2014

477-01 Media Ethics

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What You Will Learn
- A greater sense of your own personal ethics and where they come from
- Strategies for reasoning through ethical situations
- Ethical problems faced in media careers through analysis of case studies
- An awareness of the media’s structure and other causes of ethical dilemmas
- Codes and standards for media professionals
- How ethics relates to law

Materials to Help You Learn
Textbook’s website: http://www.mediaethicsbook.com

How You Will Be Evaluated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethics Blogs (4)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case respondent (1)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class activities, quizzes, homework,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion board</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ethics Blog: See instructions on Canvas

Final Exam: Format to be announced in class.

Class Activities, etc: Reading quizzes (if necessary) will be administered during class; no make-ups. Homework and discussion board contributions will be evaluated on the following scale: 5=excellent, thorough, detailed, clear, follows instructions; 4=good, but lacking detail or clarity; 3=incomplete, off-target, unclear. Details will be provided in class. Late work will not be accepted.

Essay: Details to be announced in class.

Participation: Classes are always more interesting and educational when you participate. To that end, I offer the following guidance on class participation.

Points may be awarded for:
- Asking a thoughtful question (other than procedural/housekeeping questions).
- Introducing an incident/case/example not dealt with in our readings.
- Making a reasonable attempt at answering an evaluative question.
- Volunteering facts about specific cases or situations.
- Asking for clarification on concept, language, interpretation.
- Offering a contrary opinion, point of view, interpretation.
- Introducing events from the news that tie in with our subject matter.
- Linking concepts from your other classes to this class.
- Piggybacking off of another student’s comment to add more information and context
- Challenging the accepted wisdom or majority opinion.
- Explicating a textual passage or example.
- Suggesting new resources for the class (can be done in class or out of class)

Points may be deducted for:
- Disruptive uses of technology (i.e., texting in such a way that I notice)
- Side talk and private conversations that do not assist the class.
- Noisy disruptions (i.e., opening a bag of chips during another student’s presentation).
- Repeatedly showing up late or ducking out early.
- Sarcastic or rude comments that attack the speaker.

The following are welcome but have no impact on your participation grade
- Asking procedural questions about tests, assignments, grading procedures, etc.
- Bravely attempting to answer a question even though you’re pretty sure you have no clue.

Attendance
According to the Xavier academic catalog, “Reasonable attendance at all class meetings of courses ... is expected of students as a condition for the granting of academic credit. Lack of reasonable attendance as determined by the individual faculty member is reason for denial of credit for a course and possible course failure.”
Translated, this means that I expect you to show up for all classes. Many classes will have in-class exercises and other activities that cannot be made up, so any absences will affect your grade. I will also take note of who is missing. **More than 8 absences automatically earns a failing grade. You should drop the class at that point.**

Athletes and others away on official university business are expected to inform me in advance, provide the proper documentation, and complete any assignments in advance of the absence.

No other excuses (illnesses, funerals, weddings, “My parents bought me a ticket to _____”) are accepted, except for long-term illness, which must be documented through the dean’s office. So, use your two free absences wisely.

### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>Excellent work; consistently shows mastery of material; outstanding effort and unusual insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>Good, competent work; frequently shows understanding of material, but not always mastery. May show good, but not outstanding, effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Sufficient understanding of material; weak or inconsistent in some areas. Inconsistent effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>Sufficient understanding of material; weak or inconsistent in some areas. Inconsistent effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>General weakness in understanding of material; incomplete work. General lack of effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>Work not meeting the above standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Late Work

Doing your work in a timely fashion and meeting deadlines is simply a matter of being responsible. In the work world, others may be depending on you to deliver, and when you fail to do so, you hurt not only yourself, but others and potentially your entire organization. For this reason, late work will be penalized one letter grade (10 percent) per day, including weekends and holidays. One day means 24 hours from the time the assignment was due. After four days, the grade becomes a zero.

