

JOMC 141-001 – Media Ethics Fall 2016

Classroom: Carroll Hall, room 33

Time: TR 8-9:15 a.m.

Instructor: Chris Etheridge

Office: Carroll Hall 366

email: cetherid@live.unc.edu

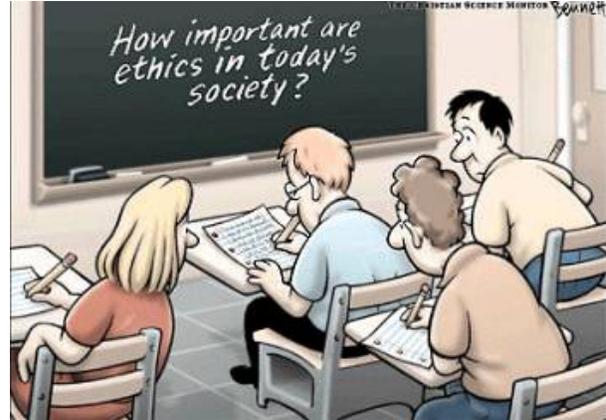
twitter: @whatsthelede

Office hours: Mondays 11 a.m.-noon

Thursdays 11 a.m.-noon

Office door is open? Come on in.

Super busy? Make an appointment.



Shelving hard decisions is the least-ethical course.

– *Adrian Cadbury, British business executive*

Course Overview: We're going to look at the relationships of ethics, ethical dilemmas, and ethical practices within a variety of media professions including journalism, visual communication, public relations, and advertising. We will talk about ethical dilemmas that have confronted professionals in print, in broadcast, online, on social media, and in person. This class explores – both in class discussions and in written assignments – what constitutes ethical practices, what interferes with ethical practices, and what emerging ethical issues may challenge you as the future leaders of the media and journalism fields.

Course Objectives: The purpose of this class is to help you make ethical decisions within your profession in an organized way. To that end, here are a few objectives. By semester's end, you should be able to:

- Integrate ethical foundations and apply those ideas to professional situations;
- Critically analyze current media professional practices through reading and discussing communication topics found in trade journals and other media;
- Compare ethical standards of mass communication professions and examine how similarities and differences help or hinder their professional relationships;
- Develop, defend, and apply your own set of guidelines to tackle ethical situations.

Basic guidelines:

- **Please be on time** – it's a matter of professionalism, responsibility, and mutual respect (all huge themes of this course). Class starts promptly at 8 a.m. – be there!
- **Be respectful** – We need to hear what everyone has to say. Participation and discussion are keys to this course, and I hope we have some intense sessions. In other words, we don't all have to agree, but I do request that you be respectful in your disagreement.
- **Be respectful, part 2** – if you must leave the room for a biology break, please limit the disruption. For example, don't let the door slam!
- **Communication is key** – Many, many misunderstandings, issues, problems, or situations (crisis communications folks can come up with all sorts of names for it) can be solved by communication. If I don't know there is a problem, I can't help to solve it. In essence, please come talk to me when you have concerns about the class or anything else that you think I can help with.

- **No phones, no social media, no browsing** – Please turn off the ringer to your phones before class starts and keep it put away. We're only in class 75 minutes at a time. Let your electronics have a break. You may use your laptops for taking notes only.
- **Keep the classroom neat and clean** – Please make sure you pick up after yourselves. Manners are good!

Professional values and competencies: The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://bit.ly/2b2FoBB>. No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. The values and competencies in bold are most relevant for this course:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;**
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- **Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;**
- **Think critically, creatively and independently;**
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Prerequisites: None! This class is required for MEJO (JOMC) majors, and it meets a requirement for a minor in social and economic justice. MEJO 141 also now meets the philosophical and moral reasoning (PH) requirement of General Education. That means, during the course of this semester, each student will complete at least 10 pages of writing. As you'll see in the week-to-week schedule, there are a few writing assignments that together meet this stipulation.

About the content: This course may at times include topics, materials, and discussions that can be disturbing or distressing. It is difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate all the directions our conversations may take. If you find it necessary to step out of the classroom, you may do so without penalty. However, you still are responsible for any material covered during time that you miss, and should make arrangements to get notes from a classmate.

