



MERCER
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number
CMN 102

Course Title
Media Issues and Ethics

Credits
3

Hours: 3 Lecture

Co- or Pre-requisite: ENG101

Implementation
Semester & Year:
Spring 2022

Catalog description: An examination of current issues and ethical dilemmas in mass media such as sensationalism, press censorship, violence, political coverage, rights of privacy, and photo manipulation. The implications of recent developments in mass media and current regulation of broadcast and cable media are discussed. Students read, evaluate and analyze media ethical case studies.

General Education Category:
Not GenEd

Course coordinator: Dylan Wolfe, wolfedy@mccc.edu, 609.570.3332

Required texts & Other materials: Patterson, P., Wilkins, S., and Painter, C (2019). *Media Ethics: Issues & Cases*. 9th edition. McGraw Hill: New York, NY. ISBN: 978-1-5381-1258-8

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills in analyzing and discussing various viewpoints on a media or cultural phenomenon. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11)
2. Demonstrate oral and written argumentation skills through analyses of ethical approaches and mass media ethical case studies. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
3. Discuss, analyze, and respond to contemporary dilemmas faced by media professionals in areas including journalistic responsibilities; information ethics; the right to privacy; truth in advertising; media and business; news and politics; images in photography, film, and video; media in the digital age; and portrayals of women and minorities in both entertainment and news media. (ILG 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)
4. Research and write a paper analyzing a current ethical dilemma faced by the mass media. (ILG 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

Institutional Learning Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I Ethical Dilemmas (SLO 1, 2, 4)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define and explain the basic terms of media ethics, including ethics, practical ethics, ethical dilemma, mass media, and media ethics.
- Name and explain the components of an ethical dilemma.
- Identify the agent, act, and outcomes in examples or case studies.

Unit II Ethical Reasoning (SLO 1, 2, 4)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Explain and compare the ethical approaches of Socrates, Aristotle, Kant, Bok, Bentham, and Mill.
- Identify the primary focus of ethical approaches within the dilemma model.

Unit III Ethical Application (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Diagram ethical dilemmas from case studies and examples.
- Apply ethical models of virtue ethics, golden mean, categorical imperative, Bok's model, and utilitarian valuation to case studies and examples.
- Critically review the use of ethical models in practical decision-making.
- Discuss the issues of privacy, right to know, and journalistic responsibility.

Unit IV Truth (SLO 1, 2, 3)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Explain Plato's notions of doxa, noesis, and ideal forms in relation to knowledge and truth.
- Explain and discuss the evolution of truth from Monotheism to the Enlightenment.
- Define and explain concepts of correspondence, empiricism, universality, and individual reason.

Unit V Objectivity (SLO 1, 2, 3)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define and differentiate concepts of objectivity, subjectivity, and relativism
- Define journalistic objectivity and explain the historic reasons for its implementation
- Explain the perspective of Pragmatism and the arguments against universality
- Discuss the role of the free press in American democracy

Unit VI Ethics in Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define and explain the place of strategic communication, technology, and the audience in mass media and society
- Define and compare theories of audience including stimulus/response, cognitive dissonance, and social construction of knowledge.
- Discuss the role of advertising and marketing to children
- Explain and apply the TARES model to specific case studies and examples

Unit VII Visual Ethics (SLO 1, 2, 3)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Explain and discuss the history and influence of photography
- Critically reflect on the ethical implications of image use, image manipulation, and visual representation

Unit VIII Digital Media (SLO 1, 2, 3)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define and differentiate the roles of first informer, information verification, source verification, and citizen journalism
- Critically reflect on various perspectives related to digital technologies, information, and citizenship
- Research, explain, and critically engage with case studies related to ethical dilemmas in the digital age

Unit IX Art & Entertainment (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Discuss the historical and contemporary perspectives on art and aesthetics
- Define and explain the differences between entertainment, infotainment, reporting, and documentary
- Research, explain, and critically engage with case studies related to ethical dilemmas in arts and entertainment

Evaluation of student learning:

Mid Term Exam	200 points	Combination of short explanatory questions and longer essays requiring application (SLO 1, 2, 3)
Quizzes/Short Assignments	100 points	In-class quizzes on basic concepts; in-class assignments focused on application (SLO 2, 3)
Presentation / Group Essay	200 points	Small groups research, analyze, and present a media ethics case study (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)
Final Exam	200 points	Combination of short explanatory questions and longer essays requiring application (SLO 1, 2, 3)
Research Essay	200 points	Students research, analyze, and apply ethical model to a media ethics case study (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4)
Participation	100 points	Students participate in class discussions and small group activities (SLO 1, 2, 3)
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Total	1000 points	