~MCJO 141.2 - Media Ethics: The Fall 2021 Edition ~

Classroom: Greenlaw 101 Time: TR 2-3:15 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Lois Boynton

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Home phone: 919/960-6093 (leave message if needed)

Stop by! Office and Zoom

Mondays 10-11:30 am and 2-5 pm Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:45-5 pm Wednesday 3-4 pm **on Zoom only**

And, by appointment or when my office door is open





Before getting to the official class stuff...

Let's face it... a "normal" semester can be quite a balancing act, and this pandemic has been messing up perfectly good academic experiences, right? But, rather than focus solely on the downsides, I hope we can come up with some positives as we plow through professional media ethics.



Most importantly, you don't have to go it alone... misery loves company, or something like that. © I hope you'll take advantage of campus resources as needed:

- <u>Counseling and Psychological Services</u> (aka, CAPS) Go to its website or visit its facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.
- CAPS Multicultural Health Program for Black, Indigenous, and students of color
- <u>Community Clinic</u>, UNC Department of Psychology in-person and teletherapy services
- Student Care Hub ask a question
- Carolina Cupboard on-campus food pantry
- COVID-19 Emergency Grant Funding
- COVID-19 Update: New action items on vaccination and testing for Carolina community
- COVID-19 Community Standards

<u>Please</u> let me know how I might help you! Office hours are my o-fficial meeting times, but I will work with you to meet/e-meet other times, too.

OK... on with the course stuff!



Where's it at? Syllabus contents:

- ◆ Attendance p. 3
- Participation criteria p. 3
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[ABOUT]

We're going to look at the relationships of <u>professional</u> ethics, ethical dilemmas, and ethical practices within a variety of media professions – print, broadcast, and online journalism; various visual communications approaches for news, business and social interactions; public relations; advertising; and even hybrids.

This class permits all students opportunities to explore – both in-class discussions and written assignments – what constitutes professional ethical practices, what interferes with acting ethically, and what emerging ethical issues may challenge you as the newest generation of professional communicators.

Prereqs? Nope!



MEJO 141 meets the Gen Ed requirement for philosophical and moral reasoning (PH)!

That means, during the 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.

Masks? Yep!

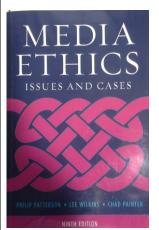
<u>UNC's o-fficial edict</u>: All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom, to protect yourself, your classmates and me as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or you wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the <u>Office of Student Conduct</u>. At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from ARS have an exception. More information at

https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/.



The purpose of this class is to help you make effective ethical decisions within your profession. Course objectives include:

- ① What goes into making an ethical decision? Explore ethical foundations to apply in professional ethical dilemmas;
- ② The value of having a process: Applying ethical codes and standards of our professions to resolve ethical dilemmas;
- ③ Critically analyze ethical expectations and challenges in our professions through reading, writing and discussing communication topics found in trade journals and other media.



⇔ da book: Media Ethics: Issues and Cases by Philip
Patterson, Lee Wilkins &
Chad Painter, 9th edition

Plus, scintillating readings on <u>Sakai</u> in the <u>Resources</u> Folder

All assigned readings should be completed <u>before</u> the appropriate class sessions for

which they are assigned to ensure that you're ready to discuss, ask questions, offer opinions, disagree, argue, share knowledge, etc. That's what will make this class fun!

About the content: This course may at times include topics, materials and discussions that can be disturbing or distressing, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate all the directions our conversations may take. If you find it necessary to step out of class, you may do so without penalty. However, you still are responsible for any material covered during time that you miss, and you should arrange to get notes from a classmate. I will record class meetings and post them on Sakai, as well. I will be happy to meet with you if you have concerns. Please also remember that 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, as noted on p. 1 of this syllabus



Always Be Curious

This is a real-world class in which we're going to examine the challenges and dilemmas of today's media and communication professions. Please keep up with what's going on in the world and in your profession through regular reading/viewing of traditional and evolving media channels.

