**COURSE OUTLINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMN 102</td>
<td>Media Issues and Ethics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3 lecture**  
**Hours:**  
**ENG 101 with a minimum C grade**  
**Pre-requisite**  
**Summer 2011**  
**Implementation**  

**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.

**Is course New, Revised, or Modified?** Revised

**Required texts/other materials:**

**Revision date:** 2011  
**Course coordinator:** Donna Munde

**Information resources:** Course supported by contemporary magazines, television programs, websites, news articles, films, music, and communication industry journals.
Course Competencies/Goals:
The student will be able to:

- Analyze the style of argumentation and method of proof used by scholarly mass media critics.
- Apply critical thinking skills in analyzing various viewpoints on a media or cultural phenomenon.
- Write critical analyses of the interrelationship between media portrayals, real-life occurrences, and personal experience.
- Develop written argumentation skills through researched analyses of media theories and mass media ethical case studies.
- Devise and factually support cultural critiques, based on assessments of media portrayals vs. historical and contemporary data.
- Compare and contrast the roles of new media vs. traditional broadcast media in creating an either fragmented or global cultural community.
- Utilize mass media products to discuss, analyze, critique, and respond to mass media portrayals of contemporary issues: violence; body issues; victims’ rights; crime resolutions; the right to know; the right to privacy; media as big business; news and politics; media in the digital age; media and government adversarial relationships; gate-keeping and agenda-setting in both entertainment and news media.
- Read and analyze a variety of case studies in media ethics, including information ethics, competing allegiances, privacy issues, media deadlines and bottom lines, the ethics of photojournalism and video journalism, and ethical dilemmas created by the digital age.
- Research and write a paper analyzing a current issue and a current ethical dilemma faced by the mass media.

Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.

General Education Knowledge Goals
- Goal 1. Communication. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
- Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.
- 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.
- 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.
- Goal 7. History. Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.
- Goal 8. Diversity. Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.

MCCC Core Skills
- Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.
- Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.
- Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making. Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.
- Goal D. 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.
- Goal E. Computer Literacy. Students will use computers to access, analyze or present information, solve problems, and communicate with others.
- Goal G. Intra-Cultural and Inter-Cultural Responsibility. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of intelligent citizenship in a diverse and pluralistic society, and will demonstrate cultural, global, and environmental awareness.
Units of study in detail.

Unit I: Media and Social Issues: “Are American Values Shaped by the Mass Media” and “Are Harry Potter books harmful for Children?”

*The student will be able to…*

1. describe three of the five myths that Schiller believes structure media content and manipulate consciousness.

2. describe Carey's position of the communication model.

3. define and describe these terms and names from the chapter: privatism, neutrality, status quo, social conflict, pluralism, John Dewey, communication model.

4. analyze the arguments of the authors and suggest a solution to the issue, or agree with one of the positions from the reading.

5. describe several of the justifications for criticizing the *Harry Potter* series of books as anti-Christian and promoters of the occult.

6. describe several criticisms of the books in terms of stereotyping.

7. list justifications by those who defend the Harry Potter series of books as valuable children's fantasy.

8. analyze and come to a conclusion on the issue of the censorship of books worldwide.

Unit II: A Question of Content: “Violent Video Games” and “The Power of Advertising”

*The student will be able to…*

1. identify and describe several reasons for the criticism of violent video games leading to increased violence in society.

2. describe several reasons for the defense of violent video games as positive activities for children.

3. summarize the main points of recent articles that defend each of the positions.

4. analyze and come to a conclusion on the issue of violent video game content and its impact.

5. describe the major points of Calfee's position stating the negative impact of advertising on society.

6. describe the major points of Godrej's position stating the positive impact of advertising on society.

7. analyze and state the main points of a video clip on the subject of the power of advertising.
Unit III: Law and Policy: “Has Industry Regulation Controlled Indecent Media Content?”

The student will be able to…

1. summarize the "slippery slope" argument against government control of indecent media content.
2. summarize the relationship between government and media, using the comic book industry as an example.
3. relate the FCC’s definition of both indecent and obscene media content.
4. summarize one article on recent events in media regulation of indecent content.


The student will be able to…

1. describe the "pay for play" practice of radio stations and record promoters as outlined by Eric Boehlert.
2. identify several reasons for the decline in the broadcast radio music business.
3. describe the business model for independent musical artists as outlined by Chuck Salter.
4. analyze the web site of a currently popular recording artist.

Unit V: Life in the Digital Age – “Are Online Services Responsible for an Increase in Bullying and Harassment?”

The student will be able to…

1. list several reasons in favor of the position that online services are responsible for an increase in bullying and harassment.
2. list several reasons against the position that online services are responsible for an increase in bullying and harassment.
3. describe a typical cyber stalker.
4. define cyber stalker, cyber bully, cyber coward, harassment, and bullying.
Unit VI: An Introduction to Ethical Decision Making and Case Study

The student will be able to…

1. recognize the need for professional ethics in the mass media.

2. work through a model of ethical decision making.

3. identify the five philosophical principles applicable to mass communication situations.

4. list and explain five of the myths of media case discussions.

4. apply the five philosophical principles to a case study.

Unit VII: “Privacy: Looking for Solitude in the Global Village” and Case Study

The student will be able to…

1. distinguish between the right to privacy and a need for privacy.

2. distinguish between the law and ethics of privacy.

3. understand the concepts of discretion, right to know, need to know, want to know and circles of intimacy.

4. understand Rawls's veil of ignorance as a tool for ethical decision making.

5. apply Kant's notion of duty as a tool for ethical decision making in a case study.

6. apply ethical decision making to a case study of a current event.

Unit VIII: Media Economics: “The Deadline Meets the Bottom Line” and Case Study

The student will be able to…

1. describe the social responsibility theory of the press.

2. describe several of the reasons, both legislative and economic, that have created mass media conglomerates.

3. list several methods used by mass media companies to cope with economic difficulties.

4. define the "stakeholder" theory of economic success.

5. analyze a case study related to the issues of media economics.
Unit IX: “The Ethics of Photo and Video Journalism” and Case Study

The student will be able to…

1. list several of the technologies that are available for altering photos.
2. list several issues that arise when photojournalists alter images.
3. define "file footage" and "eyewash" as they relate to photojournalism.
4. apply ethical reasoning to a case study dealing with the ethics of photo and video journalism.

Unit X: New Media: “Continuing Questions and New Roles” and Case Study

The student will be able to…

1. understand the role of copyright law in ethical decision making about Internet content.
2. devise a few professional strategies for using the Internet as a reporting and advertising tool.
3. delineate policy issues the Internet raises for journalists and citizens.
4. analyze and respond to a case study on the issue of new roles for journalists in the Internet Age.

Evaluation of student learning:

Your class grade is based on your performance on quizzes, written homework assignments, a Mid-Term Exam, course paper and a Final Exam.

- Written Homework = 30%
- Quizzes = 25%
- Mid Term Exam = 15%
- Course paper = 15%
- Final Exam = 15%

Total = 100%

Academic Integrity Statement:
Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity -- the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty. The entire policy on Academic Integrity is located in the Student Handbook and is found on the college website.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
Any student in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations. Eligible students at Mercer County Community College are assured services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you are eligible for services, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services at (609) 570-3525.