

College of Journalism and Communications
Department of Telecommunication
Department Chair: Professor David Ostroff
2088 Weimer Hall
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<p>RTV4432: SENIOR SEMINAR Section 4545, Fall 2019 Periods 3-5 Monday 9:35-12:35 Weimer G30 Office Hours: TW 2:30- 4:30 and by appointment</p>	<p>Professor Michael Leslie, Ph.D. Office: 3060 Weimer Hall Office Phone: 352-392-2904 Fax: (352) 846-2899 E-mail: mleslie@jou.ufl.edu</p>
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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

The goal of this course is to have your learn about ethics and how to apply ethical principles to the problems you will face in the exercise of your career as a mass communications professional.

This course will also give you access to being an ethical leader in the communications profession, and the capacity to deal with those factors that constrain and shape your perceptions, emotions, creative imagination, thinking, planning and actions as a communications professional.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will have acquired the following abilities:

- 1) The ability to apply critical thinking to creating messages for a diverse and inclusive society
- 2) The ability to use an ethical reasoning model to resolve difficult ethical dilemmas in mass communication
- 3) The ability to find innovative solutions to some of the persistent challenges in journalism and mass communication
- 4) The ability to argue coherently for what you believe in and have that reflected in your work as a mass communications professional
- 5) The ability to assess the reliability and validity of the information and messages you are exposed to via mass and digital media.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

The required textbooks for this course are:

Media Ethics: Issues and Cases, 8th edition, by Patterson and Wilkins.

Ethics in Media Communications: Cases and Controversies, by Louis A. Day

You can buy or rent these books online at www.coursesmart.com or from www.Amazon.com or borrow them from the UF library. They are also available for sale in the UF bookstore.

Here are some additional resources that you will find helpful:

The Elements of Moral Philosophy, 5th edition or later, by James Rachels.

Gender, Race and Class in Media, any edition, by Dines and Humez

Society for Professional Journalists Case Studies: <http://www.spj.org/ethicscasestudies.asp>

Other resources to help you excel in this class will be announced in class, sent to you via the class listserv, or posted in E-learning.

COURSE COMPONENTS

The course consists of the following elements:

Lectures- I will provide a concise lecture each week on the topics we are examining and discussing that week. You are expected to read assigned materials for the week **before** my lecture and come prepared to ask questions about any part of the readings you do not fully understand.

Current Issue Group Presentation-

Student teams will be responsible for researching and presenting on selected topics of interest related to the course objectives. These team presentations will be 10-15 minutes in length, or as assigned by me.

Quizzes- I will assign three or four quizzes related to the assigned readings, videos, guest speakers or to some topic we have discussed or that I have lectured on in class.

Reaction Papers- From time to time, I will ask you to write a brief response to the assigned readings, videos, guest speakers or the topics we have discussed in class.

Group Case Study Debate- You will be assigned an ethics case, to debate in opposing groups, using the format taught in this class, for discussion and comment by both me and your peers

Individual Case Study- You will be assigned an ethics case, , using the format taught in this class, for review and comment by both me and your peers.

Attendance: You are expected to attend class each week and attendance will be taken at the beginning, mid-point or end of each class. Your active participation in group discussions and class activities is expected, and your will be negatively impacted. if you are chronically absent.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Evaluation Criteria

All assignments and presentations will be evaluated based on both form and content. Form refers to professional and timely presentation in accord with assignment instructions, as well as cogency and organization. Content refers to quality of analysis, correct application of principles, coherence in reasoning, and thoroughness of research. Your grade will reflect your success in meeting these standards.

Assignment Scoring

I will be using a base-10 grading scale, as follows:

10= Exceeds expectations for top performance in the course

9= Very good

8= Good (some minor deficiencies)

7= Average (mixed performance with some deficiencies)

6= Below average with major deficiencies

5 or less = Unsatisfactory

Assignment Weights

Individual Case Study: 20%

Group Case Study Debate 20%

Attendance: 20%

Quizzes 20%

Current Issue Presentation: 20%

Final Grades will be assigned according to the following scale, and will include plus and minus grades according to the University of Florida grading policy in effect. I reserve the option to curve final grades.