The university provides a number of resources and services to help you cope with any difficult challenges you face while part of the Carolina community and beyond through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): <https://campushealth.unc.edu/services/counseling-and-psychological-services>.

Required Text: *Media Ethics: Issues and Cases*, 8th edition, by Philip Patterson and Lee Wilkins. At least one copy is available at the Park Library. The textbook will be supplemented by articles or **other readings**, which you may

access via Sakai (<http://sakai.unc.edu>). All assigned readings should be completed before the appropriate class sessions for which they are assigned to ensure that you're ready to discuss, ask questions, offer opinions, disagree, argue, and share knowledge.

Professional curiosity: This is a real-world class in which we are going to examine the challenges and dilemmas of today's mass communication professions. Curiosity—quite simply asking questions—is one of the foundations and driving tenants of our industries. Please keep up with what is going on in the world and in your profession. Take some time each week to check out the news in papers, magazines, TV, and online. Find out what ethical issues face professionals in your field by taking a look at the trade journals available in the Park Library (second floor of Carroll Hall) or online. See something interesting? Bring it to class or post it on Sakai!

Honor Code: All participants in this course are expected to conduct themselves within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://studentconduct.unc.edu/>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. All participants in this course are expected to complete their own work and there will be no leniency for cheating. Any participant in this course who has concerns about the Honor Code or the role it plays in this course are encouraged to meet with the instructor, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Students Charlie Tuggle, or a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Diversity: The University's policy statements on Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination are outlined at <http://policy.sites.unc.edu/files/2013/04/nondiscrim.pdf>. In summary, UNC does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Why is this important? We will explore it in this course.

Harassment: UNC does not tolerate harassment based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture, disability, or for any other reason. It is also a violation of the Honor Code and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and Title IX of the Educational Amendments. If you need assistance with a harassment issue or problem, bring it to the attention of the instructor or The Office of the Dean of Students, dos@unc.edu or (919) 966-4042.

Individual Accommodations: If you require individual accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. For more information, visit the Learning Center website at <http://learningcenter.unc.edu/ldadhd-services/> or call (919) 962-3782.

Attendance: "Showing up is 80 percent of life." – Woody Allen, *New York Times*, August 21, 1977. You are permitted three absences from class without penalty. If you are late to class by more than five minutes, you will be counted absent. If you leave more than 10 minutes early, you will be counted absent for that class. You do not have to notify me of your reasons for your absences, nor do you have to provide a doctor's note. For each class you miss after three, your final grade will be lowered by three points. For example, if your grade average is a B- (81) and you have four absences, your final grade will be a C+ (78). **Please note: Chances are EXCELLENT that you will need all of your absences for sick days or other types of emergencies or opportunities. I strongly suggest that you save your absences for these purposes. DO NOT waste your absences on "the weather's too nice (or too lousy) to come to class" and then ask for an exception to the attendance policy when you actually come down with the flu.**

Participation: The success of this class depends in large part on the quality of class discussion, and quality discussion depends in large part on preparation of all participants. With that in mind, you will be given 100 percent participation to start the class and points will be deducted from there for any of the following:

- Starting, Aug. 30, all students will be assigned several days to "Start the Conversation" (find your assigned days on Sakai. No, you may not trade with anyone else in the class). You'll be expected to write five good (non-yes/no) questions about the assigned readings for that day in the "Start the Conversation" forum by 3 p.m. the day before the assigned class period. Please note that multiple people will be assigned to each day, so you will need to ask different questions than those that are

already posted. If someone has already posted your question, come up with something else. Failure to post five discussion questions or posting duplicate questions will result in three points deducted from your final participation grade for each date missed.