### Academic Honesty

You are expected to do your own work and credit information and statements from others appropriately. You may not:

- cut and paste sentences, paragraphs or pages from documents on the web and offer them as your own.
- buy papers from the web and offer them as your own.
- paraphrase the ideas of others without acknowledging the source.
- collaborate on class work with anyone unless directed by the instructor.
- allow others to copy from your work

You are required to:
• place inside of quotations and correctly cite any passages that are drawn from other sources.
• Acknowledge the source of any information that you have paraphrased.
• Correctly cite the source of factual information
• Report any instances of academic dishonesty to the instructor

Some Thoughts on Grading
• In an ethics class, there are few clearly right or wrong answers. However, there are an abundance of accurate, well-reasoned and well-argued answers. Your grade will depend on these.
• Although I apply trained, professional judgment to your class work, I realize that you may not always agree with me.
• The process of grading is painful – for you and for me. While I always attempt to be objective, I do not always succeed. No one can be completely objective all the time.
• Different professors grade differently. People see different things as important. That’s life.
• You are not alone. I get evaluated all the time – by my peers, my bosses, and by you.
• Grades are not necessarily an accurate evaluation of your work or your ability, but it is the system we use.
• It is wise for you to explore the boundaries of your professors’ professional judgments. Learn what he or she values and then do your best to deliver.
• In this class anyway, an “A” is available to all students. In the event that you all earn an “A” for the semester, you will all have delivered not just pretty good work, but outstanding work.

Professionalism in Class
The fact that you have chosen to attend college leads me to conclude that most of you are interested in spending your lives doing more than asking people if they would like fries with their meal. That being the case, you might want to look upon your experience here as professional training for your life in the outside world. Part of that training involves learning about expectations that will be placed on you. In this class, those expectations include (but are not limited to):

Show up for all classes. It makes little economic sense to pay thousands of dollars in tuition, fees, books and living expenses and then not take your reward – an education. If you are unable to attend because of a serious medical or other situation, do as you would do in the outside world: call your supervisor (that’s me) before you are expected in class. Otherwise, I may worry about you.

Be on time. Employers in the outside world do not long tolerate dawdlers, and neither do I. Be punctual. Turn in your work on time. People who show up late in the outside world get docked in their pay. Students who fail to meet deadlines in this class are penalized with lower grades.

Be respectful. This applies to other students as well as your instructor. Showing respect means refraining from reading newspapers in class, talking during lectures and student presentations, leaving early or arriving late.
Take responsibility for your education. The educational experience thrives on student involvement. Do the readings and come to class ready to participate in discussions. Asking questions and offering your point of view in class is good practice for thinking on your feet and expressing yourself. Enjoy your moment on the stage. In this class, any student who attempts to express his or her opinion is a success.

Pay attention to the instructions. Assignments often have detailed instructions. Please follow them to the letter. The instructions, in part, are intended to give every student an equal chance at doing his or her best work. If the instructions are unclear, please ask for clarification. Just as in the outside world, repeated failure to follow instructions in this class results in serious consequences.

Accept challenges with grace. Much of the work you face in this class will be unfamiliar or difficult. This fact should not be taken as an excuse to whine. You are in college to learn, which means there is a great deal you do not know. Get used to it. Exams, papers, and presentations are all learning opportunities. Even from your failures I expect great things.

Accept the consequences of your actions. So you partied the night before the midterm, so you overslept, so you missed the exam. So what? You knew there would be no make-ups for the exam. You made your choice, now live with the decision. Don’t ask for a special exception, because in doing so you devalue the choices of all the other students in the class.

Write, spell, and punctuate as if your job depended on it. This course is offered by the Department of Communication Arts, so the standards of the communication profession apply to your work in this class. Your written assignments should be letter-perfect, down to the spelling, grammar, punctuation, and style. Consider this standard procedure for the outside world, where resumes with typos or other errors are routinely consigned to the trash can.

Do your own work. You are expected to fully comply with the university’s academic honesty policy. Anything less compromises your integrity and devalues your education. Plagiarism, or taking credit for someone else’s work, is a serious offense – both in this course and in the outside world. Copying a classmate's work, failing to attribute information to a source, or making up information will lead to your failing the assignment. The same goes for unauthorized collaboration on assignments and exams.

Your choice to continue your enrollment in this class means that you have read, understand, and will abide by all of the provisions above.