JL MC 462: Media Ethics, Freedom, Responsibility

Section 1, 3 credits
Spring 2018, Jan. 8-May 4, 2018
MWF 9-9:50 a.m.
Classroom: Hamilton Hall, Room 169
Final Exam: Wed., May 2, 7:30-9:30 a.m.

Instructor Information
Julie Roosa (pronounced ROSE-uh)
Office: 116 Hamilton Hall
515-294-0496 (o), 515-450-3599 (c) emergencies only please
jroosa@iastate.edu

Office hours
10-11 a.m. M-R, other times available, email me to schedule, jroosa@iastate.edu
Office location: 116 Hamilton Hall

Department Information
Greenlee School of Journalism & Communication
613 Wallace Road, 101 Hamilton Hall, Ames, IA 50011-4010
515-294-4342, Fax: 515-294-5108
greenlee@iastate.edu

*Syllabus adopted with permission from Brenda Witherspoon, fall 2017*

Course description from university catalog
Ethics and professionalism in the practice of journalism, public relations and advertising.

Course summary
JL MC 462 will cover the foundations of ethics, including cultural values and global principles, and consider their application to media. Students will consider case studies and learn how to apply professional codes of ethics to situations. Students will develop their own personal codes of ethics. We'll look at the functions of the media in relation to government and also consider ethical issues that have arisen in the digital age.

Prerequisites
JL MC 110 and minimum C+ in JL MC 201. Greenlee majors only.

Learning outcomes
Students who have successfully completed JLMC 462 will be able to:

- Understand the ethical frameworks that have affected people through time, particularly as applied to and reflected in professional advertising, public relations and journalism.
- Identify the entities likely to be affected by decisions made by media professionals and potential harms and benefits.
- Become familiar with the formal codes of ethics of major industry organizations such as the Society of Professional Journalists and the Public Relations Society of America.
Apply ethical frameworks or codes to specific case studies.
Understand how changing technology raises new ethical questions and recognize the growing edges of media that generate new ethical approaches.
Develop and articulate a personal code of ethics.

Correlation with ACEJMC competencies
These outcomes and objectives draw from the professional values and competencies of the Accrediting Council on Journalism and Mass Communication and the Greenlee School faculty. JL MC 462 is a key part of the Greenlee School program. Students who complete the program will be able to:

- 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; and
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Required textbooks
None. Supplemental materials such as commentary, articles, podcasts, and videos will be used. When possible, please read/view prior to class and be ready to discuss and apply concepts in class.

Course announcements
Important course announcements, including unexpected cancelations, will be posted on Canvas as soon as possible. Check Canvas regularly for updates, especially in the case of bad weather.

Grading guidelines
Your final grade will be based on these percentages:

20 percent - Midterm paper (No midterm exam). 200 points. Due Wednesday, Feb. 28, 9 a.m.
30 percent – Final group project (No final exam). 300 points. Due Wednesday, May 2, 7:30 a.m.
20 percent – Eportfolio (Includes personal code of ethics). 200 points. Due Friday, April 20, 5 p.m.
30 percent – Class participation, Canvas discussion posts, and in-class assignments. 300 points.
Total points possible=1,000

Grading scale

(%) 94-100 A, 90-93% A-, 87-89 B+, 84-86 B, 80-83 B-, 77-79 C+, 74-76 C, 70-73 C-, 67-69 D+, 64-66 D, 60-63 D-, 0-59 F.

Grade descriptions
A=Mastery in all content areas/learning outcomes. Work is exemplary, goes above-and-beyond.
B=Mastery in most areas. Work is good.
C=Demonstrates competence in most areas/learning outcomes. Acceptable college-level work.
D=Demonstrates competence in some, but not all, content areas/learning outcomes. Inconsistent or below average college-level work.
F=Lacks competence in most/all learning outcomes for the class.

Extra credit All regular coursework must be turned in (even after deadline for no points) to earn the opportunity for extra credit. Extra credit assignments will be announced in class, or students may submit ideas for instructor approval. No extra credit will be accepted once Dead Week begins.

Course requirements
PARTICIPATION. While at Iowa State, your primary job is being a student. It’s one of the greatest jobs in the world, but, like any job, it takes work. Treat this class as you would a job. Enthusiastic participation is expected. If you are not here, we'll notice. If you are here but not prepared, we’ll notice. If you are here but distracted (think cell phone), we'll notice. If you often come in late or leave early, we'll notice. Moreover, the primary approach of this class will be discussion; it will only work well if everyone is here, ready, and willing to participate. Random students will be called on by name during each class. If you are not here to answer the call or you are here but unprepared, you are likely to lose participation points (see ATTENDANCE below.) Bottom line: You can’t do your job if you’re not here, nor can I. Let’s all be here and we’ll all be happier.

