

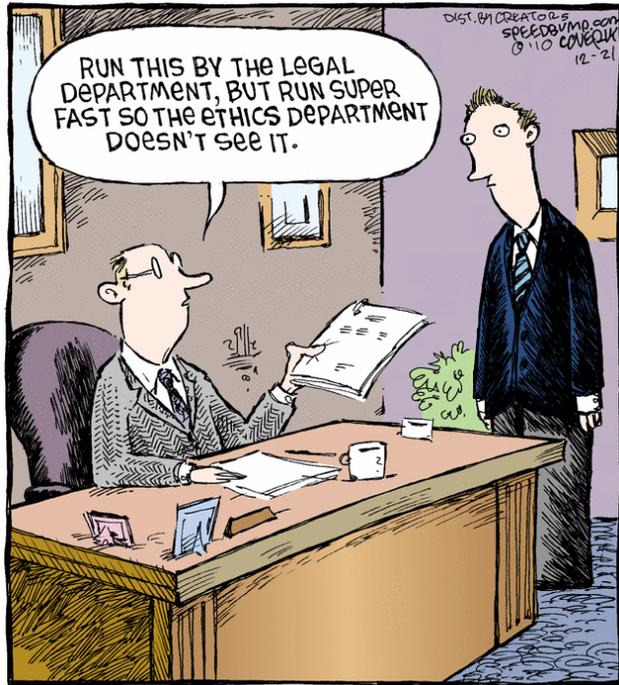
MEJO 141 MEDIA ETHICS Fall 2018 SYLLABUS

Classroom: Room 0143 Carroll Hall
Time: TR 3:30-4:45 p.m.

Instructor: Farnosh Mazandarani

Office: Room 369 Carroll Hall
Office Hours: Mondays 1pm-3pm;
Thursdays 1pm-3pm;
also by appointment.
E-mail: Farnosh@live.unc.edu

Course Goals and Objectives: Welcome to MEJO 141! We're here to learn about media ethics. Media professionals talk a lot about doing the right thing, but they're constantly criticized for ethical and moral shortcomings. We're going to look at the relationships of ethics, ethical dilemmas, and ethical practices within a variety of media professions including entertainment media, journalism, visual communication, public relations, and advertising.



This class explores – both in class discussions and 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.

Here are the specific course objectives:

- Integrate ethical foundations and apply those ideas to professional situations;
- Critically analyze current mass communication 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.

Readings: The required text for this course is *Media Ethics: Issues & Cases* (8th edition) by Philip Patterson and Lee Wilkins.

The text will be supplemented by articles or other readings and videos. All assigned readings should be completed before class.

Sign up for a Slack Account

We will use this site as a way to communicate inside and outside of class. You can also use it to aid in discussion with your classmates and as the primary way to ask me questions. This, along with Sakai will also be where you will turn in all your work and assignments. I will send you an email invitation to our Slack page.

ABOUT THE CONTENT AND CLASS

This course may at times include topics, materials, and discussions that could be disturbing or distressing to some people. 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 are responsible for any material covered during time that you miss, and you should make arrangements to get an update 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 \(CAPS\)](#).

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.

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 schedule, there are a few writing assignments that together meet this stipulation.

Accommodations: If you may require reasonable accommodations to ensure that you have equal access to this course, you are encouraged to self-identify with either of the following offices, depending on your individual needs. Please notify the program at (919) 843-9471 as well.

Department of Accessibility Resources & Service
(919) 962-8300 accessibility.unc.edu

The Learning Center
(919) 962-7227 learningcenter.unc.edu

Diversity: The University's policy statements on Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination are outlined [here](#). 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.

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.

Honor Code: You need to know and follow UNC's policies regarding academic honesty in this class. I will enforce all these rules. All participants in this course are expected to complete their own work and there will be no leniency for cheating. Anyone 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.

You can learn all about the UNC Honor System and expectations for student behavior here: <https://studentconduct.unc.edu/>

Attendance: Attendance will be taken by the professor at the beginning of class. You are permitted 2 absences from class. If you are late to class by more than five minutes or leave more than 10 minutes early, you will be counted absent. Please do not notify the instructor of your reasons for your absences. For each class you miss after 2, your final grade will be lowered by three points. I strongly suggest that you save your absences for emergencies and sick days. Do not ask for an exception to the attendance policy when you actually come down with the flu. An absence on a due date does not justify a late assignment. **Students who have no absences for the semester will receive a bonus of five points on the final exam.** Your attendance will be posted on

Sakai.

Make-Up Policy: Exams may be made up in the event of a medical emergency that is documented with a doctor's note. Make-up exams will be given at the end of the semester.

