

## Global Strategic Communications and Ethics

### COURSE INFORMATION

**MMC6213: Fall 2016: Strategic Communications and Ethics**

Credits 03

Meeting Time: Distance Asynchronous

Office Hours By Appointment

### INSTRUCTOR

David Shapiro

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Note—please use my [dtshapiro@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:dtshapiro@jou.ufl.edu) email address for all communication.

### What you will learn

Communications specialists integrate knowledge from many areas: aesthetics, branding, marketing, human psychology, and, of course, communicating. This course focuses on communications concepts, while integrating ethical reasoning throughout. The value of ethical reasoning can be justified in many ways. For example, as creators of content accessible through the globe, communications specialists have a unique obligation to be thoughtful, sensitive, and responsible about the impact of their messages. Additionally, consideration of what actions are proper and ethical is central to being a decent and responsible person. At a broader level, the ability to reason ethically can help you to avoid shortcuts and anticipate situations that can harm your brand, your company, your employees, your customers and yourself.

By the end of this course, you will be able to describe the value and purpose of strategic communication. Based on this foundation, you will also learn to:

- Identify ethical dilemmas in strategic communication, including determining how to anticipate and consider different stakeholder's perspectives of those dilemmas.
- Identify and describe a variety of alternative responses to strategic communication ethics problems.
- Use an ethical decision-making model to reason through these ethics dilemmas.
- Make and justify decisions about which responses are most ethically sound.

## Summary of Course Design

### **Lectures**

The recorded materials will help you to understand key concepts and assignments. These are reinforced in an online homework system and in written submissions.

**Please note: You may safely ignore any reference to class assignments, projects or homework referred to in the recorded lectures. Many elements of the course have been revised since the recordings were done. Follow only the syllabus for assignments, due dates and other relevant information.**

### **Assignments**

You will have regular assignments and these will be the basis for your final grade.

During the first half of the class (weeks 1-5) you will read the assigned materials, view online lectures, demonstrate your understanding in McGraw-Hill's online CONNECT center, and discuss a critical ethical issue related to the material you studied.

Week 6 you will watch a lecture that helps you begin to create a situation analysis for a publically traded firm or business. You submit the company you have chosen for your situation analysis in Week 6 and submit your situation analysis during week 12.

The second half of the class (weeks 7-12) gives you a chance to apply ethical reasoning to situations you may encounter or hear/read about, and help you prepare for real-world ethical decision-making. You will read the assigned materials, view online lectures, complete online homework through Canvas and write a discussion post on an assigned case study.

You will be required to turn in two ethics memos. Each memo should be at least two pages long.

Your semester-long project is to develop a situation analysis for a publicly traded firm or organization. **Your focus should be on the marketing or communication challenges faced by the company.**

### **Homework for weeks 1 – 5**

In addition to your readings during weeks 1 – 5, you will have two kinds of homework:

First, you will complete homework dealing with your assigned readings in McGraw Hill's CONNECT system and website. Submit your homework through McGraw Hill's CONNECT. You will find a link to CONNECT below in the syllabus near information about your textbook. **In purchasing "CONNECT PLUS" for the course you will receive both a digital version of the text and the homework system.**

Second, from weeks 1-11, you will find a discussion situation (see below) that will pose a different issue or question each week. You should post a thoughtful

response to this key topic question and respond to two posts from your fellow students. All responses should be placed in the “Discussion” section of your Canvas shell.

***There is no homework in Week 6.***

***Homework for weeks 7 - 11***

For weeks 7 – 11 you will continue to answer the Discussion questions posted under the Discussion tab, and post two replies in response to posts from your fellow students.

For the second half of the course you will submit your homework to the “Assignments” section of Canvas. The details and topic of the weekly homework can be found in the weekly module pages in Canvas.

