

JOU 326: Media Ethics

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| Classroom: AJ 339 | Instructor: Brad King | Phone: 8692 |
| Time: TR 930-1045 | Office: AJ 389 | Email: jbkking@bsu.edu |
| Website: www.thedudeman.net Category: Media Ethics | Office hours: T, R: 11-12 W: 1230-2 by appointment (+ online, off-campus as well) | Twitter: #bsuME |

JOU 326: Media Ethics

The primary purpose of this course is to examine the moral, social, political, economic and governmental pressure on the media. It will explore behavior in the workplace as it pertains to ethical decision making. This course will encourage you to examine and evaluate your ethical development and the role that development plays in ethical decision making.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will engage in ethical reasoning as demonstrated by reaction papers, small group discussion, in-class presentations, formal presentations and a final paper.
- Students will develop an ethical "logic" for making decisions as demonstrated by reaction papers and a final paper
- Students will develop an understanding of ethical "grey areas" as demonstrated by small group discussion, informal presentations, in-class presentations and a formal presentation.
- Students will develop an ethical "toolbox" using various ethical philosophies as demonstrated through reaction papers, small group discussions, in-class presentations, formal presentations and a final paper.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Day, Louis Alvin. *Ethics in Media Communications, Fifth Edition*.

GRADING SCALE:

- The grade scale in my class is a 10 point scale, with the final grades tabulated based upon individual performance.

ASSIGNMENTS:

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Reaction Papers | 50 |
| Informal Presentations | 25 |

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|----------------------|-----|
| Formal Presentations | 100 |
| Final Paper | 100 |
| Final Presentation | 100 |

ASSIGNMENT POLICIES:

Assignments are due at the start of class unless otherwise stated. I will not accept late assignments unless you have made arrangements with me before the due date. Understand I am busy. If you wait until the last second to try to discuss this with me, I may not have time. *You* are turning in my assignment. Please remember that.

Written Assignments

Formatting

- Times New Roman 12, Single Spaced, Single Column, Left Justified, Straight Quotes (and others)
- All digital assignments will be saved in this format: lastname.assignmentname.doc or lastname.assignmentname.rtf. Any assignment saved and sent without this file name will be deleted and considered missed.
- Your name, class and assignment name will be written in the left corner of the first page of your assignments. Failure to do this will result in a zero for the assignment.

Requirements

- Please use End Note citations for your research:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

Formal Presentations

- Presentations will be done in a professional manner, which means dressing appropriately.

Brad's Rules

How My Classroom Works

1. Professionalism breeds excellence. You are always under scrutiny. You are evaluated in more ways than simply turning in your assignments.
2. I am not your friend. I am not your parent. I am your professor. It's not personal, I promise you.
3. There is not, nor will there ever be, extra credit in life.
4. I will take attendance at the beginning of class. Anyone not present at the start of class will be considered absent. You will lose 5 points off your final letter grade for every unexcused absence in this class.
5. If you are going to be late or if you are going to miss class, I will expect to hear from you before the start of class. If I do not accord me this respect, please do not expect me to waive my fourth rule.
6. There are two acceptable excuses for missing class: an illness and a catastrophic family event. A wedding or a field trip is not a catastrophic event.
 - In the case of illness, I will expect doctor's documentation delivered at the start of the next class period. This will be some formal document. An email or hand-written note on a sheet of notebook paper will not suffice.
 - *You* are missing my class. Please do not believe the burden is on me to trust your story.
7. You will have small group discussion groups and critique groups. Please use them. Do not ask me questions about writing and editing until you have discussed those with your group. My first question to you will be to verify that.
8. For simple questions, Google before you ask me. This is a journalism class. Be curious.
9. If you do not complete the assignments, please do not participate in discussions. Your uninformed opinions only serve to remind us that you did not do the work assigned.
10. Do not ever tell me "you don't know" why you did something when I ask for an explanation about your writing or research. You had a reason. Enough of one that moved you into action. So let's talk about it.