GROUP ASSIGNMENT

Ethics in the News Presentation - 20%

You will be assigned to a group of 3-4 students and asked to identify a news item dealing with a mass media ethics-related event that has been in the news sometime during the previous two weeks. You'll explain the item to the class (15 minutes) and lead a short discussion (15 minutes). 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 assignment consists of three components: the information you provide via Slack to educate your fellow students on your topic prior to class (news items, videos, links etc.), identify appropriate ethics codes to consider, your in-class presentation (using effective visuals such as a few PowerPoint slides); and your assistance guiding the discussion in class. You will be responsible for helping lead/manage the discussion in class, which is where we'll discuss the ways (and there will be multiple; remember, these decisions aren't black and white!) we might address the dilemma. Some good places to find topics are [Poynter's Everyday Ethics Column](#) and the [iMedia Ethics](#) website.

Please have your information posted to the appropriate Slack channel by at least 2pm **TWO DAYS** before your assigned presentation day. This gives your fellow students time to review the information you provide and to create their discussion points and questions. You should submit your in-class presentation (PowerPoint, handouts, etc.) to me through Slack before class on the day of your presentation.

The following criteria will be used to evaluate your project:

1. Is the topic timely (within the two-week time frame), and does it involve an issue of ethical concern to mass media professionals?
2. Do you clearly explain the situation? Do you clearly outline the ethical issue(s) the situation presents? Do you apply the appropriate ethics codes to analyze the situation and help inform your proposed response?
3. Do you effectively present your topic in class, using appropriate and effective visual aids (presentation slides, etc.)?
4. Do you effectively help guide class discussion, responding as appropriate to classmates' comments and questions?
5. Do you submit all your materials on time?

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments should be turned into the appropriate Sakai assignment as Word documents with the exception of discussion points. Please double-space all written assignments using 12-point Times New Roman and 1" margins. The tone for all writing can be conversational but should also be professional. Late work will result in a full letter grade deduction. Assignments more than 24 hours late will not be accepted and a grade of 0 will be recorded.

Response Papers - 30%

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 questions either in class or on Slack. The prompts will be available at least one week in advance of the due date. Each response should be no less than 450 words, but not more than 550 (approximately a page and a half double-spaced).

Opening Class: Intro to the Discussion - 10%

Each student will introduce a topic from the assigned reading once during the semester. The student will present (orally and in writing) a 1.5 to 2-page response paper (5 minutes). This assignment allows you to reflect on your assigned reading. It is an opportunity to “think out loud” about issues that interest you and that are connected to the reading. You may talk through a new idea arising from your reading, contemplate what confuses you, argue an inconsistency, defend an idea represented in the reading, offer an alternative view, elaborate/apply via a personal experience, etc. Turn in your written paper to the Sakai assignment.

Start the Conversation: Discussion Points - 10%

When not primarily responsible for introducing a topic or a news presentation during a class meeting, each student will present (orally and in writing) one assigned discussion point and/or question. Prepare one question or discussion point (open-ended rather than yes/no) to facilitate discussion of the assigned readings, topic, or news presentation. You will need to ask different questions than those that are already posted, so if someone has already posted your question or made your point, come up with something new. Post your discussion point Slack.

Midterm/Final Exam – 10% and 20%, respectively

Two quizzes will test your understanding of the material covered in lectures, assigned readings, and class presentations. The first exam will test material up until that date, while the final exam is comprehensive. Exams will include multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, and short-answer questions to test your understanding of the material covered in lectures, in-class activities, assigned readings, and in-class presentations.

Grading: Course grades will be calculated using the following percentages:
The final course grade will be calculated using the following scale:

Ethics in the News Presentation 20%
Three Response Papers 30%
Opening Class Discussion 10%
Start the Conversation 10%
Midterm Exam: 10%
Final Exam: 20%

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	=	59 or below

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I follow the University’s Grading Standards, as adopted
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.

Grades will be posted on Sakai for all assignments.

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, this 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+.