***There is no homework due in week 12.***

***Weekly Discussion Posts***

Teamwork and discussion are integral parts of any communications course, especially one focused, at least in part, on ethics. This class will be no exception. You are expected to read the assigned chapter and accompanying readings and actively participate in weekly discussions through the “Discussions” tab in the Canvas e-learning site. You will be expected to demonstrate that you are thinking about the issues by asking questions, offering your own opinions and share justifications for those opinions, participating in class debate, posting comments and questions to the e-learning site and keeping your eyes and ears open for current events that may relate to class discussions. Please be respectful of the contributions of others and help create a class environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

For this part of the course, you will be a senior advisor to the corporate communications department for a multinational oil firm suddenly confronting a massive oil spill off the California coast.

Each week you will also post a response to two student’s post that you either agree or disagree with. You will find each weekly discussion topic under each respective week in the syllabus. You will be expected to reference ethical guidelines and perspectives in your responses and create a meaningful discussion with your classmates. Please keep these guidelines in mind as you create your weekly posts:

- 1) Your writing should be thoughtful, reflective, and focused. You should also attempt to be persuasive, by which I mean you should try to convince others, especially others who disagree with you, that you have a valid and credible perspective. You may find the following piece helpful as a guide:
- 2) Your discussion posts should average 250-400 words. You are strongly encouraged to document any facts you bring to bear in making your arguments. In general, when you provide factual information, it should be referenced.

3) At a minimum, your comments on the postings of others should run between 100 and 250 words.

Personal attacks or disrespect towards others is inappropriate and will cost you points on the assignment. I will watch and determine if I feel a discussion is inappropriate. Your goal should be to help the author of the post you are commenting on see another perspective.

4) Your initial Discussion posts are due by Thursday at 11pm ET of week 1 through week 11. Comments on the posts of two classmates are due by Saturday at 11pm ET. Late submissions will be penalized.

**Rubric for grading Weekly Topic Posts and responses.**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Thoughtfulness (25%)	Post represents outstanding thinking and logical reasoning. The presentation is opinionated but balanced and fair to opposing ideas	Post represents good thinking and logical reasoning. The presentation is opinionated with mention of opposing sides.	Post shows some weakness in thinking and logical reasoning. It lacks an informed perspective and/or ignores opposing sides	Missing significant sections or information.
Documentation (25%)	All facts in the posts are documented with links to relevant sources. Many sources were consulted and easy sources (like Wikipedia) are used sparingly.	All facts in the posts are documented with links to relevant sources. Adequate sources were consulted and easy sources (Wikipedia) are used sparingly.	Most facts in the post are documented but few sources are used.	Unclear where facts have come from or facts or few sources consulted.
Coherent, clear, persuasive (25%)	Writing is clear, compelling, organized, powerful and grammatically correct.	Writing is straightforward, understandable and avoids most grammar or spelling errors.	Writing has significant problems	Writing quality is poor, difficult to read.

Responses to the posts of other (25%)	Responses are engaging, challenge the peer post without demeaning it. Responses show key areas in which the original is flawed, limited or short-	Responses are respectful in challenging the peer's post. Key areas of disagreement are identified.	Response is opinionated but somewhat lacking in respect. Response fails to clarify the point of difference or the limits of	Response is opinionated but ignores the strengths or weaknesses of the original post.
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**Ethics Memos**

You will write two ethics memos in the second part of the semester that must be submitted through the “Assignments” tab in Canvas. The first memo will discuss a case assigned to everyone; in other words, everyone will write about one case in common. You won’t need to describe the circumstances of this case.

The second memo can be about **any real-world strategic communications ethics case you choose.** This memo should be about a concrete, specific decision you or another media professional has to make. In other words, don’t write about the general issue of the ethical standards of PR or HR professionals; rather, write about a specific case (you may NOT use cases discussed as part of this class or those found in the text).

Write the second case study memo as if you’re the key player (i.e. you are the person encountering the ethical dilemma), and write as if you haven’t yet taken action on the key ethical dilemma – you are still in the process of making your decision and the purpose of the memo is to inform your boss and offer an ethical course of action.

