



**Bachelor of Applied Arts (Media Studies)  
Diploma in Media Communications**

**Winter 2016**

**Section: 01 & 02**

**AHSS 1080**

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<b>Course Title:</b>	Ethical Issues in Media
<b>Pre-requisites:</b>	None
<b>Co-requisites:</b>	None
<b>Restrictions:</b>	None
<b>Credits:</b>	0.50
<b>Course Website (If applicable):</b>	<a href="http://www.onlineguelphhumber.ca/">http://www.onlineguelphhumber.ca/</a>
<b>Method of Delivery:</b>	3-0 (Lecture)

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***Calendar Description:***

Through a case study approach, this course examines ethical theories to contemporary moral issues faced by professionals working in media industries. It examines which, if any, limits should be placed on the media and its influence on society.

## ***Course Learning Outcomes:***

On completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Define the term ethics.
2. Identify the principles of the free market economy.
3. Outline the theory of distributive justice advanced by Rawls.
4. Define the term conflict of interest and provide examples of this kind of moral dilemma from the media.
5. Compare and contrast relativism and moral absolutism identifying the relative strengths and weaknesses of each theory.
6. Compare and contrast natural vs. civil rights, prima facie vs. absolute rights, and positive vs. negative rights using the right to privacy.
7. Outline the basic principles of utilitarianism making reference to the concepts of net utility, higher and lower pleasures.
8. Identify the steps in the process for moral decision-making encompassed in Kant's Categorical Imperative and apply this model to discussions of lying.
9. Summarize the problems with distinguishing storytelling from lying making references to media technology.
10. Provide an account of the is/ought fallacy.
11. Identify the moral issues that arise when entertainment and information are conflated.
12. Define the term caveat emptor and evaluate the relative merits and demerits of adopting this account of responsibility in relation to the media.
13. Outline Locke's theory of private property and evaluate the applicability of this doctrine to intellectual property.
14. Provide an account of Aristotle's distinction between acting in and acting through ignorance.
15. Identify four arguments used by Mill in his defence of freedom of expression.
16. Summarize Mill's harm principle and apply it to discussions of freedom of expression.
17. Compare and contrast ethics of conduct and virtue ethics.
18. Outline Aristotle's doctrine of the mean.
19. Analyse the relative strengths and weaknesses of legislating the media.

## Learning Resources

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### *Required Textbook(s):*

**Title:** Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning  
**Author:** Clifford G. Christians, Mark Fackler, Kathy Brittain Richardson, Peggy J. Kreshel, Robert H. Woods, Jr.  
**Edition:** Ninth Edition  
**ISBN:** 9780205029044  
**Publisher:** Pearson

## Course Schedule

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Lesson/ Week	Topic	Readings/Activities
1 Jan. 13	Introduction to Course, Philosophy and Ethics	N/A
2 Jan. 20	Ethical Theories News: Institutional Pressures and Truth-telling	Ethical Foundations and Perspectives, pp. 1-27 Chapters 1 & 2
3 Jan. 27	News: Reporters and Sources, Invasion of Privacy	Chapters 3 & 4
4 Feb. 3	Persuasion in Advertising: The Commercialization of Everyday Life, and Advertising in an Image-based Culture Class Debate #1	Chapters 6 & 7
5 Feb. 10	Persuasion in Advertising: Advertising's Professional Culture Review and preparation for Midterm Class Debate #2	Chapter 9
<b>Winter Break (Reading Week)</b>		
6 Feb. 24	Midterm in class	N/A
7 Mar. 2	Public Relations and Persuasion: Public Communication Class Debate #3	Chapter 10
8 Mar. 9	Public Relations and Persuasion: Telling the Truth in Organizational Settings and Conflicting Loyalties Class Debate #4	Chapters 11 & 12
9 Mar. 16	Entertainment: Violence Class Debate #5	Chapter 14
10 Mar. 23	Entertainment: Media Scope and Depth <b>**Essay Due**</b> Class Debate #6	Chapter 16
11 Mar. 30	Entertainment: Censorship Class Debate #7	Chapter 17
12 April 6	Conclusions and Review for Final Exam	N/A
<b>Final Exam – (to be scheduled within final exam period) Please check <a href="http://www.guelphhumber.ca">www.guelphhumber.ca</a> for exam schedules</b>		

## **Evaluation and Due Dates**

Students will be evaluated in this course through:

Midterm	25%
Debate-In Class	20%
Essay Assignment	25%
Final Exam	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**NOTE:** All final exams are 2 hours in length and will be scheduled by Registrarial Services and available online at <http://guelphhumber.ca/registrar/schedules>

All instructions for course work to be provided within course website.