Taking Criticism

No single aspect of my teaching receives more discussion amongst students than my critiquing. For many, this is the first time you will experience a line-by-line analysis of their work. It will likely be the first time you have your work displayed for a class as a teaching tool so that others can learn from your mistakes. It will likely be the first time you experience the realities that they don't write well. This despite what you have been told for most of your academic life.

My efforts and my style may seem unpleasant to you. Trust me when I tell you that I take no great joy in editing poorly written assignments. That unpleasantness, however, will not stop me from doing my job.

I will use student work to illustrate points, which sometimes means your work will be on display for the entire class. This is not to embarrass or humiliate you. I promise.

I am blunt. I apologize for that. I've tried -- to no avail -- to soften my critiques over the years. It's a continuing part of my professional development. However, my job is to push you beyond the capabilities you believe you have, to develop within you a sense of work ethic and to hone your attention to detail. My critiques are meant to help you in those three areas.

My style is meant to prepare you the real world, which is a place where performance, excellence and professionalism are how you are judged. You are not paying me to make you feel good. You are paying me to prepare you for that life. Even if you don't yet realize that.

If you believe you will turn in a first draft written the night before an assignment is due and pass my class, you are mistaken. You will fail. If you don't take the time to follow my instructions, listen in class, apply the concepts discussed in class and participate in the critique groups, please do not expect me to afford you some level of respect you believe you inherently deserve.

(A Modified) Ten Commandments (via Prof. Drummond, Cal-Berkeley)

1. "It's" and "its" are not interchangeable. Don't use them as such.
2. Rarely start a sentence with a dependent clause. Subject-verb-object sentences are preferable. Also, know the reasons for using dependent clauses and phrases.
3. Punctuation marks go inside the quotes.
4. Said says it all.
5. "Community", "indigenous" and other group terms are unacceptable. And poor writing.
6. No obscenities, ever.
7. Never lead with a quote, unless the Pope said "Shit."
8. Then forget 6 and 7.
9. Nobody cares what you think.
10. Ask the most antagonistic questions at the end of the interview. If you don't have any antagonistic questions, you probably don't have a story.

Thoughts on Objectivity and Balance

Many of you have strong opinions on what is right and wrong, the moral behaviors that you believe should guide the world. I applaud you for your convictions. I probably have friends who hold similar views to you. In fact, I count myself lucky to have a massive network of friends who hold all manner of opinions.

Understand those opinions have no place in this classroom.

Objectivity exists, and as Prof. Drummond has written, and I know it when I see it. The adjectives are usually the tip off. For the purposes of this class, you are not Pro Choice nor are you Pro Life. Everyone believes in free choice and that life is important. Sound bites are no substitute for actual thought.

Taking Care

Discussions of ethics will elicit personal, emotional reactions from your fellow students. We will touch on a variety of subjects that many people hold as moral truths in their lives, and I will openly question those. This is not a criticism of their morals. This is a teaching method to deconstruct why we hold our beliefs and how those influence our actions.

If you are flip, or worse, openly hostile to someone in the class, we will have an issue. My first remedy is always to engage in a critical dialogue with all my students; however, I reserve the right to ask you to leave my classroom if you become threatening -- emotionally, psychologically or otherwise -- to someone who disagrees with your viewpoint.

This class isn't about right and wrong. That's up to you in your own lives. This class is about understanding all the different ways in which we approach issues and how those approaches define the ethics of the media.

My Website

I will not use Blackboard throughout this semester. We will use my personal teaching site, <http://www.thedudemane.net>.

- Your class will have its own Category (located on the left side of the site) where you can see the latest announcements.
- The class syllabus, assignment sheets and rubrics will be available in the BSU tab (located along the top).
- However, I will place your grades on Blackboard. I advise you to check this throughout the semester. I will not answer questions about a week 2 grade, for instance, in week 16.