For each entry, you should follow the same basic format:

- Identify and explain the ethical dilemma. For the assigned case, you need don’t need to describe the circumstances of the case. For the second case, keep your description brief – provide only the most critical information. Identify what decision the organization has to make and briefly explain WHY the decision represents a dilemma. What right-vs.-right choice does the decision-maker have to make? (If a media professional is choosing between right and wrong, there’s really no dilemma, only a question of courage.)
- Weigh the alternatives available. Few ethical situations present ONLY either/or options, so don’t limit yourself to two alternatives. Can/should any alternatives be dismissed immediately as unethical? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the remaining alternatives? How would each choice advance your journalistic goal of serving the public? Conversely, what problems would be created by adopting that alternative?

- Cite the ethical rationale for the decision you make. In each entry, come to a decision about what the decision-maker (i.e. you) should do. Explain what you believe the BEST choice would be, even if that choice still isn't perfect. But remember – you're writing to your boss, who may not remember who Kant was. So translate, demonstrating that you understand duty-based and consequence-based ethical principles, but making your arguments in the language of the real world. Make reference to any ethical principle or decision-making model we've discussed, but use language any reasonably educated adult could understand.

**Rubric for your Ethics Memos**

Rating	Characteristics
35-30	<i>Exceptional.</i> The memo is focused and integrates examples with explanations or analysis. The memo demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The memo reflects in-depth engagement with the topic.
29-20	<i>Satisfactory.</i> The memo is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The memo reflects moderate engagement with the topic.
19-10	<i>Underdeveloped.</i> The memo is most description or summary, without consideration of alternate perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. The memo reflects passing engagement with the topic. The memo may indicate student "feelings" about the issue without sufficient development of a moral framework.
10-5	<i>Limited.</i> The memo is unfocused, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays no evidence of student engagement in the topic.
0	<i>No credit.</i> The memo is missing or consists of one or two disconnected sentences.

**Semester Long Project**

Your semester-long project is to develop a situation analysis for a publicly traded firm or organization. **Your focus should be on the marketing, reputational or general communication challenges faced by the company.** You should propose the company that you will work on to Prof. Shapiro by Saturday, 11pm EST of Week 6 of the class. In proposing a company, be sure to indicate why you have chosen that company. You should also be sure there is sufficient public information available on the company to do the situation analysis. You have six weeks to do the Situation Analysis.

**RUBRIC FOR GRADING THE SITUATION ANALYSIS (SA)**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Credit
	72-80 (total)	64-71	56-63	<56	0
Completeness (25%)	SA has material related to all parts of the template selected. Sections are complete.	SA has material related to most parts of the template selected. Sections are mostly complete.	SA has some sections that are missing material related to all parts of the template selected or some sections are incomplete.	Missing significant sections or information.	
Quality (25%)	Information is of outstanding quality (recent, useful, relevant).	Information is of good quality (recent, useful, relevant).	Information is of adequate quality (somewhat dated, occasionally not useful or relevant).	Information is of poor quality (dated, not useful or relevant).	
Coherent, clear, persuasive (25%)	Writing is clear, compelling and with no spelling or grammar errors.	Writing is straightforward, understandable and avoids most grammar or spelling errors	Writing has significant problems.	Writing quality is poor, difficult to read.	
Analysis (25%)	SWOT analysis is exceptional, and clearly details the company or brand's paramount issues	SWOT analysis is good, identified company or brand's important issues.	SWOT analysis is fair, identifies straightforward issues.	SWOT analysis is poor, issues identified seem unrelated to the rest of the SA.	

**Schedule/Due Dates**

Your initial discussion posts are due on Thursday, by 11pm EST, and your comments/discussion responses on Saturday, by 11pm EST.  
Your weekly homework is due by Thursday at 11pm EST.

For week 6 you should submit your publicly traded company that will serve as the focus of the situation analysis by Saturday at 11pm EST.

For the sets of Ethics Memos, set 1 is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 9; set 2 is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 11.

The Situation Analysis is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 12.

### **Requirements**

1. You will need an Internet connection to access your text, view the lectures, attend online class sessions, and complete your assignments.
2. You must be able to communicate with the instructor. Most communications can be done via email and the discussion board, but you may be asked to join Dropbox.com (a free online service) to share large files.