One resource I like is <u>The Skimm</u>; you may have others. Find ethical issues that professionals in your field face by taking a look at the trade journals like PR Week, Ad Age, Columbia Journalism Review, among others.

See something interesting? Bring it to class or post it on Sakai! The more the merrier!

Attendance and Participation

Please be here! You'll find it to be handy. I consider this a professional environment and you to be the professionals (OK, I'll be professional, too!). In the professional world, there's no such thing as not attending a meeting or workday "just because." Treat attendance as an expectation.

The <u>university's class attendance policy</u> states, "Regular class attendance is a student obligation. Students are responsible for all of their work, including assessments, tests, and written work, and for all class meetings. ... No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings." The university considers more than 3 absences to be a concern. You may be absent from class <u>3 times</u> before I take points off for missed classes. For each class you miss after 3, your final grade will be lowered by 3 points. For example, if your grade average is a B- (81) and you have 4 absences, your final grade will be C+ (78).

There are **exceptions**:

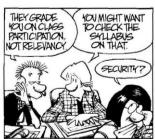
- ① University approved absences are authorized university activities, disability, religious observances, or pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office. Also, significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the EOC.
- ② **COVID-19:** It has a habit of raising a ruckus on our lives. I get that. Please let me know and let me work with you to get through the challenges.

Please communicate with me <u>early</u> about potential absences. And, be aware that you are bound by the <u>Honor Code</u> when making a request for a University-approved <u>absence</u>.

<u>One more note:</u> You are responsible for any material covered during classes, and you will lose credit for any **in-class** assignment completed during classes you do not attend unless you make arrangements with me ahead of time.







Additionally, I distinguish between attendance and participation. In short, attendance is expected but not sufficient condition for an outstanding participation grade. In addition to attending class twice a week, I expect everyone to be active participants in the class and small-group discussions and on Sakai forums—ask questions, offer your opinions, and challenge. I think you'll find it makes learning easier and even more fun. Yes, it's a large class, but we can make the community interactive and ethical decision-making more effective through dialogue. Join the fun! Here are criteria I follow for determining the participation portion of your grade. I'll also ask you to assess yourself via these same criteria at the end of the semester.

A (9-10)

Consistently participates in class and/or online twice a week. Thought-provoking ideas, asks/posts interesting questions. On time. No absences.

B (7-8)

Participates in class and/or online once or twice a week consistently through semester. Good ideas, asks/posts questions. On time, no absences.

C (5-6)

Participates in class and/or online time to time. Mostly prefers to lurk. Pretty good input but doesn't speak up/ contribute online consistently. Attends classes.

D and F (≤ 4)

Barely says anything all semester whether in class or on Sakai Forums. Mostly lurkers even if has good attendance. May or may not be on time.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion mission and vision statements with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on prohibiting harassment and discrimination. In summary, UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or 919/966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

HONOR CODE:

I expect that each student will conduct themselves within the guidelines of the University honor system (http://honor.unc.edu). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or my responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.



Title IX

Any student who is affected by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the EOC Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), CAPS (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Policy on non-discrimination

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. The University's Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you may seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu), the EOC office, or online to EOC at https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/.

Class accommodations

UNC-Chapel Hill provides reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. The Office of Accessibility Resources and Service determines accommodations for individuals with documented, qualifying disabilities according to applicable state and federal laws. For information, visit the ARS Office website, call 919/962-8300, or use NC-Relay 711.

If you need **individual assistance**, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor (that's me!). If you are serious about improving your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness. Please don't wait!!

- Syllabus You know, this thing you should check every now and then...
- Resources PowerPoints, readings. PowerPoints are merely outlines for discussion I do not provide all the detail that's what listening and note-taking are for. Every career requires you to take good notes to make sure you report accurately, represent your clients accurately, and get the names accurate for photo cutlines. Additionally, I'll record class meetings and post them on Sakai.
- Assignments in-class and homework. Any homework assignments announced in class will be posted after that class period.
- Forums: Yes, participation in Sakai forum discussions counts as class participation. Continue and/or spark class discussions.
- **Gradebook**: I will post grades. If you have a question about a grade, please bring it to my attention <u>within a week</u> of it being posted (rather than waiting until the semester ends).