You should check the class website once a day, and certainly the day of class, for recaps of the class and upcoming announcements. On occasion, I am asked to speak or attend an event with little notice. If that happens, I will post this on the site. It is your responsibility to check.

Syllabus

My syllabus is merely a guidepost for the semester. No class ever runs exactly the same. Therefore, like presidential appointments, the syllabus serves at the pleasure of the professor. Subject to change. And to paraphrase the California appellate judge's ruling: all parties are advised to chill.

Department Rules

Equipment Check Out:

The Integrated Media Lab's checkout policy is that the student returns the equipment 24 hours after renting. The exception is if the student rents the equipment out on Friday, it is not due back until the following Monday. If the student fails to return the equipment on time, a warning will be issued for the first offense. After the first offense, the student will not be able to rent equipment from the lab for the remainder of the semester. Hours of lab operation are posted in classrooms and on the lab window. If there are any questions, the student can contact Natalie, the iLab graduate assistant, at 285-0060, or at njnauman@bsu.edu.

Saving Documents on Lab Computers:

If you do not have a Flash drive or some other external hard drive, please make sure that you don't save documents on your lab computer desktop. There is a drive -- THAWSPACE -- where you can create a folder and save your documents. Please do not sully our desktop workspace with your files.

Printing in Labs:

There are no longer printers in AJ 361, 246, 360 or 392. Please do not expect to print your assignments out in class. As I expect your work to be stapled or clipped together, this shouldn't be an issue for the class.

Professional-In-Residence:

The department requires that students attend at least one professional-in-residence workshop each semester. Please do not wait until the last second to attend. **You will lose one full letter grade.** Also note that you will not receive your attendance card until the session is over. If you leave five minutes before, you will not be counted.

University Rules

Department Writing Statement

The Department of Journalism regards writing proficiency as essential to the satisfactory completion of all journalism courses. Therefore, department instructors must monitor writing performance and language usage proficiency in all journalism courses. Student grades must reflect both criteria. This means you will be graded on your spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

Competency Statement

As part of its assessment procedures to improve curriculum, the Department of Journalism requires all students to take Department and Sequence Competency Exams. Students are required to take both the Department and Sequence exams first in JOURN 101 and later in their sequence capstone course. Failure to complete exams will result at best in an incomplete for the respective course. Course instructors will specify time and location of the exams.

Disabled Student Statement

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are...

Diversity Statement

The Department of Journalism is committed to creating an awareness of diversity issues as they relate to the society, to the workplace and to the classroom.

Capstone Classes

As part of its assessment procedures to improve curriculum, the Department of Journalism requires all students to take Department and Sequence Competency Exams. Students are required to take both the Department and Sequence exams first in JOURN 101 and later in their sequence capstone course. Failure to complete exams will result at best in an incomplete for the respective course. Course instructors will specify time and location of the exams.

Journalism Writing Center

The Journalism Writing Center (JWC), AJ 382 (285-7412), provides free one-on-one coaching for undergraduate and graduate students, including assistance with grammar and language usage, style, structure, editing and revising, clarity and creativity. Coaching is also available for JOURN 101 students attempting the Language Usage Proficiency Exam (LUPE). The JWC Web site has a variety of online resources, including interactive quizzes. Visit the site at: <http://jdwritingctr.iweb.bsu.edu>

Language Use Proficiency Examination

Students must successfully complete a departmental language usage proficiency examination (LUPE). The 100-question exam will be administered via the InQsit system for all JOURN 101 students from weeks three through fifteen each semester. Students will be permitted retakes throughout the twelve-week testing period, but only one exam may be taken in a given week. The minimum passing score will be 70 percent. Successful completion of the LUPE will be a prerequisite for entry into in JOURN 104, NEWS 120, 121 or 122. Successful completion of this examination does not satisfy the University Core Curriculum Writing Competency Examination requirement.