### **Policy for Late Work:**

**5% per day to a maximum of 7 days, at which point the student will receive zero on that assignment.**

### **Drop Box Policy**

If late submissions are permitted by the late policy of this course outline, such assignments submitted after the due date must be electronically date stamped and placed in the secure assignment drop box, located on the second floor in the Learning Commons.

**NOTE: The University of Guelph-Humber Undergraduate Calendar states:**

*“Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.”*

Accordingly, instructors may decide to use originality checking services, such as Turnitin.com, to ensure that submitted work conforms to the university’s Academic Misconduct policy. The instructor will notify students of such a requirement in advance. More information on Academic Misconduct is included below in this outline.

# Academic Policies

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## **Important University of Guelph-Humber Academic Regulations**

### ***Academic Integrity / Academic Honesty***

Academic misconduct is behaviour that erodes the basis of mutual trust on which scholarly exchanges commonly rest, undermines the University's exercise of its responsibility to evaluate students' academic achievements, or restricts the University's ability to accomplish its learning objectives.

The University takes a serious view of academic misconduct and will severely penalize students, faculty and staff who are found guilty of offences associated with misappropriation of others' work, misrepresentation of personal performance and fraud, improper access to scholarly resources, and obstructing others in pursuit of their academic endeavours. In addition to this policy, the University has adopted a number of policies that govern such offences, including the policies on Misconduct in Research and Scholarship and the Student Rights and Responsibilities regulations. These policies will be strictly enforced.

It is the responsibility of the University, its faculty, students and staff to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible through establishment and use of policies and preventive procedures to limit the likelihood of offences occurring. Furthermore, individual members of the University community have the specific responsibility of initiating appropriate action in all instances where academic misconduct is believed to have taken place. This responsibility includes reporting such offences when they occur and making one's disapproval of such behaviour obvious.

University of Guelph-Humber students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students should also be aware that if they find their academic performance affected by medical, psychological or compassionate circumstances, they should inform the appropriate individuals, (instructors, Academic Advisor) and follow the available procedures for academic consideration outlined in the University's calendar.

Students are encouraged to review the policy:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/guelphhumber/current/c07/c07-amisconduct.shtml>

### ***Grading Procedures***

Feedback to students on work completed or in progress is an integral part of teaching and learning in that it allows students to measure their understanding of material and their progress on learning objectives. Feedback often goes beyond grading-an indication of the standard achieved-to include comments on the particular strengths and weaknesses of a student's performance. While the nature and frequency of such feedback will vary with the course, the University of Guelph is committed to providing students with appropriate and timely feedback

on their work. Instructors must provide meaningful and constructive feedback prior to the 40th class day. This may include but is not exclusive to returning papers, assignments, in-class or laboratory quizzes, laboratory reports, or mid-term examinations prior to the 40th class day. In research and independent study courses, instructors must provide students with a realistic idea of their performance by discussing progress directly with the student and, if necessary, identify specific areas for improvement. This may include the assessment of a research plan, literature review, annotated bibliography, oral presentation or other assessment tools.

### ***Missed Final Exams / Deferred Privileges***

When students do not write a required final examination, complete a final assignment, or complete a work term report prior to the last class date, they must request Academic Consideration to be considered for a deferred privilege. When granted, a deferred privilege allows a student the opportunity to complete the final course requirements after the end of the semester, but during established timelines.

Please note that faculty members do not grant deferred privileges. Faculty can only grant academic consideration for work that is due during the semester and cannot grant extensions beyond their deadline for submission of final grades.

The nature of the deferred privilege may take the form of either a deferred condition or a deferred examination. The Admissions and Academic Review Sub-Committee grants deferred privileges on the basis of **medical**, **psychological** or **compassionate** consideration. Please see your Admission and Program advisor for details.

### ***Accommodation Procedures***

Students will identify themselves to Accessibility Learning Services and, where required, provide appropriate documentation of their need. Where appropriate, students will inform individual instructors of their disabilities and academic accommodations required, by distributing an "***Accommodation Letter***".

#### **When students require test accommodations, they will**

- Remind instructors at least **one week in advance** of each test or as soon as possible, that they require test accommodation.
- Book the test date and time in the Accessibility Learning Services office or make the appropriate arrangements to write in the Test Centre at least one week in advance of each test, or as soon as possible.

Students with special needs are accommodated through Humber ITAL Accessibility Learning Services. Students should make themselves familiar with the policies relating to special accommodations by visiting the website at: <http://www.humber.ca/student-life/swac/accessible-learning>

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the University's policies and Academic Regulations. These policies can be found at: <http://www.guelphhumber.ca/registrar/policies>