MEJO 141.5 Media Ethics Tentative Daily Schedule

***** Please note: this schedule is subject to change if speaker opportunities arise, a snowstorm hits our town and livelihood, etc. *****

- Aug. 21 Introduction to the course and the subject of ethics
- Aug. 23 Introduction to Ethical Decision Making
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 1
- Aug. 28 Overview Entertainment Media: Standards and Practices, MPAA, FCC, etc.
- Aug. 30 The Ethical Dimensions of Art and Entertainment
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 10 *and* Case Studies 10A-10C
- Sept. 4 Continuing The Ethical Dimensions of Art and Entertainment
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 10 Case Studies 10D-10E
- Sept. 6 Continuing The Ethical Dimensions of Art and Entertainment
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 10 Case Studies 10F-10G
- Sept. 11 The Ethics of Photo and Video Journalism
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 8 *and* Case Studies 8A-8C
***Assigning**: Reading response #1
- Sept. 13 Continuing The Ethics of Photo and Video Journalism
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 8 Case Studies 8A-8C
EITN: Suzanne Blake, Keaton Swanzy (**Post an article on the subject on Slack by Sept 11th**)
- **ASSIGNMENT DUE:**** Turn in Reading response #1 by 11:59pm Sept 17th on Sakai
- Sept. 18 Continuing The Ethics of Photo and Video Journalism
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 8 Case Studies 8D-8F
EITN: Vaughan Poole, Kristy Ramer (**Post article of subject on Slack by Sept 16th**)
- Sept. 20 Information Ethics: A Profession Seeks Truth
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 2 *and* Case Studies 2A-2C
EITN: Jack Haverkate, Matt Johnson (**Post article of subject on Slack by Sept 18th**)
- Sept. 25 Continuing Information Ethics: A Profession Seeks Truth
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 2 Case Studies 2D-2F
***Assigning**: Reading response #2
EITN: Parker Marshall, Anna Pogarcic (**Post an article on the subject on Slack by Sept 23rd**)

Sept. 27 Loyalty: Choosing Between Competing Allegiances
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 4 *and* Case Studies 4A-4D
EITN: Erik Beene, Maya Blanton (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Sept 25th)

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:**** Turn in Reading response #2 by 11:59pm Oct 1st on Sakai

Oct. 2 Continuing Loyalty: Choosing Between Competing Allegiances
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 4 Case Studies 4E-4G
EITN: Luke Buxton, Sarah Clouser (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Sept 30th)

Oct. 4 Privacy: Looking for Solitude in the Global Village
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 5 *and* Case Studies 5A-5B
EITN: Adriana Diaz, Rachel Jensen (Post article of subject on *Slack* by Oct 2nd)

Oct. 9 Continuing Privacy: Looking for Solitude in the Global Village
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 5 Case Studies 5C-5D
EITN: Laura Brummett, Chapel Fowler (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Oct 7th)

Oct. 11 Midterm Review

Oct. 16 Midterm Exam

Oct. 18 Fall Break- **NO CLASS**

Oct. 23 Mass Media in a Democratic Society: Keeping a Promise
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 6 *and* Case Studies 6A-6C
EITN: Maggie Mccullough, Gillian Totaro (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Oct 21st)

Oct. 25 Continuing Mass Media in a Democratic Society: Keeping a Promise
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 6 Case Studies 6D-6F
***Assigning:** Reading response #3
EITN: Briana Summers, Addison West (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Oct 23rd)

Oct. 30 Strategic Communications
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 3 *and* Case Studies 3A-3C
EITN: Excellence Perry, Hailey Wall (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Oct 28th)

****ASSIGNMENT DUE:**** Turn in Reading response #3 by 11:59pm Oct 31st on Sakai

- Nov. 1 Continuing in Stat Comm
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 3 Case Studies 3D-3F
EITN: Cathleen Rogers, Hannah Towey (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Oct 30th)
- Nov. 6 Continuing in Stat Comm
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 3 Case Studies 3G-3H
EITN: Cole Villena, Rachel Wock, Sam Kudeviz (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Nov 4th)
- Nov. 8 New Media: Continuing Questions and New Roles
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 9 *and* Case Studies 9A-9C
EITN: Dana Gentry, Cameron Sharer (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Nov 6th)
- Nov. 13 Continuing New Media: Continuing Questions and New Roles
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 9 Case Studies 9D-9G
EITN: Anne Carter Payne, Brian Keyes (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Nov 11th)
- Nov. 15 Media Economics: The Deadline Meets the Bottom Line
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 7 *and* Case Studies 7A-7C
EITN: Jessica Hardison, Kristen Hoard (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Nov 13th)
- Nov. 20 Continuing Media Economics: The Deadline Meets the Bottom Line
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 7 Case Studies 7D-7F
EITN: Jess Dulin, Ryan Lipton (Post an article on the subject on *Slack* by Nov 18th)
- Nov. 22 Thanksgiving – **NO CLASS**
- Nov. 27 Becoming a Moral Adult
*Read for today: MEIC, Chapter 11
- Nov. 29 Applying Ethical Models to Current Events
- Dec. 4 Final Exam Review
- Dec. 13th Final Exam at 4PM- BE SURE TO BRING YOUR LAPTOP***