ATTENDANCE. A portion of your grade is based on participation, including in-class assignments that can’t be made up. If you must miss class, please email jroosa@iastate.edu before class. You do not necessarily need to include a reason, just the absence. For purposes of this policy, there is no distinction between an excused vs. unexcused absence. Instead, each student is entitled to three (3) absences (includes being physically in class but “intellectually absent” or distracted – i.e., on your cell phone) before losing participation points. That’s one full week of class (one full week of work!) Roll won’t necessarily be called at each day, but your name could be (see PARTICIPATION above.) Eventually we’ll get to know each other, and I’ll make note if you’re absent.

GROUP DAY. Attendance on GROUP PRESENTATION day(s) is MANDATORY. If you miss a group presentation day, you will earn a 0 for participation. Plus your group’s grade will suffer.

RESPECT. We are certain to have rousing discussions in this class on topics that generate strong feelings and opinions. It is OK to disagree but not to be disagreeable. The basic rule is respect. It is the instructor’s goal to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect. All comments should be based on facts and documentation, not prejudice or personalities. Students must maintain respect for opinions differing from their own, as well as differing styles of presentation. Use of racist, sexist, homophobic language or other demeaning or harassing comments have no place. If you believe any person is disregarding these standards, please notify the instructor immediately. Also contact the instructor if you have suggestions for improving the classroom environment.
CELL PHONES AND LAPTOPS. Cell phones and laptops are a distraction to you, me, and each other. Please yours away at the start of class. Yes, this means you’ll need to take notes by hand.

CANVAS. We will use Canvas (replaced Blackboard in January 2018) to enhance the class. Find your grades, attendance, supplemental materials, links, and online discussions on our class Canvas site.

EMAIL RESPONSE POLICY. I try to respond to emails within 24 hours during the work week. If you don’t hear back from me, please email me again.

DISCUSSIONS. We will have an online discussion in Canvas most weeks related to the class content. A question(s) will be posted on Wednesday by midnight. Students will post their response by the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. For the FIRST DISCUSSION ONLY every student will respond. For all other discussions, whether you post a response depends on the first letter of your last name:
- A-K=Respond by the first and third Sunday of the month by 11:59 p.m.
- L-Z=Respond by the second and fourth Sunday of the month by 11:59 p.m.
Late postings will not be accepted for full credit. While only certain students must respond, every student must read the discussion thread every week to be prepared for class. Be sure to post on Canvas – do not email your response to your instructor.

Discussion grading will be based on a 0-3 scale:
- 3=Meets minimum word count of 100 words. Makes strong connections/clear reference to class content. Shows insight/depth of thought. 0-1 error in mechanics (grammar, spelling, style, etc.)
- 2=Makes some connections/attempts to reference to class content. 2-3 errors in mechanics.
- 1=Lacks depth/substance. Little/no connection to class content. Short on word count. 4-5 errors.
- 0=Incomplete or late. More than 6 errors in mechanics.

MIDTERM PAPER. In lieu of a midterm exam, you will write a paper about involving a Movie and a Mentor. More details will be provided. Length will be four (4) pages, double-spaced, ~1,000 words, using appropriate college-level sources. The paper will reflect the material covered to date. Deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 28, at 9 a.m. 200 points. Late papers will lose 10% (one letter grade) each day late.

FINAL GROUP PROJECT. In lieu of a final exam, you will complete a final group project in the form of a multi-media presentation and written analysis. Deadline is Wednesday, May 2, 7:30-9:30 a.m. (The scheduled final for the class.) 300 points. No late papers or presentations accepted.

EPORTFOLIO. Each student will create a professional online Eportfolio, showcasing their work and including a personal code of ethics. We’ll follow the same requirements and similar grading as explained by Dr. Michael Bugeja at his website, myethicsclass.com: "Required pages: Home, About, My Bio (or My Resume), My Contact Information, My Ethics Code, My Video (or Multimedia, Photography, etc.), My Work Samples. Note: You must display work on at least two platforms. If you don't have such work, generate some by spending time at the Daily, ISUtv, Ethos, Trend, Sir, Uhuru, KURE, etc. Or join one of our many student organizations, including Ad Club, PRSSA, Cardinal and Gold, Society of Professional Journalists, etc." Deadline is Friday, April 20, 5 p.m. 200 points.

NEWS CONSUMER. If you haven’t already developed a daily news habit, start today. As a media professional (journalism, public relations and advertising), it’s essential to keep up on what’s happening in the world around you. You should sign up for your free student subscription to The New York Times, listen to National Public Radio, catch your local news or cable channels, and follow
your favorite news Web sites. Please make sure you are exposed to a variety of balanced news programming. Keeping up on the news will be the best way to keep up in class.

QUALITY. Every written assignment should be written as a professional journalist would write it. Your work should meet the standards of accuracy, clarity and conformity with AP style expected of copy destined for publication. To earn full points, your contributions should engage the issues, have depth and substance, and make connections to class materials.

PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is unacceptable. It is against the law and is an especially egregious act for a professional communicator. Copying anyone else’s work or other forms of dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for an assignment and could result in an F for the course. The instructor reserves the right to additionally turn the student in to the Dean of Students office. For information on Iowa State University’s policy on academic dishonesty visit http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html

Student success
To be a successful student, you should do the following: Attend class; meet your classmates and talk to them often; check with a classmate if you miss a class and borrow notes; spend 2-3 hours outside of class, working on that class, for every hour in class; check your Iowa State email regularly; log on to the course website daily; communicate with your instructor and visit during office hours, create a study schedule so you don’t fall behind; take advantage of campus resources such as tutoring, study skills help, academic coaching, supplemental instruction, etc. For more information, visit the Academic Success Center website (http://www.asc.dso.iastate.edu/)

Important university dates
Visit the ISU Academic Calendar website (http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/calendar/) for details.

Off-campus travel
Students assume the liability inherent in transportation to off-site locations for Greenlee School course assignments, as well as for class field trips. Whether a student drives his or her own vehicle or chooses other transportation options, the liability inherent in transportation is assumed by the student and not the instructor, the Greenlee School of Journalism and Mass Communication or Iowa State University. Students have the responsibility to make sure that any involved vehicles are maintained in good condition, that they are properly insured and that safe driving practices are employed when traveling, including but not limited to: no texting when driving, use of seat belts and adherence to all applicable laws and signage.

Disability accommodation
Iowa State University is committed to ensuring that all educational activities are free from discrimination and harassment based on disability status. All students requesting accommodations are required to meet with staff in Student Disability Resources to establish eligibility. A Student Academic Accommodation Request form will be provided to eligible students. The provision of reasonable accommodations in this course will be arranged after timely delivery of a SAAR form to the instructor. Students are encouraged to deliver completed SAAR forms as early in the semester as possible. Student Disability Resources (www.dso.iastate.edu/dr/), a unit in the Dean of Students Office, is located in Room 1076, Students Services Building. Contact SDR by email at disabilityresources@iastate.edu or by phone at 515-294-7220 for more information.
Dead week
This class follows the Iowa State University dead-week policy, as noted in section 10.6.4 of the Faculty Handbook, http://www.provost.iastate.edu/resources/faculty-handbook.

Harassment and discrimination
Iowa State University employees strive to maintain campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information or status as a U.S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact an instructor, Student Assistance (515-294-1020, dso-sas@iastate.edu) or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance (515-294-7612).

Religious accommodation
If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the Dean of Students Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance.

Contact information related to accommodations or other policies
If you are experiencing or have experienced a problem with any of the above issues, email academicissues@iastate.edu.

Course calendar at a glance (subject to change with notice)
Week 1 (Jan 8) Introductions, syllabus, expectations, goals; Discussion Post #1, due Sunday, 1/14/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 2 (Jan. 15) HOLIDAY/NO CLASSS on 1/15; Defining Ethics; Discussion Post #2 (A-K), due Sunday, 1/21/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 3 (Jan. 22) Ethical Framework VIRTUE & application to media; Discussion Post #2 (L-Z), due Sunday, 1/28/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 4 (Jan 29) Ethical Framework DUTY & application to media; Discussion Post #3 (A-K), due Sunday, 2/4/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 5 (Feb. 5) Ethical Framework UTILITARIANISM & application to media; Introduce MIDTERM assignment; Eportfolio refresher; Discussion Post #3 (L-Z), due Sunday, 2/11/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 6 (Feb. 12) Ethical Framework RELATIONSHIP & application to media; Discussion Post #4 (A-K), due 2/18/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 7 (Feb. 19) Catch Up
Week 8 (Feb. 26) Midterm Paper, A Movie and a Mentor, due Wednesday, 2/28/18, by 9 a.m.; Codes of Ethics; Discussion Post #4 (L-Z), due 3/4/18 @11:59 p.m.; Introduce FINAL GROUP PROJECT

Week 9 (March 5) Ethics & Law; First Eportfolio review due; Discussion Post #5 (A-K), due Sunday, 3/11/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 10 (March 12) SPRING BREAK/NO CLASS. Enjoy your time off

Week 11 (March 19) Issues in Media Ethics-Journalism; Discussion Post #5 (L-Z), due Sunday, 3/25/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 12 (March 26) Issues in Media Ethics-Visual Communication; Discussion Post #6 (A-K), due Sunday, 4/1/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 13 (April 2) Issues in Media Ethics-Advertising; Discussion Post #6 (L-Z), due Sunday, 4/8/18@11:59 p.m.

Week 14 (April 9) Issues in Media Ethics-Public Relations

Week 15 (April 16) Issues in Media Ethics-Online/New Media. Final Eportfolio with personal code of ethics due, Friday, April 20, 5 p.m.

Week 16 (April 23) Dead Week/Catch Up

Week 17 (April 30) Finals Week. JL MC Final is Wednesday, 5/2/18, 7:30-9:30 a.m. Group Presentations & Papers due 7:30 a.m. (No final exam)