

JOMC 141 – Professional problems and ethics

Instructor: Adam Hochberg

Phone 919-238-9664

ahochberg@unc.edu

Course goal: Through readings, presentations, and class discussions, we'll explore ethics in a variety of mass communication professions, including print, broadcast, and digital journalism, public relations, and advertising. The class will help you make ethical decisions by integrating ethical foundations into practical situations. You'll critically analyze the ethical decisions of others, compare various ethical standards, and develop a set of defensible ethical guidelines of your own.

Required Text: *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*, 8th edition, by Philip Patterson and Lee Wilkins. The textbook will be supplemented by other readings, which you'll find on Sakai in the Resources folder. All assigned readings must be completed before the appropriate class sessions. I'll be adding and perhaps deleting required readings from the syllabus during the semester in an effort to keep the class current and topical. It's your responsibility to monitor the online syllabus on Sakai for changes.

Honor Code: Of course, you are expected to conduct yourself ethically in this class. You are expected to follow the honor code. You are expected to produce your own work in this class without assistance, except in assignments that are designated as collaborative. You are not to plagiarize other people's work, fabricate news stories, or use text, graphics, video, or audio that's not your own without proper permission and credit. You are expected to honestly represent yourself on attendance sheets and other class records. Violating these expectations is an honor code violation.

Attendance and participation: As you arrive for each class period, please sign in on the list in the back of the classroom. You are allowed three absences during the semester for any reason (or for no reason). For each class you miss after three, your final grade will be lowered three points. You're also expected to actively participate in class discussions, both in person and online. Here are the criteria for the participation portion of your grade:

- "A" students participate in most of the class discussions during nearly every class period (or try to participate by raising their hands when questions are asked) and contribute to at least half the online discussions. Their contributions are thought-provoking, and they occasionally bring in outside material relevant to the class. They arrive to class on time and do not miss classes.
- "B" students participate in some of the class discussions and contribute to at least half the online discussions, but are not as insightful as the A students. They have no absences and they arrive to class on time.
- "C" students may participate in class or online from time to time but mostly lurk. They may have some good things to say but don't speak up often. They may have absences or be tardy on occasion.
- "D" and "F" students barely say anything all semester in class or online, or -- even if they contribute occasionally -- they have little insightful to say. They may or may not arrive to most classes on time.

One more note about participation: While I allow computers and phones in the classroom, I expect you to use them only for class business. I reserve the right to order individual students (or the whole class) to turn off their electronics. And inappropriate use will affect your participation grade, even if I don't say anything to you at the time.

Assignments and Deadlines: All assignments are due at the beginning of class (2:00 p.m.). Late assignments receive a reduced grade. Unless I've given you prior permission, I won't accept any assignment more than 24 hours late. (You'll receive an "F.")

Research requirement: You're required to complete two hours of research participation during the semester. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement. The first is to participate in two hours of JOMC academic research studies. You'll receive emails about these studies and will be able to sign up online. The second way is to write two two-page summaries and critiques of academic research articles. Each review counts for one hour of research, so you can combine participation in the studies with article reviews to fulfill your requirement. You may summarize any recent article in *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Advertising*, *Mass Communication and Society*, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, or *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*.

Special Accommodations: If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in the course, please let me know as soon as possible. You can contact the Department of Disability Services at 919-962-8300 or disabilityservices.unc.edu.

Grading: This class uses UNC's grading standards, found here: registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/

A = 93-100	B- = 80-82	D+ = 67-69
A- = 90-92	C+ = 77-79	D = 60-66
B+ = 87-89	C = 73-76	F = below 60
B = 83-86	C- = 70-72	

The assignments count for the following percentage of your grade:

February 3 quiz	10%	Group project	15%	Participation	15%
Midterm exam	25%	Final exam	30%	Research requirement	5%

Values and competencies: The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires all graduates be aware of certain core values and competencies. This class teaches students:

- To demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- To think critically, creatively and independently.
- To write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- To critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- To understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press.
- To demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- To understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- To apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- To apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.
- To contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

SCHEDULE (Subject to change; watch for updates and additions on Sakai)

Date	Topic	Before this date, do this:
Jan. 8	Introduction Why learn ethics?	
Jan. 13	Foundations of ethics	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 1 "Can ethics trump law?" (Sakai)
Jan. 15	Truth, transparency, and balance	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 2
Jan. 20	Ethics codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Browse "Ethics Codes," Pew Research Center and "Social Media Policy Database" (Sakai) · "NPR back in hot seat over opera show host Lisa Simeone's political activities" (Sakai) · "Which journalists accepted free laptops from Google?" (Sakai)
Jan. 22	Decision-making techniques	<i>Media Ethics</i> , pp. 4-7 (Bok Model), 86-89 (Potter Box) "Making Ethical Decisions" (Sakai)
Jan. 27	Plagiarism, fabrication,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Our cheating culture: Plagiarism and fabrication are unacceptable in journalism" (Sakai) · "Patchwriting" is more common than plagiarism, just as dishonest" (Sakai) · Expand and read each of the tabs under "Avoiding Plagiarism" on left side of this page: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/1/ · "Twitter, Flickr use by eyewitnesses raises questions for news orgs about image rights, compensation" (Sakai)
Jan. 29	Race and diversity	"How Untold Stories Can Reflect Diversity" (Sakai)
Feb. 3	Quiz	
Feb. 5	Advertising and persuasion	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 3
Feb. 10	The TARES test	"The TARES Test: Five Principles for Ethical Persuasion" (Sakai) pages 148-151 and pages 159-172.
Feb. 12	Political advertising; Ethics and democracy	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 6
Feb. 17	Guest speaker: Craig Silverman "Regret the Error"	"Corrections and Ethics" Greater Accuracy through Honesty" (Sakai); Read Craig's blog at www.poynter.org/author/craigsilverman/

Feb. 19	Guest speaker: Ken Eudy, CEO, CapStrat	Do some research on Ken, so you can ask intelligent questions.
Feb. 24	Privacy issues	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 5
Feb. 26	Guest speaker: Adam Rhew, Director of Public Policy and Administration, MeckEd	"Friend of the Victim: The Case of the Murdered Student" (Sakai)
Mar. 3	Loyalties Review day for midterm	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 4 Bring any questions about what we've covered so far.
Mar. 5	Midterm exam	
Mar. 10, 12	<i>Spring break</i>	
Mar. 17	Anonymous sources Form groups for group project	"Welcome to the Sausage Factory" (Sakai) "Does a 'savvy media observer' require anonymity for smack talk? Apparently so!" (Sakai) "The Disconnect on Anonymous Sources" (Sakai)
Mar. 19	Group project work day Decide on project topic and write one paragraph proposal. Proposal due no later than 3/23, noon	Bring ideas for group project topic
Mar. 24	Ethical photography, video	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 8
Mar. 26	Ethics and the bottom line	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 7
Mar. 31	Political polls Group project work day	"20 questions a journalist should ask about poll results" (Sakai) "Public opinion polls do not always report public opinion" (Sakai)
Apr. 2	Ethics and sports reporting	"News room ethics and sports journalists" (Sakai)
Apr. 7	Blogging and citizen journalism	<i>Media Ethics</i> , Chapter 9 "Acts of Journalism: Defining press freedom in the digital age" (Sakai)
Apr. 9	Group presentations	
Apr. 14	Group presentations	
Apr. 16	Group presentations	
Apr. 21	Group presentations (if necessary) Review for final	
Apr. 23	TBA	
Mon. May 4, noon	Final exam	