- Good classroom discussion depends on good listening. If you are clearly not paying attention during the in-class presentations or class discussion, three points will be deducted from your final participation grade. This includes talking to your neighbor while someone else is speaking to the class, reading or viewing material not related to the class discussion or activity, sleeping in class, having a computer open during Ethics in the News presentations, or generally being disruptive in a way that prohibits a good learning environment. In the event that any of these happen, you will receive an email from the instructor notifying you of why the points are being deducted from your grade.
- The instructor will be keeping track of who speaks in class throughout the semester. This is a big class and so it is difficult to get to everyone who would like to speak in each class period. With that in mind, there is a requirement that all students participate in the discussion in one of two ways: either by (1) Speaking in class about the material or (2) Writing a follow-up response to the class discussion in the Sakai "Class Response" forum by Fridays at 11:59 p.m. The post can be as short as 50 words, but it must directly address something brought up during the class discussion. Failure to complete one of these two activities each week starting Aug. 30 will result in three points deducted from your final participation grade for each instance.
- At the end of each some class periods, you will be asked to fill out a quick questionnaire about the class discussion. The purpose of this is to help participants in the class reflect on their role in the course and improve how discussion in the class develops in the future. This will not be graded and will be an opportunity for you to note that you are not getting called on enough, that class discussion is not what you are looking for, or that you would like to see more of something else.



Quizzes: Periodically throughout the semester, you will be given a short quiz at the beginning of class to test whether you have done the day's assigned reading. Quiz questions will be basic; you do not need to have studied the reading – you just need to read it. Quizzes will always be given at the beginning of class and will be timed. If you come late, you will have less time (or even no time) to do the quizzes. You may not come to class, take a quiz, and then leave. All in-class assignments require that you be present for the entire class period to count.

Ethics in the News presentations: You will be assigned to a group of 3-4 students and asked to identify a news item dealing with media ethics. You'll explain the item to the class and lead a short discussion. Each group member will receive the same grade for the assignment, unless a member does not show for the presentation or is demonstrating a clear lack of participation in the project. The schedule for the Ethics in the News presentation and a rubric for grading are posted on the Sakai site.

Research Participation Requirement: Students in MEJO 141-001 are required to complete two hours of research over the course of the semester. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement. The first way is to participate in

two hours of academic research studies in the School of Media and Journalism. Sign up online to participate in these studies – and, double-dipping is allowed if this requirement is present in another class! The second way to fulfill the research participation requirement is to write two two-page summaries and/or critiques of academic research articles from the *Journal of Media Ethics*. Each review counts for one hour of research participation, so you may combine participation in the studies with article reviews to fulfill the research requirement. You may summarize any article published in the past two years. Get some guidance here: <http://guides.lib.unc.edu/mejo141>. Your summaries are due no later than **noon on Friday, Dec. 9**. Early papers are cheerfully accepted!

Reading responses: Throughout the semester, you will be given three writing prompts and asked to respond. These will be found on Sakai along with a grading rubric. They will also be discussed in class and you are encouraged to review the material early to ask question either in class or in the forums. The three due dates can be found on the course schedule and the prompts will be available at least one week in advance of the due date. The Reading response should be no less than 450 words, but not more than 550. All Reading responses are due at the beginning of the designated class period (aka, 8 a.m.). Late papers (8:01 a.m. and later) will receive a reduced grade unless you and I agree before the assignment is due that it can be late. No assignment will be accepted if it is turned in more than 24 hours after its deadline – a grade of 0 will be recorded.

Midterm and Final exams: Two exams will test your understanding of the material covered in lectures, assigned readings, and class presentations. Exams will include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, and short-answer questions. The final exam will test your knowledge of the material from the entire semester. Exams may only be made up in the event of an actual medical emergency (with proof from a doctor’s note). Make-up exams will be given at a time and date that is convenient to both the instructor and student.

Your final grade will be based upon	Grading Scale:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation (in class and/or on Sakai) 20% • Quizzes (<i>lowest dropped</i>) 10% • Ethics in the News presentation 10% • Research participation 5% • Reading responses 15% • Midterm exam 15% • Final exam 25% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A = 93-100 A- = 90-92.9 B+ = 87-89.9 B = 83-86.9 B- = 80-82.9 C+ = 77.79.9 C = 73-76.9 C- = 70-72.9 D+ = 67-69.9 D = 60-66.9 F = <60

Sakai: Valuable information and tools are available via Sakai. As a student registered in MEJO 141-001, you have automatic access to this site. Please use it regularly, especially under:

