

COM 367 – Ethical Problems in Mass Communication

Section 01, FALL Session 2014

School of Communication, Illinois State University

Room: Fell 176

Time: Wed, 4-6:50pm

Professor: Dr. Maria A. Moore

Office: Fell 454

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Phone: 438-3298

Office Hour: Tues 12:30-1:30pm, or by appointment

TA: Rachel Hettrick

TA email: rehettr@ilstu.edu

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 a day. Please use email for QUICK issues only. For all other matters, stop by during office hours or through appointment.



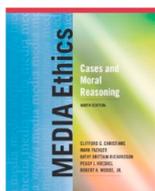
Course Description: This course will empower students with essential skills and theoretical understanding as the foundation for ethical decision-making involved in the creation and dissemination of mass communication content. Through case-based encounters with practical and relevant situations, students 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



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 (make sure to get the correct edition, as the case studies change significantly among editions)

Text can be digitally rented for 180 days for \$50.99 from <http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/2964072/9780205031955>

Course Activities with Evaluation Opportunities

NEWS Ethics Case Study Executive Memo: 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 class). Your analysis will result in both a 2-3 page written executive memo and a small group discussion.

Quizzes: There will be eight 20-point quizzes conducted on-line through ReggieNet. The quizzes will be available for 24 hours prior to the start of class. The quizzes will be timed and only one attempt will be allowed.

Participation Self-Evaluation: Five times during the semester you will have an opportunity to self-evaluate your engagement and participation in class. The instructor reserves the right to question your self-evaluation if observance of class behavior and attendance does not synchronize with your submission.

ADVERTISING Ethics Case Study: At the conclusion of our lesson sections on Advertising Ethics, working in teams of 2-students, 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 class). Your analysis will result in an in-class presentation (no written component).

PR Ethics Interview a Manager Project: For this assignment on public relations ethics, 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 or have worked for in the past.

“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 producers/writer/editors/actors/videographers who made the film and/or the media ethical dilemmas faced by the characters portrayed in the film. You are not to be concerned with the interpersonal ethical issues (though there may be many), rather focus on the media decisions made by the real production team and/or the fictional characters.

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. Points are awarded for both content and creativity.

Evaluation Opportunities: Grades based upon total points. Points will not be rounded-up.	Points	#	Total	GRADING:	
News Case Brief & Small Group Discussion (1 @ 65 points)	65	1	65	A	500-461
Advertising Case & PR Interview (2 @ 60 points)	60	2	120	B	460-401
Quiz (8 @ 20 points)	20	8	160	C	400-341
Participation Self-Evaluation (PSE) (5 @ 5 points)	5	5	25	D	340-281
Movie Project	65	1	65	F	280-0
Personal Code of Ethics	65	1	65		
			500		

Course Policies

Attendance: This course will use a variety of teaching and learning methods, and most rely on active and prepared discussion from all of us. Your attendance is essential for your own success, as well as for the contributions you will make with your fellow students. Some activities will only be conducted in class (participation self-evaluations & group discussions), so non-attendance will result in no points earned for that activity. When in class, be ENGAGED with the discussion. Turn off your cell phones. Laptops are to be used for note-taking only.... no game-playing, email, texting, browsing or chatting. **Students using laptops will be asked to sit at the front of class.**

Time: We will respect one another's time in this course. We will start and end on time. We will use our time fully and productively. Tardiness communicates disrespect to all participants.

Student E-mail: Students will be expected to have a working e-mail account and to regularly log into ReggieNet. Weekly agenda information will be available to all students via ReggieNet so it is essential that your account is current and that you access it regularly. Inability to use or have access to ReggieNet may compromise your success in this class.

Assignment Due Dates: Deadlines are firm and non-negotiable, as they would be in the professional world. 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 turned in at the beginning of class, or may be sent via ReggieNet email attachment (PDF ONLY). Late assignments may be accepted within 5 days of the original deadline for partial credit (50%) if caused by an excused absence due to dire illness, death in your immediate family or a university-documented activity.



Make-up / Extra Credit Activities: Small Group Discussions and Participation Self-Evaluations cannot be made up, as they occur as part of class. There are no make-up opportunities for your interview presentation, but students may negotiate with other groups a change in time and date. Once the window for quiz taking has expired, there are no make-up opportunities. Your instructor reserves the right to offer extra credit in random and surprising ways.



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".)*

Special Needs or Accommodation: If you need to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability, contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD) to register and establish a record of your situation. Please speak with me privately regarding any course adaptation or accommodations you may require, or if you need special arrangements during a building evacuation.

Study Tips

Though Media Ethics can be a formidable and perplexing 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:



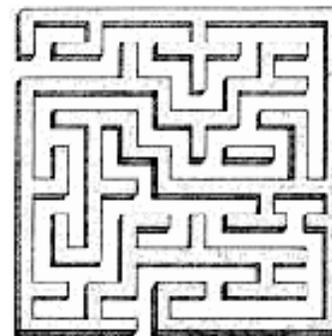
As you study the assigned readings prior to the class make margin notes as you read. Think about how you might use the information you've read to participate in class discussion.

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

Bring your textbook to each class session as we will actively use and refer to it.

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.



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

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Fall 2014

Graduate Student Syllabus Addendum

In addition to the coursework required for all students in COM 367, you will have these requirements:

- Acquire and read **one** of the following books:
 - Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher by Stephen D. Brookfield
 - The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life by Parker J. Palmer
 - What the Best College Teachers Do by Ken Bain
- Prepare and teach a class section on a topic selected in coordination with Dr. Moore
- Write a personal reflection essay regarding your experience in teaching a topic section COM 367 (no more than 5 pages, please). Include your reflections about the book you selected to read as well. Due no later than November 19.