your favorite theory and theorist.

NEWS Ethics Case Study Executive Memo: At the conclusion of our lesson sections on News Ethics, you will have the opportunity to find, examine, and critically evaluate ethical issues and implications from a real-world example of your own choosing (make sure it an example that was not covered in our text nor in our on-line class). Your analysis will result in a written executive memo.

ADVERTISING Ethics Case Study Executive Memo: At the conclusion of our lesson sections on Advertising Ethics, you will have the opportunity to find, examine, and critically evaluate ethical issues and implications from a real-world example of your own choosing (make sure it an example that was not covered in our text nor in our on-line class). Your analysis will result in written executive memo.

PUBLIC RELATIONS Ethics – Interview a Manager Project: For this assignment, you will need to seek out and interview in-person (can be face to face or virtual using FaceTime or Skype) a manager of an organization or company. You might consider a relative, or a family friend, or a previous ISU student who is now in the workforce, or seeking out a manager in a company you are interested in working for.

ENTERTAINMENT Ethics – At the Movies Project: Grab your popcorn, borrow/rent a movie, and complete your project for our Entertainment Ethics section. Pick a movie from the list that will be provided—one that you HAVE NOT SEEN. Watch it, while considering the media ethical dilemmas faced by the people who made the film and/or the media ethical dilemmas faced by the characters portrayed in the film.

Personal Code of Ethics: As the culminating project for the end of this course, you have the opportunity to codify your own personal ethical principles and standards. You have complete freedom to design your code style and mode of presentation.

COM 367 FALL 2019 -- LESSONS AND DUE DATES

Lesson 1: Orientation ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY AUGUST 27, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Complete the on-line lesson on how to succeed in an online course
- Know the course syllabus and performance expectations

Lesson 2: Ethical Foundations ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 3, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 1-28: *Ethical Foundations* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete the online lesson and View presentation
- **Assignment: Theorist and Theory summary (25 points)**

Lesson 3: News Part 1 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 29-77: *Institutional Pressures, Truth-telling, & Reporters/Sources* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson

Lesson 4: News Part 2 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 28-114: *Social Justice & Invasion of Privacy* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson
- **Assignment: News Ethics Case Study & Case Summaries (60 points)**

Lesson 5: Advertising Part 1 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 115-154: *Commercialization & Image-Based* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson

Lesson 6: Advertising Part 2 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY OCTOBER 1, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 155-198: *Media are Commercial & Professional Culture* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson
- **Assignment: Advertising Ethics Case Study & Case Summaries (60 points)**

➤ **Pre-Mid-Term Late Work Due Tuesday October 8, 11:55pm CDT for 50% credit**

Lesson 7: Public Relations Part 1 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY OCTOBER 15, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 199-225: *Public Communication & Truth-telling* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson

Lesson 8: Public Relations Part 2 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY OCTOBER 22, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 226-250: *Conflicting Loyalties & Social Responsibility* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson
- **Assignment: Interview a Professional & PR Case Summaries (60 points)**

Lesson 9: Entertainment Part 1 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY OCTOBER 29, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 251-278: *Violence & Profits* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson

Lesson 10: Entertainment Part 2 ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 5, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Read text p. 279-300: *Scope/Depth & Censorship* & **take quiz (20 points)**
- Complete on-line lesson
- **Assignment: At the Movies & Entertainment Case Summaries (60 points)**

Lesson 11: Course Wrap Up ([ALL COMPONENTS DUE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 11:55PM CDT](#))

- Complete School of Communication Course Evaluation (anonymous survey)
- **Assignment: Course Wrap-up survey (5 POINTS)**
- **Assignment: Personal Code of Ethics (50 points)**

➤ **Post Mid-Term Late Work Due Tuesday December 3, 11:55pm CDT for 50% credit**