Assignments and deadlines



All **homework assignments** are due at the beginning of the designated class period (aka, 2 p.m.). Late papers (2:01 p.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 – it'll get ya a zero.

In-class assignments are just that – you'll work on them in class and turn them in when class ends. Missing an in-class assignment constitutes a zero for that item.

*NOTE: All assignments should be saved/turned in as Word or PDF documents *

Your final grade will be based on

*Homework	13%	Grading Scale:
*Participation (in class and/or on Sakai forums)	10%	A = 90-100
*In-class assignments, quizzes (lowest dropped), etc.	12%	B = 80-89
*TARES group project	15%	C = 70-79
*Research participation	5%	D = 60-69
*Test	10%	F = <60
*Midterm exam	15%	(and +/- as appropriate)
*Final exam	20%	

* Extra Credit: It's unlikely you will receive extra credit opportunities in this course. In the rare event that they occur, they will be class wide, so please don't ask for individual extra credit assignments.



A Few Words on Grades: I follow the <u>University's Grading Standards</u>, adopted by the Faculty Council. *Fabulous* reading, I assure you!!

Grades are not negotiable, but I will give every consideration to concerns you have about a grade, IF the concern is identified **promptly**. If you have questions about or dispute a grade, the issue needs to be taken care of <u>within a week of receiving that grade</u>. The only grades I'll discuss at the end of the semester are those assignments you complete at the end of the semester.

Assignment highlights – Here's what's happening this semester:

<u>Homework</u> –Posted on Sakai in the Assignments tab. Deadlines are also on the Sakai calendar, and you will receive an email from the Sakai elves 24 hours before an assignment is due.

<u>In-class activities</u> – some will be completed in small groups; others, you'll get to do independently. They will be posted in the Assignments tab and available the day of that activity

<u>Reading quizzes</u> – There will be 6 reading quizzes (multiple choice and T/F), each worth 20 points. I will drop the lowest grade and tally the remaining 5 to count as 1 in-class assignment (you know... 5x20 = 100!).

<u>TARES group project</u> – You will work with a team (at least 1 other person) to assess a political or issue-based ad using the TARES test to rate its <u>t</u>ruthfulness, <u>a</u>uthenticity, <u>r</u>espectfulness, <u>e</u>quity, and <u>s</u>ocial responsibility. Details will be posted in the Assignments tab.

<u>Sakai forums</u> – I will post weekly prompts for you to share your perspectives by applying the concepts we're discussing in class. You're required to post once a week, minimum. More frequently is fine! Posts count as participation along with your involvement during each class period.

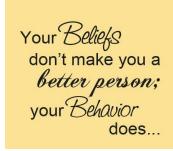
<u>Research participation</u> – complete 2 hours of research in one of 3 ways: (1) Sign up to participate in 2 academic research studies in the School of Journalism and Media. (2) Write article summaries of a study topic in <u>Journalist's Resource</u> or an academic research journal with ethical ramifications. (3) Combo! 1 research study and 1 summary. See Assignments tab for details.

<u>Test 1, midterm, and final</u> will include multiple choice, matching, true/false, short answer and brief chats. I will post study guides in the Resources tab of Sakai about a week before each one.

See the week-by-week schedule below for due dates and test dates.

And....

- Please be on time it's a matter of professionalism, responsibility, and mutual respect (all huge themes of this course). Class starts promptly at 2 p.m. be here!
- Be respectful We need to hear what folks have to say. Participation and discussion are keys to this course, and I hope we have some lively sessions. In other words, we don't all have to agree! But I do request that you be respectful in your disagreement.