- **Syllabus:** The syllabus for this class is posted in this section.
- **Discussion:** Join in! This will be a place to post your Starting the Conversation and Class Response posts. You are encouraged to continue and/or spark class discussion at any time – even if it’s a topic area that we’ve already covered. You may come up with some great ideas outside of class – please express them here, and share your views with your classmates. Post opinions, brainstorm, afterthoughts or new ideas, links to articles you have read, pose questions, or announcements. All postings must adhere to University policies and standards. So, basically, please be respectful of all opinions, whether you agree or not.
- **Resources:** PowerPoints and supplemental readings are posted in this section. Many students find it advantageous to access PowerPoints prior to class so in-class participation is easier. My PowerPoints are merely outlines for discussion. I do not provide all the detail; That is what note taking is for.
- **Assignments:** The in-class quizzes and homework assignments for this class are posted in this section. Keep in mind that any homework assignments announced in class will be posted after that class period.

- **Gradebook:** I will post graded assignments for you to review on Sakai. If you have a question about a grade, please bring it to my attention.



A Few Words on Grades: I follow the University’s Grading Standards, as adopted by the Faculty Council:

- "A" – Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The “A” grade states clearly that the student has shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.
- "B" – Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The “B” grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study.
- "C" – A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The “C” grade states that, while not yet showing any unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.
- “D” – A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The “D” grade states that the student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the disciplines; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field.
- “F” – For whatever reason, an unacceptable performance. The “F” grade indicates that the student’s performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of F should warrant an adviser’s questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

Please note: Although grades are not negotiable, I will give every consideration to any concerns you have about an assignment grade, as long as the concern is identified **promptly**. If you have questions about or dispute a particular grade, the issue needs to be taken care of within a week of receiving that particular grade. The only grades that will be discussed at the end of the semester are those assignments you complete at the end of the semester. Final averages are not rounded; to receive an A- for the class, for example, you must earn a 90 percent final average. A final average of 89.6 is a B+.

Week by Week – JOMC 141-001 for Fall 2016

***** Please note: this schedule may change if speaker opportunities arise, we have a snowstorm, etc. *****

***** Links to those items not in the textbook or distributed in class can be found in Sakai *****

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments for this day
Aug. 23	Welcome! How to take notes What is ethics?	* In class: How to Take Notes (PowerPoint on Sakai) * In class: How do we define ethics and ethical behavior? * In class: Quick questionnaire – Tell me about yourself
Aug. 25	Getting started	* Read for today: Media Ethics: Issues & Cases (MEIC), ch. 1 * Read for today: Ask These 10 Questions to Make Good Ethical Decisions * In class: Set seating chart * In class: Principles of Ethics (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Aug. 30	Foundations	* Read for today: MEIC, ch. 2 * Read for today: Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics * In class: News Ethics (PowerPoint on Sakai) * Assign: Reading response #1

Sept. 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Begin Ethics in the News presentations * Case study: Is It Appropriate for Reporters to Lurk in Online Chat Rooms?" * Read (again) for today: Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics * Read for today: RTDNA Social Media & Blogging Ethical Guidelines and general code
Sept. 6	Talking about race	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Turn in Reading response #1 by 8 a.m. * Case study: "Opinionated or Offensive? Race and the Daily Tar Heel" (on Sakai; read both the column and the response) * In class: DTH Case Study (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Sept. 8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Case Study: Minnesota Basketball Cheating Incident * In class: Homers and Cheating Gophers (PowerPoint on Sakai) * In class: What does "Don't be Horrible" mean?
Sept. 13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assign Reading response #2 * Case Study: "Caught in the 'War Zone,'" MEIC, pp. 44-47 * In class: Caught in the "War Zone" (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Sept. 15	Privacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: MEIC, ch. 5 and Case 5-A (pp. 121-123) * Read for today: Billy Sipple * For today: See Sakai for more detail * In class: Privacy (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Sept. 20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Turn in Reading response #2 by 8 a.m. * For today: See Sakai for list and more detail * In class: Duke lacrosse & Cleveland kidnapping (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Sept. 22	Visual communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: MEIC, ch. 8 & Case 8-D (pp. 205-207) * Read for today: National Press Photographers Code of Ethics * Read for today: Washington Post policy on digital manipulation of photographic images * Optional read for today: A history of digital manipulation (this is just FYI; none of it will appear on an exam!) * For today: See Sakai for more detail * In class: Who Can We Trust? * In class: Visual Communication Ethics (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Sept. 27	Is nudity news?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: News story explaining the situation (be sure to watch the two videos) * Read for today: Poynter piece explaining the editor's decision * Read for today: Story about the media adviser's firing * In class: Is Streaking News?
Sept. 29		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: MEIC, Case 8-E (pp. 207-212) * Read for today: Poynter column with advice about how to handle graphic images * In class: Disturbing Images (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Oct. 4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: MEIC, Case 8-H (pp. 221-223) * Read for today: Washington Post article explaining the Time magazine breast-feeding cover and the cover * Read for today: Poynter article explaining the Newsweek "First Gay President" cover * Read for today: American Society of Magazine Editors ethics code * For today: See Sakai for more detail * In class: More on visual decisions – you be the judge
Oct. 6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * TBA (Catching up or movie day?)

