

Media Ethics

COMM-2254

Fall 2020 Section E01 3 Credits 08/12/2020 to 12/05/2020 Modified 08/11/2020

IMPORTANT: Students should view this syllabus as a *contract for the semester*. By remaining enrolled in the class, you are accepting this contract and will be expected to follow the rules and regulations listed herein.

Description

Examination of the major classical and contemporary ethical philosophies. Application of ethical decision-making models to media issues, particularly freedom of speech, economic pressure, invasion of privacy, and the public's rights.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

COMM 1154 Minimum Grade: C and ENGL 1102 Minimum Grade: C

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Meeting Times

Office Hours: Virtual only by CourseDen email and online by appointment via Zoom or GoogleMeet.

E-Mail Address: Please use the CourseDen Mail tool to communicate with me and your classmates.

This is an online class. Office hours will be virtual only and by appointment. The very best way to reach me is by email. Please use the CourseDen Mail tool to communicate with me and your classmates. **Do not** use my westga.edu email account. I check my email several times a day M-F and usually respond quickly or within 24 hours. If you need to call, send me your telephone number and I will follow up with you during BUSINESS HOURS (9-5) only. **I will not contact you on weekends unless we have already made an arrangement to talk.** I do my best to make myself available to students within reason. While I am especially easy to reach via email, it is not inconceivable that your email message might get lost in the shuffle. So, if you reach out and don't get a response within a day, email again. Although you can access course content 24/7, I am only available for consultation during the above listed times.

Materials

Textbook:

Day, L. A. (2006). *Ethics in media communications: Cases and controversies* (5thed.). Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Outcomes

Learner Outcomes:

- To experience a variety of communication situations
- To be able to demonstrate ability to analyze case studies and employ appropriate creative problem-solving skills to ethical problems
- To demonstrate knowledge of the manner in which different publics are affected by media decision-makers

- To become a more effective listener/interpreter
- To improve critical thinking skills

✓ Evaluation

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assigned Readings: This class is structured in a reading-intensive format. This is to say that there is simply no way to succeed in the course without reading the assigned material for each module. It is especially important that you read and study the assigned material before online discussions, quizzes and exams.

Exams: There will be three exams. Each exam will include multiple choice and discussion style questions. All exams will be given online via CourseDen. You will have access to the exams for 24 hours of the exam date. You will have one hour and 20 minutes to complete the exam once you have started it. Exams are mandatory. Make-up exams are allowed only in cases of absence due to unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. If you miss an exam, *it is your responsibility to contact me immediately to reschedule and provide your documentation.*

Discussion Posts: There will be *five required discussion posts* valued at *five points each*. Discussion postings will be open for 48 hours. All discussion post assignments will open at 6 am on Monday mornings and close at 11:59pm on Wednesday evenings. Discussion post assignments are scheduled for Modules 3, 7, 9, 12 and 14. For details, see Discussion Post Guidelines in Module 1.

Learning Module Accessibility and Assigned Readings: Each learning module will cover the assigned reading material from the schedule posted in Module 1. Once each learning module is accessible, it will remain accessible on the CourseDen site for the remainder of the semester. It will only be possible to make the discussion postings during the first 48 hours that a particular learning module is posted. I do not reopen modules once they have closed, so be sure to complete your work by the deadline.

Grading Scale:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 59 and below

For example: An 89 point anything is a B. If you have an 89.7 and you ask for an extra point, it becomes an 89.8, which is a B. You also earn your grades, I don't give grades.

Missed Exams/Assignment Policies:

Exams and discussion postings are mandatory. This online format allows 24/7 access to current instruction content. Exams will be offered in a two day window where the student may log in and take the exam over the period of one hour. All discussion post assignments will open at 12am on Wednesday mornings and close at 11:59pm on Thursday evenings. Students will not be allowed to make up for missed discussion postings. For details, see Discussion Post Guidelines in Module 1.

