



RTV 4931
Ethics and Problems
Spring 2015

The U.S. Communications Act of 1934 stipulates that broadcast stations shall "operate in the public interest, convenience, and necessity."

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Assistant to the Instructor: Brianne Wigley briwigley@ufl.edu

Class Meeting Times:

Mondays 4:05-4:55 p.m. (9th period)
Wednesdays 4:05-6:00 p.m. (9th-10th period)
G030 Weimer Hall

Dr. Cleary's Office Hours:

Mondays 1:50-3:40 p.m.
Wednesdays 12:50-3:45 p.m.
and by appointment

Brianne Wigley's Office Hours:

Mondays 2:50-3:50
Wednesdays 2:50-3:50

Required Book:

Doing Ethics in Media: Theories and Practical Applications by Jay Black and Chris Roberts. Routledge: New York. 2011.

Please note: while we will often discuss assigned readings as part of class, you are responsible for reading *all* material and should expect to see questions related to it on the final exam. Do not assume that because we don't specifically discuss an assigned reading that you will not be tested on it! Also considered "fair game" for the final exam is content from class discussions, team presentations and guest speakers.

Other Resources:

You should routinely keep up with coverage of the U.S. and international media. Some recommended resources include CNN's *Reliable Sources*, aired at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Some other helpful sites include the Poynter Institute's Ethics and Diversity section at <http://www.poynter.org/>, the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma at <http://dartcenter.org/> and Reporters Without Borders at http://www.rsf.org/index.php?page=rubrique&id_rubrique=2

About the Course

Course Objectives: Broadcasters face ethical questions every day. This course is designed to help you work through those questions and provide a framework for making ethical decisions. The class will include discussion, lectures, guest speakers and case studies to explore important topics related to broadcast media ethics.

What You Will Learn in this Class:

- perspective on current media controversies and issues.
- strategies for making ethical decisions as broadcast professionals.
- insight into how ethical issues are addressed by media professionals.
- ethical theories as they relate to the media.
- how to incorporate issues of diversity in broadcast programming.

Class Policies

Classroom Atmosphere: Each of you plays a role in shaping this course. I encourage you to be actively involved in class discussion and activities. Please be respectful of the contributions of all others, including the guest speakers, and help create a class environment that is welcoming and inclusive.

Cell Phones and Computer Use in Class: As a matter of courtesy to your fellow class members, please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices prior to the start of class. It is not appropriate to instant message during class. Electronic devices must be turned off and put away during exams. Failure to do so could result in failing the exam.

Attendance: Like the field of broadcasting, this class is fast moving and demanding. Your attendance and participation are important to making this class a success. Roll will be taken for every class meeting. I reserve the right to lower final grades based on excessive absences or tardiness.

Missing Deadlines or Assignments: In the communication field, completing assignments on deadline is vital. The same holds true in this class. If you believe you have an exceptional reason for missing a deadline, please discuss it with me immediately. However, a missed deadline will generally be counted as a missed assignment and will result in a “0” for the assignment. *All assignments are due at the start of class and will be considered late if not turned in at that time.*

Accommodations for Special Needs: I want to work with you to accommodate legitimate special needs in the classroom. According to University policy, students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide appropriate documentation to you and you should provide this documentation to me when requesting specific accommodation. It is your responsibility to initiate this conversation early in the semester and you should plan to meet with me during office hours to discuss this.

Honor Code: As a student at this university, you have accepted a commitment to the Honor Code, and the principles of academic integrity, personal honesty, and responsible citizenship on which it was founded. As an instructor at this university, I am also charged with its enforcement and take that responsibility very seriously. It is my expectation that you will conduct yourself in an academically ethical way in all assignments. **Cheating, plagiarism and related offenses will be grounds for significant academic penalties, up to and including failure in the course.**

The Honor Code’s Preamble reads in part: “...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 community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.”

I encourage you to consult me if you are uncertain about your Honor Code responsibilities within this course.

Course Grading and Assignments

General University policies regarding grading are found at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> For this class, the following specific policies are in place.

Grading Scale:

A 92-100%

A- 90-91%

B+ 87-89%

B 82-86%

B- 80-81%
C+ 77-79%
C 72-76%
C- 70-71%
D+ 67-69%
D 62-66%
D- 60-61%
E below 60%

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on the following assignments:

Team Presentation	(1 x 25 percent)
Policy Memo	(1 x 35 percent)
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>(1 x 40 percent)</u>
Total	100 percent

The **team presentation** will focus on your research about current media issues. You will be assigned to a small group that will prepare a presentation highlighting media issues that present an ethical dilemma. The presentations should be 30 minutes long. Appropriate handouts and other AV material are encouraged. This is a group project and will be graded accordingly. Each team member should turn in a peer assessment on the day of the presentation.

The **policy memo** assignment asks you to address an area of media ethics relevant to the communication field you want to pursue. For example, if you want to be a news photographer, you could consider writing a policy memo that governs staff behavior on news assignments, sets forth a policy on “freebies” and discusses when the identity of subjects should be protected. This assignment should reflect your own work and thoughts. You should reference other material and that should be clearly acknowledged and appropriately cited both in text and at the end of the memo.