- Turn off the ringers Please silence your digital toys before class starts.
- Pause the shopping and give social media a rest! Part of participating is being attentive to what's happ'nin'

in class and being part of the action. So, use your laptops and other digital tools to take class notes or do inclass assignments (not homework for your other classes, either ③).

BTW, research shows there is a high correlation between cybersurfing and below average course grades [Education Psychology]. Just sayin' ©

Since you made it this far, let me know you've read the syllabus by posting a photo of your favorite animal in the 'Syllabus' forum on Sakai by 9 a.m. Aug. 20 to earn some extra credit.

ACEJMC

Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications

Professional values and competencies: The School of Journalism and Media's accrediting body outlines 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. No single course could possibly give you all 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.



A small group of faculty and professionals affiliated with the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications will conduct a site visit **October 10-13.** They would like to meet with students to learn about their experiences as they relate to the above criteria. These sessions will not include any of our faculty, and any comments you make will be aggregated with no identifiers.

Week by Week - MEJO 141-002 for Fall 2021

<u>Please note</u>: this schedule may change if speaker opportunities arise, we have a hurricane, snowstorm, etc. I will advise.

Readings: textbook and in Sakai's Resources tab Assignments: in Sakai's Assignment tab. Due 2 p.m. Please save/submit assignments in Word or PDF

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments for this day
Aug. 19	Welcome!	Whine about summer break being over 😌
	Setting the stage: Why talk about ethics?	GOT ETHICS?
Aug. 24	Case discussion: What were they thinking?!	 Questions to guide reading A British cosmetics brand pressured Asian influencers to promote its skin whiteners. They fought back. Portrayal of female journalist in 'Richard Jewell' is 'worst kind of trope,' editor says What were they thinking? Tribune Publishing bogus email The co-founder of Snopes wrote dozens of plagiarized articles for the fact-checking site 'Patchwriting' is more common than plagiarism, just as dishonest [for homework] ↓ ***Turn in plagiarism exercise***
	WHAT GOES INTO MAKING	AN ETHICAL DECISION?
Aug. 26	Foundations – the dead guys!	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 1 Ethical communication focus handout Philosophy (dead guys) highlights – read about Aristotle, Kant ***Turn in Dead Guys – Part 1 ***
Aug. 31	More dead guys	 Questions to guide reading Philosophy (dead guys) highlights – read about Mill, Ross
Sept. 2	Dead guys wrap-up	 Questions to guide reading Philosophy (dead guys) highlights – read about communitarians African ethics - Social, not individualistic, ethics (section 8) 4 Communitarian examples

Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments for this day
Sept. 7	Moral development, starring Kohlberg and Gilligan	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 11 Videos to supplement book chapter: (1) Kohlberg's theory of moral development and (2) Carol Gilligan's theory of moral development Online guide to ethics and moral philosophy [supplemental] *** Turn in Dead Guys – Part 2*** *** Reading quiz 1 – Ch. 11 ***
Sept. 9	Continuing with moral development	 Revisit questions to guide reading As you read think about the level of moral development these people are in. Case 4-H: How one tweet ruined a life (pp. 131-133) Why good people do bad things in the workplace Experience: I write fake news On a long-ago Christmas Eve, an editor understood what we were supposed to do Whirlpool adds to school laundry program The vaccine had to be used. He used it. He was fired.
Sept. 14	Test #1 Study guide will be posted on Sakai	
Sept. 16	Standpoint-ing, DEI and social justice	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 9 Standpoint theory basics How Alexandra Bell is disrupting racism in journalism Implicit bias