### **Required Textbooks**

Your textbook for Weeks 1 – 5 is titled “Contemporary Advertising (14e). Be sure to follow this link and purchase “CONNECT PLUS” when asked:

<http://connect.mheducation.com/connect/shortUrl.do?accessUrl=d-shapiro-mm6213-spring-2016>.

CONNECT PLUS will give you both the homework system and the e-book.

Your textbook for the second half of the semester is Business Ethics: Ethical Decision Making and Cases, ~~9<sup>th</sup>~~ **10<sup>th</sup> edition** (2014) by O.C. Ferrell, John Fraedrich, and L. Ferrell. The textbook is available at

[http://www.amazon.com/Business-Ethics-Ethical-Decision-Making/dp/1285423712/ref=dp\\_ob\\_title\\_bk](http://www.amazon.com/Business-Ethics-Ethical-Decision-Making/dp/1285423712/ref=dp_ob_title_bk).

**Please note you can now rent the Business Ethics text from Amazon!**

**Be sure you get the 10<sup>th</sup> edition.**

### **Announcements tab in Canvas shell**

Be sure to check the Announcements tab in the Canvas shell regularly for information on class assignments, changes and other class information. In addition, important Information will be sent via email when it is posted in this tab.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565 <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### **Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester,



but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

### ***UF Honor Pledge***

UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge which states: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given or received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the class instructor.

### ***Counseling and Wellness Center Information***

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> 392-1575; UF Police Department 392-111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### ***Grading***

Grading parameters for the class projects are provided in the form of rubrics. Your work will be evaluated according to this distribution:

#### Weeks 1 – 6

Online homework	50 points
Weekly discussion assignments	50 points
Situation Analysis	80 points

#### Weeks 7 – 12

Online homework	50 points
Weekly discussion assignments	60 points
Ethics Memos (2)	35 points each
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>360 points</b>

And grades will be determined as follows:

A	338-360 points	94-100%
A-	324-337 points	90-93%
B+	313-323 points	87-89%
B	302-312 points	84-86%
B-	288-301 points	80-83%
C+	277-287 points	77-79%
C	266-276 points	74-76%
C-	252-265 points	70-73%
D+	241-251 points	67-69%
D	230-240 points	64-66%
D-	220-229 points	61-64%
F	0-228 points	0-60%

### **Grading policy**

General University policies regarding grades can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### **Plagiarism**

In all assignments, be sure to use only your own ideas and writing. If you are unsure about what plagiarism is, read this:

<http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/msl/07b/studentplagiarism.html>

Ignorance of plagiarism will not excuse a grade of zero on any assignment where it is found.

### **Policy on Late Work**

Work in the class turned in late will generally not be accepted except for serious personal circumstance. If you anticipate not making a project deadline, please contact the instructor.

There will be penalties for late work:

- Less than 12 hours late: 10% off.
- More than 12 hours late but less than 24 hours late: 30% off.
- More than 24 hours late but less than 48 hours late: 50% off.
- More than 48 hours late: 100% off, not accepted at all.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies and can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### **Schedule/Due Dates**

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Your weekly homework is due by Thursday at 11pm EST.

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For the sets of Ethics Memos, set 1 is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 9; set 2 is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 11.

The Situation Analysis is due Saturday at 11pm EST of Week 12.

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### **WEEK ONE— August 22 – 28, 2016**

Course introduction and understanding the business of strategic communication

#### Readings

1. Ch. 1 Advertising and IMC Today
2. Ch. 2 The Big Picture: The Evolution of IMC
3. <http://www.hfrp.org/evaluation/the-evaluation-exchange/issue-archive/strategic-communications/the-abcs-of-strategic-communications>

Additional video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r\\_cJIHv3A0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r_cJIHv3A0)

Discussion Topic

Read "Web Ethics" which you can find here:

<http://pwebs.net/i/internet-ethics/>

The article raises a number of issues about marketing on the Web. Choose two of these issues and explain why you believe they are ethically troubling (or, if you wish, why you do not find them ethically troubling.) Then, please comment on the responses of at least two classmates. In expressing your own opinion, do so critically (i.e., finding both commonalities and differences) but also respectfully and thoughtfully.