A (Excellent) 90-100 percent

B (Good) 80-89 percent

C (Average) 70-79 percent

D (Below Average) 60-69 percent

E (Insufficient) <60 percent

Note: Grades will be posted in E-Learning.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, August 26

Orientation to the Course
Introduction to Media, Social and Ethical Issues
Video: Death by Design
Group Topic Assignments

Week 2, September 9

Ethics and Society (Day, Chapter 2)
Main Ethical Theories: Utilitarianism, Kantian Moral Duty, Virtue Ethics, and more
(Patterson, Chapter 1)
Group 1 Presentation

Week 3, September 16

Models of Moral Reasoning
(Day, Chapter 3)
The Case Study Approach to Ethical Decision Making
Group 2 Presentation
Video: TBA

Weeks 4, September 23

Models of Moral Reasoning
(Day, Chapter 3)
The Case Study Approach to Ethical Decision Making
Group 3 Presentation
Video: TBA

September 26: Quiz 1

Week 5, September 30

Conflicts of Interests
(Day, Chapter 7)
Economic Pressures and Social Responsibility
(Patterson, Chapter 7)
Group 4 Presentation
Video: The Post

Week 6, October 7

Media Practitioners and Social Justice
(Day Chapter 12)
Group 5 Presentation
Video: The Post

Week 7, October 14

Truth, Accuracy and Transparency
(Patterson Chapter 2)

Confidentiality
(Day, Chapter 6)

Group 6 Presentation

Practice Group Case Study Assignments

Video: The Post

Week 8, October 21

Privacy

(Patterson, Chapter 5)

(Day Chapter 5)

Group 7 Presentation

Practice Group Case Study Debates

Individual Case Study Assignments

Video: TBA

Quiz 2: October 24

Week 9, October 28

Freedom and Responsibility

Morally Offensive Content

Anti-Social Content

(Day, Chapters 9 and 10)

Group 8 Presentation

Video: American Pornography

Final Group Case Study Debate Assignments

Week 10, November 4

Stereotypes in Media Communications

(Day, Chapter 11)

Group 9 Presentation

Week 11, November, 18th

Final Group Case Study Debate Preparation

Stereotypes, Media and Propaganda

Group 10 Presentation

Video: Real Bad Arabs

Weeks 12, November 25

Final Group Case Study Debate Research Briefs Due

Individual Case Studies Due

Video: TBA

Week 13, December 2

Final Group Case Study Debate Presentations
Individual Case Study Peer Reviews Due

END OF COURSE

APPENDIX

Classroom Decorum

Please do not read newspapers, eat, drink, work on assignments for other classes, web surf, text or engage in other activities during class lectures, presentations, and group discussions.

Students with special challenges: I am committed to helping students with special challenges overcome difficulties with comprehending the subject matter, while abiding by the standards of fairness and confidentiality. In order to address your academic needs, I must be informed of your circumstances at the beginning of the semester *before* performance becomes a factor. Reasonable and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that officially recognized challenges do not become a hindrance to your ability to succeed in this course. You should provide me with an official statement from the Office of Student Services explaining the accommodation required, if you face such a challenge.

Other matters:

- I reserve the right to make changes, if necessary, to the grading system, assignments, schedule, or other matters pertaining to the class.
- I can be reached preferably via e-mail, and the telephone, but please be aware that I will not be able to respond immediately to your communication. As a rule, allow up to 48 hours for a response. Therefore, barring an emergency situation, it is advisable to contact me well in advance of any deadline in order to give me adequate time to respond.
- Students are not permitted to bring guests to class unless arrangements have been made with me prior to class.
- Please feel free to approach me about any concerns or comments you might have about this class. I will be happy to meet with you during my office hours, or by appointment.
- You are expected to arrive promptly for class, fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings. While I understand the problems created by a large campus, it is your responsibility to arrive in class in a timely manner.
- You are responsible for signing the attendance sheet for every class.
- Any evidence of **plagiarism** or cheating will result in an “E” for the course and possible disciplinary action.
- Regarding **plagiarism:** Do not submit the same work to more than one class without prior written permission from both instructors. Do not adapt work from another class for this class without my prior written permission. Do not adapt someone else's work and submit it as your own. This course requires original work, created at this time, for this purpose.
- Spelling counts. So do grammar, punctuation and professional presentation technique.
- An assignment turned in past the deadline will be penalized one letter grade for each day it is late.

- In addition to the required or recommended readings, you are encouraged to read my lecture notes posted in E-learning. You should also take notes in class because classroom sessions often reveal information that is not contained in the readings or my lecture notes.

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester, and applies to you as a student in this class.

The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. **Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action.** A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. 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 will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in doing my assignments."

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.