The memo should be approximately five pages, double spaced, and at least 1,250 words. A one-page proposal is due February 11 at the start of class. (**The proposal is not graded, but failure to turn it in on time, at the start of class, will result in a 5- point reduction on the paper.**) The full policy memo is due March 11 at the start of class.

The **final exam** is a traditionally formatted test that will evaluate your understanding of key concepts. It is cumulative and will be based on the readings, lectures (including group presentations and guest speakers), and other materials assigned and/or discussed in class. It should reflect only your own work. It is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22, from 4:05-6:00 p.m.

Disclaimer

While it is my intention to follow this syllabus and schedule as closely as possible, I reserve the right to make adjustments as needed.

Meeting	Topic
1 – Jan. 7	Introduction to the Class For next class: Read/listen to “Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception,” <i>New York Times</i> at http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/national/11PAPE.html ; and Jayson Blair: <i>Offering His Views on Making Up the News</i> (NPR Interview) http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120157094
2 – Jan. 12	Going Rogue: Liars, Cheats, and Thieves For next class: Read Chapter 1 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
3- Jan. 14	The Philosophical Roots of Ethical Thought (Part 1)
Jan. 19 – No Class	Martin Luther King Holiday
4 – Jan. 21	The Philosophical Roots of Ethical Thought (Part 2) For next class: Read Chapter 4 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
5 – Jan. 26	What Is News? For next class: Read Chapter 3 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
6 – Jan. 28	Team Presentation 1 and Social Responsibility and the Media For next class: Read Chapter 2 in <i>Doing Ethics</i> ; review RTNDA Code of Ethics at http://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics#.U-Ts3FYnGLE and SPJ Code of Ethics at http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp#
7 – Feb. 2	Codes of Ethics For next class: Read Chapter 6 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
8 – Feb. 4	Team Presentation 2 and Making It Right For next class: Review the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma website at http://dartcenter.org/
9 – Feb. 9	Covering Tragic Events For next class: Prepare proposal for Policy Memo assignment
10 – Feb. 11	Team Presentation 3 and International Journalism Ethics <i>Due: One-page proposal for Policy Memo Assignment</i> For next class: Read Chapter 5 in <i>Doing Ethics</i> ; <i>From Fear to Storytelling: Covering Disability From Outside Your Comfort Zone</i> at http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=58&aid=104987
11 – Feb. 16	Serving a Diverse Audience For next class: Read Chapter 7 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
12 – Feb. 18	Team Presentation 4 and Breaking News For next class: Read <i>How Social Media is Radically Changing the Newsroom</i> at http://mashable.com/2009/06/08/social-media-newsroom/ ; <i>NPR Social Media Guidelines</i> at http://ethics.npr.org/tag/social-media/
13 – Feb. 23	The Ethics of Social Network Sites Guest Speaker: Brianne Wigley, Masters Candidate For next class: Read “CBS Ousts 4 For Bush Guard Story” at http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/01/10/national/main665727.shtml?tag=currentVideoInfo;videoMetaInfo ;
14 – Feb. 25	Team Presentation 5 and Social Responsibility of the Press
March 2-6	Spring Break

No Class	
15 – March 9	Ethical Issues for Managers For next class: Chapter 11 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
16 – March 11	Team Presentation 6 and Media Ownership: Conflicted Interests? <i>Due: Policy Memo</i> For next class: Read Chapter 12 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
17 – March 16	CBS's 60 Minutes II Scandal For next class: Read Chapter 13 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
18 – March 18	Team Presentation 7 and Advertising Issues For next class:
19 – March 23	Sports Journalism and Programming Ethics Guest Speaker: Brianne Wigley, Masters Candidate For next class: Read Chapter 8 in <i>Doing Ethics</i> ; and <i>In NBC Interview, a Failure to Note Network Ties</i> at http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/03/business/media/03gate.html
20 – March 25	Team Presentation 8 and Covering Celebrities For next class: Read Chapter 9 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
21 – March 30	Breaking News For next class: Read Chapter 10 in <i>Doing Ethics</i>
22 – April 1	Team Presentation 9 and Motivating Employees for Ethics
23 – April 6	Too Much Information? For next class: Look at the <i>Reporters Without Borders</i> website at http://en.rsf.org
24 – April 8	Team Presentation 10 and Thinking Beyond The Borders For next class: Read "Honest Truths: Documentary Filmmakers on Ethical Challenges in Their Work." <i>Center for Social Media</i> . American University at http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/making-your-media-matter/documents/best-practices/honest-truths-documentary-filmmakers-ethical-chall ; and "What to Do About Documentary Distortion? Toward a Code of Ethics." <i>International Documentary Association</i> .
25 – April 13	Ethics of Documentary Filmmaking For next class: Read "How to communicate in a crisis," Inc.com, at http://www.inc.com/guides/how-to-communicate-in-a-crisis.ht
26 – April 15	Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies Guest Speaker: Brianne Wigley, Masters Candidate For next class: Read <i>Report Explores New Models for Journalism</i> at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/july-dec09/journalism_10-21.html
27 – April 20	Final Thoughts and Review
28 – April 22	Final Exam Bring a #2 pencil and exam book!

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