Read, watch lecture, complete Connect homework: Thursday by 11 PM ET.

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## **WEEK TWO: August 29 – September 4, 2016**

Strategic Identification of Audiences and Tools for Strategic Communication and Understanding the Value of Planning

Focus on

- Why do companies segment markets and what tools are available for strategic communication?
- What is planning for strategic communication?

Readings

Ch. 6: Segmentation, Targeting and the Marketing

Mix Ch. 7: Research: Gathering Information for IMC

Planning

Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.

Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

Discussion Topic

You are head of Communications for Worldwide Petroleum (WP), which just had one of its offshore wells blow. Ten are dead and the oil is gushing out of the damaged well some 50 miles off the coast of California. Internally, your engineers are telling you that there is only a remote chance of closing the well quickly. What you advising your CEO to do? Is it the same as what you are telling the public? What, if any, are the risks of telling the public the truth? Of not, being straight with your public communications?

Read, watch lecture, complete Connect homework: Thursday by 11 PM ET.

Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.

Respond to 2 classmates (one on your team one on the other side): Saturday by 11PM ET

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## **WEEK THREE: September 5 - 11, 2016**

### Focus on

- Understanding audiences of strategic communication (the target audience)
- Understanding influences on consumer responses to strategic communication

### Readings

Ch. 5: Marketing and Consumer Behavior

Ch. 8: Marketing and IMC Planning

### Discussion topic:

Oil continues to flow from the damaged well. Environmental groups are asking for a major commitment in from the company to begin clean-up of the coastline and to mitigate the damage to sea life. Your lawyers are concerned that a major commitment might damage their defense of the company in court and the Board is worried about the financial implications of a major financial commitment. Lay out the communications advantages for and against, take a position and defend it.

Read, watch lecture, complete Connect homework: Thursday by 11 PM ET.

Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.

Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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## **WEEK FOUR: September 12 - 18, 2016**

The big picture: Economics, social issues, and regulation in strategic communication.

### Focus on:

- The relationship of brand messages to economics
- Criticism of strategic communication
- Regulatory issues in the U.S.

### Readings

Ch. 3: The Big Picture: Economics and Regulatory Aspects

### Discussion topic

The company has commissioned an internal investigation of what happened. The internal investigation concludes that although the oil company had overall responsibility, the specific actions that led to the catastrophe were caused by subcontractors responsible for capping the well and monitoring any problems with it. In addition, the internal investigation identifies email and text correspondence between the rig and corporate headquarters suggesting intense financial pressure on company reps on the rig to quickly finish up. The Board wants to release selective portions of the report or not release it at all. Is that a good idea? Would you recommend releasing the full report or only those parts that suggest that others played a prominent role in the disaster? Discuss both the ethical and practical considerations that entered into your recommendation?

As always, please respectfully weigh in on someone else's discussion as well.

Read, watch lecture, complete Connect homework: Thursday by 11 PM ET.

Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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**WEEK FIVE: September 19 - 25, 2016**

Planning for where the message should appear

*Focus on*

- Media Planning
- Criteria for Selecting Media

Readings

Ch. 9: Media Planning and Buying

Ch. 15: Using Digital Interactive Media

Discussion Topic

It's now three weeks into the oil leak and Congress has announced it will hold hearings. They have invited Worldwide Petroleum's CEO, Mark Starstruck, to testify. Up to now, the company has been reporting an official estimate that the leak is limited to 5,000 barrels a day but internal engineering estimates suggest the leak could be as much as 10 or 20 times that, they just don't know. Moreover, the company continues to be publicly optimistic that it has a solution to the problem that can be implemented in a matter of days or weeks, but some engineers inside the company fear they may have to drill an entirely new well to intercept and cap the flow of oil, which would take months. Given all the uncertainty, would you recommend that your CEO testify? If a decision is made to testify, what would you counsel him to say, under oath? If a decision is made not to testify, how do you explain the decision? Regardless, what are the pros and cons of publicizing the full range of uncertainty about the oil leak?