Date	Topic	Assignment for this day
	THE VALUE OF HAVING	A PROCESS
Sept. 21	Having a process: Decision-making. Starting with Potter & Bok	 Questions to guide reading pp. 5-8 (Bok model how to) pp. 104-109 (Potter Box how to) What is justice? The veil of ignorance Potter Box chart [optional] Be ready to make an informed ethical decision using the Bok model and Potter Box for an in-class assignment. **Reading quiz 2 – text, Bok model and Potter Box**
Sept. 23	Encore! More decision-making techniques Wrap up Potter & Bok Onward with the TARES test	 Questions to guide reading Newsrooms rethink a crime reporting staple: The mugshot pp. 70-75: Thinking about the message: A systemic test (aka TARES) **Reading quiz 3 – doing TARES**
Sept. 28	NEXT TIME YOURE AFRAID TO SHARE IDEAS REMEMBER SOMEONE ONCE SAID IN A MEETING LETS MAKE A FILM WITH A TORNADO FULL OF SHARKS	Questions to guide reading and TARES-ing You'll work with others in class to assess an ad using the TARES test
Sept. 30 Are ya participatin'??	Professionalism and ethics codes	 Questions to guide reading Characteristics of a profession Should journalists play a role in identifying rioters? PR's responsibility in a world of misinformation
	ETHICAL EXPECTATIONS &	CHALLENGES IN OUR PROFESSIONS
Oct. 5	More professional-ing and codes-ing	 Questions to guide reading The ethical implications of PPC (pay-per-click) advertising & how to overcome them Ex-Bloomberg reporter who covered Martin Shkreli reveals relationship with him What is a public editor? [aka ombuds] ***Ethics Code Scavenger Hunt due***

Date	Topic	Assignment for this day
Oct. 7	Richard Griffiths visit!	**TARES Team Project Basics*** – who's on your team, and what persuasive political/issue-based message will you take on?
Oct. 12		
University Day No class!!	I will be in my office and available for questions and conversations. 2-5 p.m.	
Oct. 14	Midterm – ewwww!	That studying thing?
Oct. 19	Truth-tellin' – part 1	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 2 10 questions for fake news detection **Reading quiz 4 - ch. 2**
Oct. 21-24	Fall break!!	TIME
Oct. 26	Let's be truthful for a bit longer	 Questions to guide reading Truth continuum chart Peel back the label: Bob's Red Mill Quick Cooking Rolled Oats TV pundits praising Suleimani assassination neglect to disclose ties to arms industry
Oct. 28	Wrap up truthing.	 Questions to guide reading Op-ed: Bias is good. It just needs a label Verizon pulls misleading ads claiming its 5G service is 'necessary' for firefighters ***TARES Team Project Due***

Date	Topic	Assignment for this day
Nov. 2 Election Day!!!!! EVERY COUNTS	Objectivity? Neutrality? Transparency?	 Questions to guide reading Revisit ch. 2, pp. 26-31 False media balance Snake-handling Pentecostal pastor dies from snake bite
Nov. 4	More objectivity and neutrality + Start on visual challenges	 Questions to guide reading Against objectivity Telling it like it is: When writing news requires a distance from neutrality ***Brief commentary: Assess reporters' interviews***
Nov. 9	Visual/photo challenges	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 8 Photographers are being called on to stop showing protesters' faces. Should they? Optional: Fake videos of real people – and how to spot them (7-minute TED Talk) Optional: Are you an ethical photographer? ** Reading Quiz 5 – ch. 8**
Nov. 11	Persuading	 Questions to guide reading Unspun chapters **Be ready to find examples of various UnSpun strategies in class**
Nov. 16	Persuade some more	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 3 What is the difference between unethical & ethical advertising? The role of cognitive dissonance in the pandemic
Nov. 18	Privacy	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 5 Case 6-B: Doxxer, doxxer, give me the news? (pp. 190-192) **Reading Quiz 6 - ch. 6**
Nov. 23	Loyalties	 Questions to guide reading Ch. 4 The social contract (short video) Declaration of Independence [as a social contract] One person's tragedy, another person's prize

Date	Topic	Assignment for this day
Nov. 24-28	Thanksgiving holiday!!	GOBBLE TIL YOU WOBBLE
Nov. 30 LDOC!!	· HAPPY dange.	Finish up, pull it all together and review for final
Dec. 7 noon	Final exam (ewww²!!!) Please note day and time!	studying for exams ithink its stress!! cures insomnia

