



# RTV 4931 ETHICS AND PROBLEMS SPRING 2013

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

**Instructor:** Dr. Johanna Cleary, Telecommunication Department  
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**Assistant to the Instructor:** Tory Dawson  
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**Class Meeting Times:** Mondays 4:05-4:55 p.m. (9th period)  
Wednesdays 4:05-6:00 p.m. (9th and 10<sup>th</sup> period)  
G030 Weimer Hall

**Office Hours:** Monday 1:55-3:50 p.m.  
Wednesday 1:55-3:50 p.m.  
and by appointment

## **Required Books:**

*In The Hot Zone: One Man, One Year, Twenty Wars* by Kevin Sites. New York: Perennial, 2007. (This book is available through local bookstores and online sources.)

There is also a required course pack for the class available through OBT on 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Gainesville. You should have that course pack at the beginning of the semester.

Please note: while we will often discuss readings as part of class, you are responsible for reading *all* material and should expect to see related questions on the final exam. Do not assume that because we don't specifically discuss a reading that you will not be tested on it!

## **Other Resources:**

You should routinely keep up with issues related to the U.S. and international media. Some recommended resources include CNN's *Reliable Sources*, aired at 11:00 a.m. on

Sundays and at [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com). Some other helpful sources 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](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 choices. 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 should 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. You are allowed five absences without penalty, but additional absences are subject to penalty.

**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 when requested.*

**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.

**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.

## **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 grade scale will be used.

Grading Scale:	A	93-100%
	A-	90-92%
	B+	88-89%
	B	82-87%
	B-	80-81%
	C+	78-79%
	C	72-77%
	C-	70-71%
	D+	68-69%

D	62-67%
D-	60-62%
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 40 percent)
Final Exam	(1 x 35 percent)
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 involving 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. However, the contributions of each team member will be considered in assigning individual grades.

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.

The memo should be approximately five pages, double spaced, and at least 1,250 words. A one-page proposal is due Mon., Feb. 11. (The proposal is not graded, but failure to turn it in will result in a 5-point reduction on the policy memo.) The policy memo is due Wed., March 13. Late papers will receive penalties.

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 Wed., April 24 from 4:05-6:00 p.m. *Please note: there is no guarantee that a make-up exam will be allowed. If you have an unavoidable conflict, it is your responsibility to attempt to work out alternate arrangements in advance.*

### **Disclaimer**

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

Specific readings will be assigned for each topic. Please come to every class prepared to discuss the readings. However, you are considered responsible for all assigned readings, even if they are not discussed in class.

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Topic for Discussion</b>
<b>1 - January 7 Monday</b>	<b>Introduction to the Class</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Ethical Foundations and Perspectives” from <i>Media Ethics</i> ; and Sandra Dickson’s “The ‘Golden Mean’ in Journalism,” <i>Journal of Mass Media Ethics</i> (Course pack)
<b>2 - January 9 Wednesday</b>	<b>The Philosophical Roots of Ethics and A History of Ethical Challenges</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Faking the News” (Chapter 6) from <i>Ethics in Journalism</i> ; and “Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception,” <i>New York Times</i> at <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/national/11PAPE.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/11/national/11PAPE.html</a> ; and listen to “Jayson Blair: Offering His Views on Making Up the News” (NPR interview) at <a href="http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120157094">http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120157094</a>
<b>3 – January 14 Monday</b>	<b>Going Rogue: Liars, Cheats and Thieves</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read Frederick Siebert, Theodore B. Peterson & Wilbur Schramm’s “Social Responsibility of the Press” from <i>Four Theories of the Press</i> . Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 73-103. (Course pack)
<b>4 - January 16 Wednesday</b>	<b>Media Ethics: A Theoretical Approach</b>
<b>January 21 Monday</b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – No Class</b>
<b>5 - January 23 Wednesday</b>	<b>Photojournalism Ethics</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Gary Green, <i>Orlando Sentinel</i> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Creating a Positive Culture” from <i>Ready, Set, Lead!</i> from Radio Television News Directors Foundation (Course pack)
<b>6 - January 28 Monday</b>	<b>Managing the Ethical Media Unit</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “RTDNA Code of Ethics” at <a href="http://www.rtdna.org/article/rtdna_code_of_ethics">http://www.rtdna.org/article/rtdna_code_of_ethics</a> and “SPJ Code of Ethics” at <a href="http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp">http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp</a> (Course pack)
<b>7 – January 30 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 1</b> <b>Codes of Ethics</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Going Public: Should Journalists Express Their Political Views on Social Networking Sites?” By Stephanie Gleason, <i>American Journalism Review</i> (Winter 2009), pp. 6-7; and <i>The Roanoke Times News Editorial Standards for Social Media</i> at <a href="http://www.roanoke.com/newsservices/wb/xp-59614#48">http://www.roanoke.com/newsservices/wb/xp-59614#48</a>
<b>8 – February 4 Monday</b>	<b>The Ethics of Social Media</b>
<b>9 – February 6</b>	<b>Team Presentation 2</b>