Read, watch lecture, complete Connect homework: Thursday by 11 PM ET.

Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.

Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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**WEEK SIX: September 26 – October 2, 2016**

Analyzing the Strategic Communication Environment

*Focus on*

- External factors that affect a firm
- Internal factors that affect a firm

Readings

Reread Ch. 8: Marketing and IMC Planning and Appendix A: Marketing Plan

Discussion topic

No discussion this week. Students must identify the publicly traded company used for their Situation Analysis. Please provide a rationale for choosing that company as well.

### Recommended Viewing

There is an 8 part (most are short) video series on YouTube from the Small Business Administration about creating a SWOT analysis. Your viewing this will be helpful in creating the SWOT for your Situation Analysis. Find it at:

[SBA SWOT instructional videos](#)

<https://www.mindtools.com/pages/videos/SWOT-analysis-transcript.htm>

Your selected Situation Analysis company is to be submitted in Canvas assignments by Saturday at 11pm EST.

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### **WEEK SEVEN — October 3 - 9, 2016**

Introduction to Ethics-Why it is important to behave ethically in business

#### Readings & Video's

Ch. 1: The importance of business ethics

Ch. 3: Emerging business ethics issues

Ch. 7: Organizational factors: The role of ethical culture and relationships

Additional recommended readings (not required):

<http://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/040815/why-are-business-ethics-important.asp>

[http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/lao/issue\\_11/brimmer.htm](http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/lao/issue_11/brimmer.htm)

<https://hbr.org/1993/05/whats-the-matter-with-business-ethics>

Additional videos (required):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzicXbnmlIc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vstg5c3c3g8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJf3JhaiHtQ>

Online homework:

Submit your responses to Canvas.

**Question 1:** Why does it make sense for a business to behave responsibly and ethically?

**Question 2:** The book discusses an ethical corporate culture. How would you describe an ethical corporate culture? If you are currently working you may use examples from your own workplace, if appropriate.

**Question 3:** In CH. 3, (page 64), the author writes “if business is a game like basketball or boxing, ordinary ethical rules do not apply.” Why do you think this attitude would not constitute ethical business behavior? Refer to core ethical values mentioned in the chapter in your answer.

### Discussion topic

The well has finally been capped, clean-up has begun. The CEO and the Board would like to mount a multi-faceted campaign to begin to restore the company's image with the public with the slogan, "Worldwide Petroleum: Taking Responsibility and Making Things Right". Meanwhile, government investigations are ongoing, the company continues to blame its subcontractors and environmental groups are accusing the company of not putting its money where its mouth is in regards to clean up and mitigating environmental damage. Considering both the practical and ethical dimensions, what do you recommend? If you don't recommend going with the Company's preferred approach, what do you recommend instead?

Read, watch lecture, complete homework on Canvas: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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## **WEEK EIGHT — October 10 – 16, 2016**

Decision making models—how to systematically make ethical decisions

### Readings

- Ch. 5: Ethical decision making and ethical leadership
- Ch. 8: Developing an effective ethics program
- Ch. 10: Globalization of ethical decision making

### Online homework

Write a four-point code of conduct for online strategic communications professionals. Include a description of each point. Search online for codes of conduct for more information before beginning.

### Recommended reading--

- <https://www.prsa.org/aboutprsa/ethics/#.V4j2wzXqVkY>
- <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/Pages/0414-ethical-workplace-culture.aspx>
- International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) International Code of Advertising Practice: [http://www.iccwbo.org/advocacy-codes-and-rules/document-centre/2011/advertising-and-marketing-communication-practice-\(consolidated-icc-code\)/](http://www.iccwbo.org/advocacy-codes-and-rules/document-centre/2011/advertising-and-marketing-communication-practice-(consolidated-icc-code)/)

(Download the pdf of the code to read.)

