

COMM 215-201

Ethics & Communication

Course Syllabus

Loyola University Chicago

School of Communication

Spring 2020

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T 11:30am-12:45pm (online-live) / Th 11:30am-12:45pm (online)
Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW:

All professions, particularly in the field of communications, face ethical dilemmas on a daily basis. Controversy itself is nothing new; we've been grappling with right and wrong since the beginning of time. But the methods in which the information is imparted are not always clear cut. Today's decision-makers and communicators face continuous challenges on how to gather the facts, how to determine the legitimacy of sources, and how to produce and write the stories, while making certain they are adhering to their companies' own internal rules and regulations. Sometimes reporters themselves become the story—for better or worse—and must address the ensuing consequences. Companies and organizations face the challenge of protecting themselves in crises and communicating in an honest manner, both internally and externally. The legitimacy of social media continues to have a major impact and has posed even more challenges. We will investigate the growing problem of “fake news” and its impact on both journalism and the public. The bottom line in today's world: Public vs. private no longer exists and everything is on the record.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Together, we will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of ethical and moral principles
- Connect those principles to personal and professional decision-making
- Develop a process for recognizing, addressing and resolving ethical challenges

TEXTS:

- Media Ethics at Work: True Stories from Young Professionals 2nd ed. by Lee Anne Peck and Guy S. Reel
- News media: Be a student of current events and stories involving media criticism
- Other readings as assigned in this syllabus

COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Response Time: Students can expect a response to email questions and phone calls within 48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.

Course Communication: All course announcements and individual emails are sent through Sakai, which only uses Loyola email accounts. Therefore, you MUST check your Loyola email on a regular basis (several times a week) for the duration of the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Participation/Contribution Scoring: This class is a discussion forum and workshop. Your participation in class discussions is **extremely** important (10% of your course grade). Borderline grades will be raised or lowered depending on the amount of your **active** contributions to the class.

Attendance: This course will conform to the Loyola withdrawal policies. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, please email me immediately. If you must be out, hand in your assignment early or e-mail the document to me **before 11:30am on the day it is due**. It is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate and master any missed material **on your own**. Keep in mind that even one missed assignment will lower your grade substantially.

Spelling, grammar and writing skills: All are important and will affect your grade. Don't hesitate to use the Loyola Writing Center <http://www.luc.edu/writing/> to help improve your work. Also, look at the *AP Stylebook*.

Research and reasoning: Valid, research-based sourcing matters. We'll share opinions in class, but opinions without strong supporting data hold significantly less weight.

Trust: Respect for each other forms the foundation of our robust discussions.

Sakai Late Assignments: One late assignment is allowed during the semester and the assignment will be reduced one letter grade each day late for a maximum deduction of 50%. Late assignments are only accepted for one week after the due date.

Other Policies:

- Save all your papers until the end of the semester. Always back up computer files and keep hard copies of everything.
- Ask intelligent questions that arise from the coursework.

Assignments:	Due Date:	Complete/Upload to:	Points:
My Code of Ethics	1/23/20, 12:45pm	Sakai	150=15%
Team Presentations	See calendar	Sakai	200=20%
Bias and Fallacy Forum Presentation	4/7/20, 11:30am	Sakai	150=15%
Final Paper: Ethical Case Study	4/28/20, 12:45pm	Sakai	300=30%
Class Participation (includes Sakai assignments)	Weekly	In class/Sakai	200=20%
Total:			1,000

The maximum number of points available is 1,000, which is an A.

Grade scale:

1,000-930 = A
 929-900 = A-
 899-870 = B+
 869-830 = B
 829-800 = B-
 799-770 = C+
 769-730 = C
 729-700 = C-
 699-670 = D+
 669-630 = D
 Below 629 = F

Wk.	Subject
1 1/14	Introduction to class, syllabus, Sakai
1/16	In-class assignment (Sakai)
2 1/21	Review Chapters 1 and 2 – Media Ethics book
1/23	MY CODE OF ETHICS DUE (12:45pm – Sakai)
3 1/28	SELECTED QUOTE (due at 11:30am) Lesson: The Ethics of Corporate Communication
1/30	In-class assignment (Sakai)
4 2/4	Lesson: Plagiarism and Giving Credit Where It is Due Team 1: Chapter 8 Presentation and Discussion
2/6	In-class assignment (Sakai)
5 2/11	Lesson: The Ethics of Visual Imagery Team 2: Chapter 3 Presentation and Discussion
2/13	In-class assignment (Sakai)
6 2/18	Lesson: The Ethics of Breaking News Team 3: Chapter 17 Presentation and Discussion
2/20	In-class assignment (Sakai)
7 2/25	Lesson: Ethics in a Digital World Team 4: Chapter 15 Presentation and Discussion
2/27	In-class assignment (Sakai)
8 3/3	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES
3/5	
9 3/10	Lesson: The Ethics of Innovation
3/12	In-class assignment (Sakai)
10 3/17	Lesson: Why Ethics and Diversity Are Inseparable
3/19	In-class assignment (Sakai)
11 3/24	Lesson: Ethics of Non-Profit and Government Communications
3/26	In-class assignment (Sakai)
12 3/31	Lesson: The Ethics of Investigative Journalism Team 5: Chapter 9 Presentation and Discussion
4/2	In-class assignment (Sakai)
13 4/7	Bias and Fallacy Forum Presentations
4/9	In-class assignment (Sakai)
14 4/14	Bias and Fallacy Forum Presentations (continued)
4/16	In-class assignment (Sakai)
15 4/21	Lesson: Injustice in Our Daily Lives: How Leaders Respond Team 6: Chapter 24 Presentation and Discussion
4/23	In-class assignment (Sakai)
16 4/28	FINAL PAPER DUE: Ethical Case Study – 12:45pm

NOTE: Schedule may be changed.