Oct. 11		* TBA (Catching up or movie day?)
Oct. 13	Review for midterm	* ASK ME ANYTHING
Oct. 18	MIDTERM EXAM	BE SURE TO BRING YOUR LAPTOP!
Oct 20	NO CLASS	ENJOY FALL BREAK
Oct. 25	Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: MEIC, ch. 3 * Read for today: PRSA Code of Ethics * In class: We go over the midterm * In class: Public Relations Ethics (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Oct. 27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Assign Reading response #3 * Read for today: MEIC, ch. 4 & Case 4-G (pp. 104-107) * In class: Blow the whistle or go with the flow? (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Nov. 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: The Wikipedia entry explaining what the Shared Values Initiative was * Watch for today: A discussion of the "Shared Values" campaign with a link to one of the videos * Watch for today: Another of the videos * In class: Shared Values Initiative
Nov. 3	Paid to Pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Turn in Reading response #3 by 8 a.m. * Read for today: MEIC, ch. 9 & Case 9-G (pp. 251-253) * Read for today: WSJ article "Paid to Pitch" * Read for today: CNN story about mommy bloggers * Read for today: Word of Mouth Marketing Association Code of Ethics * Read for today: FTC guidelines concerning disclosure of marketing connections * In class: Paid to Pitch (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Nov. 8	Good intentions gone bad?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Case 9-F (pp. 249-251) * Watch for today: WARNING: LOTS of profanity * Watch for today: CNN piece with Tony Harris criticizing the video * In class: We talk about the video with naughty words and whatnot
Nov. 10	Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Re-read MEIC, ch. 3 (specifically focus on advertising). * Read for today: American Advertising Federation's Institute for Advertising Ethics code * Read for today: CNN contributed piece about how ethical standards affect advertising * In class: Advertising ethics (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Nov. 15	Election 2016 (and ethics!)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Readings TBA * In class: We take a breath and maybe talk about the election?
Nov. 17		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Case 3-G (pp. 76-78) * Check out for today: Real Beauty Ad * Read for today: Huffington Post article about the campaign's 10th anniversary * Watch for today: Dove Real Beauty Sketches video * Read for today: AdAge critique of the campaign * For today: See Sakai for more detail * In class: The Real Beauty Ad

Nov. 22	Product placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Case 3-F (pp. 73-75) * Read for today: An introduction to the issue of product placement (please read the first nine parts, including the segments on product placement in the movies and product placement on TV and beyond) * Read for today: Story about product placement in the new James Bond film Spectre * In class: Product Placement (PowerPoint on Sakai)
Nov. 24	NO CLASS	HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
Nov. 29	Targeted advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Case 5-B (pp. 123-125) * Read for today: Explanation of the pros and cons of behavioral targeting * Read for today: An article from Slate * In class: Targeted advertising
Dec. 1	Plagiarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read for today: Poynter column on dealing with plagiarism * Read for today: MediaShift column about plagiarism in journalism education * Read for today: Information about Stephen Glass from Wikipedia * Read for today: CNN interview with Stephen Glass * For today: See Sakai for more detail * In class: We talk about plagiarism (and maybe a movie)
Dec. 6	Review for final	* ASK ME ANYTHING (#LDOC edition)
Dec. 15	FINAL EXAM (8 to 10 a.m.)	BE SURE TO BRING YOUR LAPTOP!