### Discussion Topic:

While legal and regulatory issues continue, the Company did manage to work out a settlement with lawyers representing private plaintiffs hurt by the effects of the oil spill. The agreement didn't cap overall damages but agreed to pay those who could prove they were harmed. It has now come to the attention of Global Petroleum lawyers that the group deciding on awards, which is

controlled by the plaintiff's lawyers, has been approving large awards to companies and individuals including exotic dancers, seasonal restaurants not even open during the spill and clean up, and accountants and lawyers with offices more than 50 miles from the coast. The lawyers plan to protest to the Court and have asked the Communications department to come up with a plan to provide public relations support for their legal strategy. Is that advisable? If the Board agrees with its legal team, how would you design an ethical campaign that now seeks to justify limiting awards to those arguably harmed by the oil spill.

Read, watch lecture, complete homework on Canvas: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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## **WEEK NINE — October 17 – 23, 2016**

Philosophical Basis of Ethics—Different Ethical Styles

### Readings

- Ch. 6: Individual factors: Moral philosophies and values
- Take this Ethical Style Quiz:  
[https://www.masc.sc/SiteCollectionDocuments/Administration/ethic\\_style.pdf](https://www.masc.sc/SiteCollectionDocuments/Administration/ethic_style.pdf). After you take the quiz, click through and read “What the Styles Mean”

### Online homework

**Question 1:** What kind of ethical duties does a strategic communications professional or a web designer have? Where do these duties come from?

**Question 2:** Are there some ethical values that you believe are relative to one's own culture, religion or personal opinion? Are there some that are universal? What makes them different?

**Question 3:** Having watched the lecture and completed the ethical style quiz, which philosophical ethical style seems the most practical? Or would a hybrid of styles best describe an ethical style?

### Discussion topic

This is the final discussion topic in our oil spill series. For this assignment, provide the outline of an ethical communications strategy that would begin to re-build Global Petroleum's reputation.

Read, watch lecture, complete homework on Canvas: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

**Ethics Memo Set 1 due this week. Submit to the Assignments tab of the Canvas shell by Saturday, 11pm EST.**



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**WEEK TEN: October 24 – 30, 2016**

Ethics and Marketing

Reading

Marketing with Integrity.

[http://www.ethicsbasedmarketing.net/articles/artices19\\_8\\_2008/Marketing with Integrity.pdf](http://www.ethicsbasedmarketing.net/articles/artices19_8_2008/Marketing%20with%20Integrity.pdf)

<http://www.acxiom.com/resources/time-action-establishing-ethical-guidelines-modern-data-driven-marketing/>

<http://blog.hirerabbit.com/5-terrific-examples-of-company-social-media-policies/>

<http://hracuity.com/when-you-dont-like-what-your-employees-are-posting-on-social-media/>

Is Marketing Evil?

<http://www.ethicsbasedmarketing.net/2.html>

Why Business Ethics?

<http://web.tepper.cmu.edu/ethics/whybizethics.pdf>

Marketing to Kids

<http://www.ethicsbasedmarketing.net/6.html>

Online Homework

**Question 1:** The Federal Trade Commission regulates advertising on the basis of 2 criteria: deception and unfairness. How can an ad be unfair? Who gets hurt by deceptive advertising?

**Question 2:** Imagine your child/younger sibling was offered a free laptop in school with the understanding that they would see an advertisement for 2 minutes every fifteen minutes of use. What would your initial reaction to this offer be? Is it always unfair to advertise to children?

**Question 3:** Studies have shown that samples, as well as small gifts and lunches, can lead some doctors to prescribe more. Do you agree that marketing of products such as prescription drugs be regulated? (they currently are.)

Discussion topic

You work for MarketUS, an online marketing company that devises campaigns for clients in the technology industry. One of the strategies used by the company is comparison marketing with competitors and similar products. MarketUS wins a new client, a big video game manufacturer. You have been put in charge of the account. Your manager tells you that this account is very important to the company and to devise a strong marketing campaign, remind you that you are up for promotion at the end of the quarter. The client has requested that the online campaign focus on comparing their product to the leading competitor, XYZ Gaming. Your spouse works for XYZ Gaming and has told you in confidence that their latest product is flawed. Impressing your new client would be very useful

when you apply for promotion later this year.

