

COM411 – Strategic Communication Ethics and Law Syllabus - Spring 2016

Instructor: Mary M. Hills, ABC, Six Sigma
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219.613.8591 (text enabled)
Office Hours: Before class and by appointment.

Class Meetings

Class will meet on Mondays from 7 – 9:30 p.m., beginning on Monday, January 25, and completing on Monday, April 25. Consult the course calendar in Sakai for exceptions. Class meetings are held in SOC Room 2.

Required Course Texts and Resources

- Johnson, Craig E. (2016). *Organizational Ethics: A Practical Approach*. 3E. Sage Publications, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Additional required course readings will be available on Sakai and/or handed out in class.

Course Description: This course explores various approaches to ethical decision-making and applies them to diverse aspects of strategic communication in professional settings. Students will learn to discern a wide variety of ethical issues concerning communication behavior, apply systematic ethical analysis to various business situations, and clearly explain their analyses. The course examines applying abstract principles to specific cases in applied ethics (deductive approach) as well as using a bottom-up (inductive approach) in developing students' ethical decision-making skills. Students will take learned knowledge of moral decision-making and begin exploring contemporary topics in strategic communication ethics, such as political communication, public relations, advertising, digital media, marketing and health communication.
(no prerequisite)

Course Expectations

Students are expected to

- Obtain the course text.
- Review the syllabus for weekly reading and assignments.
- Prepare for weekly class meetings by completing the reading assignment for the week prior to the class meeting and checking Sakai for supplemental resources/handouts (slide deck) to bring to class.
- Attend class and participate in class discussions and activities.
- Submit assignments to the instructor when due.

Course Objectives (CO)

Students will be required to comprehend and demonstrate through class discussions, assignments and exams their grasp of the following:

- A. Gain knowledge in individual and organizational ethics principles and decision-making.
- B. Understand ethical communication practices.
- C. Gain knowledge of U.S. law impacting organizational communication.
- D. Examine ethical and legal issues in organizational communication.

Course Schedule (Subject to change if necessary. Students will be notified of changes in advance.)

Week	Focus	Reading & Assignments
1 January 25 CO A & D	Course Intro – legal vs. ethical, information cycle, decision making & decision points Individual Ethics	Johnson, Text Introduction, Chapters 1-3 Course Presentation/Paper Discussed
2 February 1 CO A & D	Ethics in Organizational Exchanges – org. culture, org. policies, processes & procedures	Johnson, Chapters 4-6 Assignment: Codes of Ethics Comparison
3 February 8 Online discussion only, no onsite CO A & D	Ethics in Global Society	Johnson, Chapters 12 & 13
4 February 15 CO A & D	Ethics in Org. Groups	Johnson, Chapters 7-9 Speaker: Organizational Ethics
5 February 22 CO B	Ethics Practices	Johnson, Chapters 10 & 11
6 February 29 CO D	Course Project - 1/1 Meetings	
7 March 7 CO C & D	Intro to Communication Law – organizational communication, building a case (evidence, witnesses)	Assigned Readings Speaker: Attorney Assignment: First Amendment Paper
8 March 14	Spring Break, no class	
9 March 21 CO C & D	Public & Investor Relations	Assigned Readings Speaker: IR Communication
10 March 28 CO C & D	Marketing & Advertising	Assigned Readings
11 April 4 CO C & D	Digital & Intellectual Property	Assigned Readings
12 April 11 CO D	Issue - Mock Trials	Course Presentations/Discussion

13 April 18 CO D	Issue - Mock Trials	Course Presentations/Discussion
14 April 25 CO D	Issue - Mock Trials	Course Presentations/Discussion
April 29 CO D	Opinion Paper Due	

Grading

All course requirements will be graded on point values. Total point value for the course is 1,000 points. The points/weight of each requirement is:

Assignments	Points	Weighting
Codes of Ethics Comparison Paper	170	17%
First Amendment Paper	170	17%
Issue – Mock Trial Presentation (Weeks 12-14)	200	20%
Majority Opinion or Minority Report (Week 14)	200	20%
Class Participation (20 pts./week for 13 weeks)	260	26%
Total	1000	100%

At the end of the course, a letter grade will be assigned based on total points gained using the table below.

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	930 - 1000	93% - 100%
A-	900 - 929	90% - 92%
B+	870 - 899	87% - 89%
B	830 - 869	83% - 86%
B-	800 - 829	80% - 82%
C+	770 - 799	77% - 79%
C	730 - 769	73% - 76%
C-	700 - 729	70% - 72%
D+	670 - 699	67% - 69%
D-	601 - 669	60.1% - 66%
F	600 or below	60% and below

Written Assignments

Students will receive an assignment outline that includes a description and requirements for each assignment one week prior to its due date. Instructor approval for a late assignment must be gained prior to its due date. The course paper/presentation assignment will be handed out in week two(2).

Class Participation

To gain full points for class participation, students must interact with the class discussion. Participation can be

- Providing additional information to the topic being discussed
- Sharing a personal experience on the topic being discussed
- Enhancing comments made by other students on the topic under discussion
- Clarifying/paraphrasing the topic under discussion to support understanding, or
- Presenting a brief critical assessment of the topic under discussion.

School of Communication Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents.

Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;

- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
 - Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit;
- or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source>.

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. A student who submits the same work for credit in two or more classes will be judged guilty of academic dishonesty, and will be subject to sanctions described below. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.