Part I: Introductions

Week 1: January 11

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|---|---------------------|
| Tuesday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class overview • Syllabus • Assignments | |
| Thursday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Ethics? • Notecards • Using the Class Wiki, Twitter | |

Week 2: January 18

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Tuesday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. Ethic Statements • Chapter 1 Lecture | Chapter 1: Ethics + Moral Development |
| Thursday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 Lecture • Outline, Reaction Paper 1: The Role of Ethics in Society | Chapter 2: Ethics + Society |

Week 3: January 25

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|--|--|
| Tuesday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 Lecture | Chapter 3: Ethics + Moral Reasoning |
| Thursday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline, Reaction Paper 2: My Ethics, Not My Company's, Should Guide My Decisions • Small Group Discussion: The Role of Ethics in Society | DUE: Reaction Paper 1 : The Role of Ethics in Society |

Week 4: February 1

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|---------|--|--|
| Tuesday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussion: Ethical Codes of Conduct | READING: Associated Press Managing Editors ; National Press Photographers Association ; Online News Association Mission ; RTNDA Code of Ethics and Professional |

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|-----------------|--|--|
| | | Conduct ; SPI |
| Thursday | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussion: My Ethics, Not My Company's, Should Guide My Decisions | DUE: Reaction Paper 2: My Ethics, Not My Company's, Should Guide My Decisions |

Part II: Case Studies

Week 5: February 8

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussion 4-10 Outline • Reaction Paper 3-10 Outline • Chapter 4 Lecture | Chapter 4: Truth + Honesty in Media Communications |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussions: Case Studies | Chapter 4: Case Studies |

Week 6: February 15

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 Lecture | Chapter 5: The Media + Privacy DUE: Reaction Paper 3: Case Study 4 |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussions: Case Studies | Chapter 5: Case Studies |

Week 7: February 22

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 Lecture | Chapter 6: Confidentiality + The Public Interest DUE: Reaction Paper 4: Case Study 5 |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussions: Case Studies | Chapter : Case Studies 6 |

Week 8: March 1

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 7 Lecture | Chapter 7: Conflicts of Interest DUE: Reaction Paper 5 : Case Study 6 |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Group Discussions: Case Studies | Chapter : Case Studies 7 |

Week 9: March 8

SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES

Week 10: March 15

I will be out of town this week, attending the South by Southwest Conference + Festival .

However, I will have a video version of the lecture. Attendance will be taken through viewing.

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 8 Lecture (video) | Chapter 8: Economic Pressures + Social Responsibility DUE: Reaction Paper 6 : Case Study 7 (email, assignment name "rp6") |
| Thursday | | |
| No Class | | |

Week 11: March 22

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 9 Lecture | Chapter 9: The Media + Antisocial Behavior |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Group Discussions: Case Studies | Chapter : Case Studies 9 |

Week 12: March 29

I will likely be out of town on Thursday, April 1 for the Popular Culture Association conference in St. Louis.

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|--|---|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 Lecture | Chapter 10: Morally Offensive Content DUE: Reaction Paper 7 : Case Study 9 |
| Thursday | | |
| No Class | | |

Part III: Advanced Case Studies

Week 13: April 5

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group, Chapter 11 | Chapter 11: Media Content + Juveniles DUE: Reaction Paper 8 : Case Study 10 |
| Thursday | | |
| | | DUE: Formal Presentation |

Week 14: April 12

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group, Chapter 12 | Chapter 12: Media Practitioners + Social Justice |
| Thursday | | |
| | | DUE: Formal Presentation |

Week 15: April 19

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|----------|---|--|
| Tuesday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group, Chapter 13 | Chapter 13: Stereotypes in Media Communication |
| Thursday | | |
| | | DUE: Formal Presentation |

Week 16: April 26

| | Lecture | Reading/Assignments |
|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Tuesday | | |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Presentation Work, Small Groups | DUE: Final Paper |
| Thursday | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Presentation Work, Small Groups • Class Evaluation | |

Week 17: May 3, Exam Week

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|--|--|---|
| | | |
| | | DUE: Final Presentation |