Answer these questions in your discussion post:

1. Do you tell your manager about the potential conflict of interest?
2. What do you tell your spouse?
3. Do you share the information about the flawed product, and do you use it in your campaign?

Read, watch lecture, complete homework on Canvas: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

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## WEEK ELEVEN — October 31 – November 6, 2016

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Readings

Ch. 2: Stakeholder relationships social responsibility and corporate governance.

Ch. 4: The Institutionalization of business ethics.

Role of CSR communication (see weekly module page for link to PDF file)

Additional recommended readings (not required):

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/devinthorpe/2013/05/18/why-csr-the-benefits-of-corporate-social-responsibility-will-move-you-to-act/#916acaf5e1cc>

<https://projectcsr.wordpress.com/2010/12/03/models-of-corporate-responsibility-part-i-the-classical-model/>

<https://projectcsr.wordpress.com/2010/12/09/models-of-corporate-social-responsibility-part-2-the-stakeholder-model/>

<https://projectcsr.wordpress.com/2010/12/20/models-of-corporate-social-responsibility-part-3-social-demandingness-theory/>

<https://projectcsr.wordpress.com/2010/12/30/models-of-corporate-social-responsibility-social-activism/>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/susanmcperson/2016/01/08/5-csr-trends-that-will-blossom-in-2016/#3a6a1f57742a>

Videos (required):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFkSfvvAVeE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5KZhm19EO0>

Online homework:

**Question 1:** What model of CSR is most persuasive to you, and why?

**Question 2:** Some say that business has one goal: to make money. Therefore,

CSR initiatives are irrelevant to business. Discuss the argument for and against this viewpoint.

Discussion Topic:

Corporate Social Responsibility: Wells Fargo

Read:

1. <https://www08.wellsfargomedia.com/assets/pdf/about/corporate-responsibility/2015-social-responsibility-summary.pdf>
2. <https://www08.wellsfargomedia.com/assets/pdf/about/corporate-responsibility/2015-social-responsibility-report.pdf>. (This is 88 pages long. I include it so you can do a deeper dive into your chosen section for discussion.)
  1. Of Wells Fargo's three CSR priorities, which do you think will contribute more to the bank's bottom line? Why?
  2. Should a financial institution like Wells Fargo be worried about things like Diversity and Social Inclusion, or is their main responsibility to the bottom line for shareholders?

- Submit your answers to the Discussion tab of the Canvas shell.

Read, watch lecture, complete homework on Canvas: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

**Submit Ethics Memo Set 2 this week through the Canvas Assignments tab of the Canvas shell by Saturday at 11pm EST.**

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## **WEEK 12 – November 7 – 13, 2016**

Ethics Online-Future Issues for Strategic Communications

Reading

<http://www.infoworld.com/article/2607452/application-development/12-ethical-dilemmas-gnawing-at-developers-today.html>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2015/08/the-future-of-morality-at-every-internet-users-fingertips/400520/>

<http://www.dbmarketing.com/articles/Art190.htm>

**There is no homework this week.**

Discussion topic

Crisis communications—Panama City Rape and Impact on Tourism

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/04/15/us/florida-panama-city-beach-spring-break/>.

You work in the strategic planning and communications office of Panama City Tourism Board. You are responsible for monitoring news, information and comments about Panama City online. You come across the article that says “shame on Panama City” for letting Summer break get out of hand.

Answer the following questions in your discussion post:

1. What strategy do you suggest to the Mayor to deal with criticism from competing tourism destinations in Florida? In your answer include references to:
  - a. News releases
  - b. Social media-posting comments/interacting with comments
  - c. Blogs
  - d. Any advertising online (for example, online ads promoting Panama City as family friendly)
  - e. Any other online elements you feel are important.

**Submit Situation Analysis this week through the Assignments tab of the Canvas shell by Saturday at 11pm EST**

Read, watch lecture: Thursday by 11 PM ET.  
Discussion assignment posted: Thursday by 11PM ET.  
Respond to 2 classmates: Saturday by 11PM ET

**Sunday: give big sigh of relief.**