Point Values per assignment/assessment

3 Exams: 25 points each $25 \times 3 = 75\%$ of total possible points per semester

5 CourseDen Discussion Assignments:

(Discussions at 5 points each) $5 \times 5 = 25\%$ of total possible points per semester

Total points for semester: 100

PowerPoint MP4's (Important): Each learning module includes a PowerPoint Presentation with audio commentary (narrated by a male

colleague), saved as an MP4. PowerPoint presentations do *not* completely explain what is delivered in full in the book. Thus, the PowerPoint presentations should be used to *supplement and focus* your reading—but not as a replacement for it. From the PowerPoint MP4's, you can ascertain which particular parts of each chapter I am focusing on. **Use the PowerPoint MP4's to guide your reading and study of the textbook.** In some cases, there are concepts and information in the PowerPoint MP4's that are *not* in the book. (Such content is oh-so-subtly identified as "NOT IN THE BOOK" on the PowerPoint slides.) The non-textbook information provided in the PowerPoints should be adequate for use in your study. (In other words, the explanation of non-textbook info on the PowerPoint MP4's will be enough: There will be no need for you to research this information any further than what has been provided.)

BE THOROUGH. To succeed in the class, you will need to do ALL the readings, listen to ALL of the audio segments, take ALL of the quizzes, make ALL of the required discussion posts, take ALL of the exams—and, of course, study.

Attendance: For online courses, attendance is qualified by participation in discussion, submitting assignments, and taking quizzes and exams on time. Your last date of attendance is determined by user progress including last log-in and last submitted assignment or post. *All of your participation in the course is being tracked digitally.*

Breakdown

Technical Considerations: Many of the instructional materials for this course were created using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. As such, students will need access to Microsoft Reader. (Most of you will have this already.) For a free download of Microsoft Office 365, visit http://www.westga.edu/its/570_3275.php.

CourseDen Resources & Technical Support

For CourseDen and technical support, including tutorials, troubleshooting, and online resources, reference the UWG Online Student Guide link - <http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php>. You may also contact UWG Online Help Desk Monday - Thursday 8am - 8pm EST and Friday 8am - 5pm EST at 678.839.6248 or 1.855.933.8946 (UWGO); or email staff at online@westga.edu. Additionally, you may contact the GeorgiaVIEW D2L 24-Hour Help Desk for assistance, 7 days a week and 365 days a year, via the Internet at <https://d2lhelp.view.usg.edu/s/> or phone at 1.855.772.0423.

CourseDen Tools

We will primarily use CourseDen *Discussions, Assignments, Quizzes, Grades, and Email tools*. You are expected to log in to CourseDen regularly throughout the week, but especially within 24 hours of each scheduled class session.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions.

Criteria

Assignments

Exams: There will be three exams. Each exam will include multiple choice and discussion style questions. All exams will be given online via CourseDen. You will have access to the exams for 24 hours of the exam date. You will have one hour and 20 minutes to complete the exam once you have started it. Exams are mandatory. Make-up exams are allowed only in cases of absence due to unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. If you miss an exam, *it is your responsibility to contact me immediately to reschedule and provide your documentation.*

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Schedule

See CourseDen for weekly course schedule.

* Course Policies and Resources

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Attendance and Participation

This is a fully online course and attendance is recorded as participation in all aspects of the course. Your participation is digitally tracked. Lack of engagement in the course may result in failure of the course.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will result in failure on assignment on the first attempt, and may be subject to additional disciplinary action(s) on the second attempt including failure of the assignment and the course. Hint: It will not be tolerated. The University of West Georgia Student Code of Conduct (Section 2.0) defines academic dishonesty as including, but not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, excessive collaboration, and facilitating or allowing academic dishonesty in any academic exercise. Code definitions are noted below. The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, **failing the assignment on first attempt and failing the course on second attempt, plus whatever sanctions the university deems fit** which may include suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Cheating: Cheating means using, attempting to use or aiding others in using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids. It also means excessive collaboration or gaining unauthorized access to unauthorized materials.

Fabrication: Fabrication means falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged. Plagiarism also includes "self-plagiarism" which includes the reuse of one's own work without acknowledging that one is doing so or citing the original work.