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Breaking News</b> <b>For next class:</b> Review the “Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma” website at <a href="http://dartcenter.org/">http://dartcenter.org/</a>
<b>10 – Feb. 11 Monday</b>	<b>Covering Tragedy</b> <i>Due: Proposal for Policy Memo Assignment</i> <b>For next class:</b> Read “From Fear to Storytelling: Covering Disability from Outside Your Comfort Zone” at <a href="http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/diversity-at-work/76405/from-fear-to-storytelling-covering-disability-from-outside-your-comfort-zone/">http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/diversity-at-work/76405/from-fear-to-storytelling-covering-disability-from-outside-your-comfort-zone/</a> and “The Whole Story: Diversity Tips and Tools” at <a href="http://www.spj.org/divws2.asp">http://www.spj.org/divws2.asp</a>
<b>11 – Feb. 13 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 3</b> <b>Serving a Diverse Audience</b> <b>For next class:</b> Be prepared to discuss <i>In the Hot Zone</i> and read the profile of Kevin Sites at <a href="http://kevinsitesreports.com/KS/KSabout/KSabout.html">http://kevinsitesreports.com/KS/KSabout/KSabout.html</a>
<b>12 – Feb. 18 Monday</b>	<b>Discussion of <i>In the Hot Zone</i></b>
<b>13 – Feb. 20 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 4</b> <b>Ethical Issues in Emerging Democracies</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Nataliya Dymtrochenko, Former Ukrainian Journalist <b>For next class:</b> Review “CBS Ousts 4 for Bush Guard Story” at <a href="http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/01/10/national/main665727.shtml?tag=currentVideoInfo;videoMetaInfo">http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2005/01/10/national/main665727.shtml?tag=currentVideoInfo;videoMetaInfo</a>
<b>14 – Feb. 25 Monday</b>	<b>CBS’s <i>60 Minutes</i> Scandal</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read Noam Cohen’s “In Animated Videos, News and Guesswork Mix: <i>New York Times</i> at <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/06/business/media/06animate.html?r=1&amp;">http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/06/business/media/06animate.html?r=1&amp;</a>
<b>15 – Feb. 27 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 5</b> <b>Covering Celebrities</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Tory Dawson, Masters’ Candidate <b>For next class:</b> Read Harcup, T. and O’Neill, D. (2001). What is news? Galtung and Ruge revisited. <i>Journalism Studies</i> , 2(2): 261-280.
<b>March 4-8</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
<b>16 – March 11 Monday</b>	<b>Reality TV Ethics</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Tory Dawson, Masters’ Candidate
<b>17 – March 13 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 6</b> <b>Ethics Issues for Station Managers</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Sandy Wagner, Revenue Dir., Multimedia Properties <i>Due: Policy Memo</i> <b>For next class:</b> Read in “NBC Interview, A Failure to Note Network Ties” at <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/03/business/media/03gate.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/03/business/media/03gate.html</a>
<b>18 – March 18 Monday</b>	<b>Crisis Management Issues</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Truth and Objectivity” from <i>Ethics in Journalism</i> (6 <sup>th</sup>

	ed.) by Ron F. Smith (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing) and “Are NPR Reporters Too Involved in Their Stories?” at <a href="http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5452082">http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5452082</a>
<b>19 – March 20 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 7 The Case for Objectivity?</b>
<b>20 – March 25 Monday</b>	<b>Breaking News</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Why the Penn State scandal stayed secret” by Gary Sinderson at <a href="http://www.tvnewscheck.com/article/55595/why-the-penn-state-scandal-stayed-secret">http://www.tvnewscheck.com/article/55595/why-the-penn-state-scandal-stayed-secret</a>
<b>21 – March 27 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 8 Ethics Issues in Sports Journalism</b> <b>Guest Speaker:</b> Tory Dawson, Masters’ Candidate
<b>22 – April 1 Monday</b>	<b>Framing The Content</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Honest Truths: Documentary Filmmakers on Ethical Challenges in Their Work” from Center for Social Media conference at American University at <a href="http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/making-your-media-matter/documents/best-practices/honest-truths-documentary-filmmakers-ethical-chall">http://www.centerforsocialmedia.org/making-your-media-matter/documents/best-practices/honest-truths-documentary-filmmakers-ethical-chall</a> ; and “What to Do About Documentary Distortion? Toward a Code of Ethics” from the International Documentary Association at <a href="http://www.documentary.org/content/what-do-about-documentary-distortion-toward-code-ethics-0">http://www.documentary.org/content/what-do-about-documentary-distortion-toward-code-ethics-0</a>
<b>23 – April 3 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 9 Documentary Ethics</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read Phillip Patterson and Lee Wilkins’ “Advertising Ethics” (Chapter 3) from <i>Media Ethics: Issues and Cases</i>
<b>24 – April 8 Monday</b>	<b>The Ethics of Advertising</b> <b>For next class:</b> Review the “Reporters Without Borders” website at <a href="http://en.rsf.org/">http://en.rsf.org/</a>
<b>25 – April 10 Wednesday</b>	<b>Team Presentation 10 Thinking Beyond The Borders</b>
<b>26 – April 15 Monday</b>	<b>Media Ownership: Conflicted Interests?</b>
<b>27 – April 17 Wednesday</b>	<b>Breaking News</b> <b>For next class:</b> Read “Report Explores New Models for Journalism” at <a href="http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/july-dec09/journalism_10-21.html">http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/media/july-dec09/journalism_10-21.html</a>
<b>28 – April 22 Monday</b>	<b>Some Final Thoughts on the Future of the Field</b>
<b>29 – April 24 Wednesday</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>

**Peer Evaluation**  
***RTV 4931 – Ethics and Problems***  
**Spring 2013**

**This form is due to Dr. Cleary on the day of your presentation.**

Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list your contributions to the presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list your teammate's contributions to the presentation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how you would numerically describe the effort of each member: (The total should be 100%.)

Your contribution \_\_\_\_\_

Your teammates' contributions \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell the instructor anything else you think is important to know in assigning a final grade:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_