Excessive Collaboration: Excessive collaboration means the end result of all idea swapping, sharing, brainstorming, and conferring has obliterated one student's voice and replaced it with that of another. Student writers collaborate excessively when they abandon, wittingly or unwittingly, their own words and adopt, claiming them as their own, the ideas or exact phrasing of their collaborator.

Late work

Late is defined as not meeting the assigned deadline. If the professor accepts late work, one letter grade will be deducted for each day it is late, starting with the due date. If more than 2 days go by, the assignment will receive an automatic zero.

If you anticipate missing a deadline, submit the assignment before it is due (uploaded/posted to Course Den). Any assignment turned in after its deadline will receive a zero unless approved documentation of extenuating circumstances (approved at the instructor's discretion) is provided.

The very nature of this course demands that we stick to a firm schedule. Readings and assignments must be completed on the day they are assigned on the course schedule. Be sure to read the book and take notes while reading; lectures are intended to *complement* (not duplicate) that information, so completing readings before class is very important.

Classroom and Online Etiquette

Exercising personal freedom is an appealing part of college life. In order to create an atmosphere where individual expression and social interchange are both respected, please observe the following: (1) address each other with respect; (2) contribute to discussions, don't dominate them; (3) stay focused on the topic being discussed.

Contacting me

The *Email* tool in CourseDen allows you to send e-mail to and receive e-mail from me and your classmates. It is important that you check your e-mail each day. I will respond to e-mail within 24-48 hours with the exception of Friday afternoons, weekends, and holidays. If you send me e-mail Friday afternoons, weekends, or holidays, I will respond by 5:00 pm the following business day. Do not send e-mail to my UWG e-mail address. CourseDen Email allows me to timely respond to and efficiently manage emails given that all course related emails are archived in one place.

College/School Policies

University Support Services & Policies

For information regarding university academic support, online support, Honor Code, email policy, credit hour policy, HB 280 policy (Campus Carry), and mental health support, please visit <https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

¹Standard 8 of ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

²Standard 12 of ACEJMC professional values and competencies.

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Mass Communications Degree Program Learning Outcomes

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: The Bachelor of Science degree program in Mass Communications is accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), and the Department is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. The Department has adopted as its Mass Communications degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies, known as 6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS, that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog](https://catalog.westga.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=11&pooid=1991) (https://catalog.westga.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=11&pooid=1991) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction](http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/) (<http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/>).

6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS

[6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS
\(https://www.westga.edu/academics/coss/mass-communications/assets/pics/6x6_MC_Success_Graphic.JPG\)](https://www.westga.edu/academics/coss/mass-communications/assets/pics/6x6_MC_Success_Graphic.JPG)

(click to view image)

1. Freedom of Speech & Press
2. History
3. Diversity
4. Global Impact
5. Theory
6. Ethics
7. Think Critically & Creatively
8. Research & Evaluate
9. Write Effectively
10. Self-Evaluate
11. Apply Numbers & Statistics
12. Apply Technology

Film & Video Production Degree Program Learning Outcomes

Overview: The Bachelor of Science degree program in Film & Video Production is designed to train graduates in the field who are agile, adaptable, and able to employ their skills in an array of roles from entrepreneurial content producers to on-set film work, both above and below the line. It will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the machinery at work behind media production and distribution, along with a set of tangible, marketable, and transferable skills for an array of positions within the infrastructure of film and content production. The FVP degree program learning outcomes include:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking, aesthetic awareness and technical proficiency in the production and assessment of audio-visual film work.
2. Understand all phases and roles of film production in order to help formulate career goals.
3. Understand the various potentials of film as both a commodity for a targeted audience, and an act of authorship and creative expression.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of cinema in a global society.

Institutional Policies

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online](#)

[\(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information# (http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information)

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>)

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](#) for more information.

COVID-19

Proctored Exams/Online Instruction: Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all courses and/or exams online or in a proctored environment. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Virtual or in-person proctored exams, if your instructor should require them, may result in an additional cost to the student. Please discuss these details with your instructor or see the information provided here.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.

Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

Student FAQs: For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the [Student FAQ webpage](#) (<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php>).

Additional Items
