

Conversations about Ethics: Philosophical, Professional and Personal
School of Continuing Studies: Georgetown University
MPPR 500-02
 Fall 2009 Syllabus

Instructor	Linda Y. Kelleher
Phone	703-346-9808 (cell) 703-527-1695 (evenings)
Email	lindaykelleher@gmail.com
Class Time	Mondays, 7:45 pm-9:45 pm (First class on Wednesday, Sep 2)
Location	Clarendon Campus, 3101 Wilson Blvd, Arlington
Term	Fall 2009
Office hours	By appointment
Teaching Assistant	Jackie Titus Jackie.titus@gmail.com (301)233-3683

Course Objectives

- To understand the concept of ethics from a personal and business perspective
- To understand how communication professionals, organizations and businesses/institutions make decisions about right and wrong actions
- To review case studies of ethical situations and examples to draw parallels for coursework
- To equip students with the ability to develop and defend ethical points of view while respecting the views of others
- To allow students to define, clarify and strengthen their values and ethical commitments

Course Description

This course will teach students to understand and evaluate ethical dilemmas, and defend decisions made in ethical situations. Students will understand basic principles of ethics and learn how to practically apply them in the communication field. This course will meet for 13 sessions beginning Wednesday, Sep 2 and ending Monday, Dec 7. Our class will review ethical philosophies, evaluate ethical situations in different areas of communications, and examine cases and hear from guest speakers to review real-life situations.

Students will leave the course with an increased knowledge and hands-on familiarity of the practical applications of ethics in the communication field and how their own personal ethics will help lead them to success.

Attendance

Attendance is critical to your success in this class. I will circulate an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class session and will begin class on time. In the event that you must miss class, please notify me as soon as possible. You will be allowed no more than two excused absences in the duration of this class, as long as you have made

arrangements with me before your absence. If you miss more than two classes, each class thereafter will result in the reduction of your grade by one-third letter (e.g. A to A-). Each un-excused absence will also affect your grade by one-third letter.

Contacting Me

I will not hold regular office hours, however I am available before or after class by appointment, as well as at other scheduled times during the week. The best way to reach me is by cell phone or gmail. I will do my best to get back to you within 24 hours. When you email assignments please send a copy to Jackie Titus.

Academic Resource Center

If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

Honor System

Students are expected to abide by the Georgetown University Honor System. If you have not already done so, please familiarize yourself with the material and information posted on the Honor Council's website:

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/hc/index.html>

Georgetown University Honor Pledge

"In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: to be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together."

Being Polite

Please arrive on time. The use of cell phones and blackberries in class is prohibited. Please turn these off before class starts. We will have a break during class where you can check messages. We will also on occasion, have guest speakers who will appreciate this as well. Regarding food, you are welcome to bring food or drink to the classroom.

Materials/ Required Texts

- Day, Louis Alvin. *Ethics in Media Communications*. (Wadsworth Group, 2005).
- Gower, Karla K. *Legal and Ethical Restraints on Public Relations* (Waveland Press, 2003).

Grading

Assignment	Date assigned	Date due	Grading value
First Case Analysis	Sep 14	Sep 21	10
Second Case Analysis	Sep 28	Oct 5	15
Group Project (paper)	Oct 5	Oct 12 (identify/ approval of teams and institution to Jackie.titus@gmail.com) Nov 9 (paper due) Nov 9 and Nov 16 (oral presentations)	20
Group Presentation (oral presentation)		Nov 9 and Nov 16	5
Final Project (paper and oral presentation)	Nov 9	Nov 23 (paper due) Nov 23 and 30 (oral presentations)	35
Peer Evaluation		Nov 16	10
Class Participation			5
TOTAL POINTS			100

Assignments

There are four writing assignments for this class. Your assignments should meet Georgetown University's standard of excellence. Please follow these guidelines for your work:

- Student name, course numbers and assignment title in the top left of the page
- Use 12 point font and 1 inch margins
- Double spaced work
- Adhere to APA rules (<http://www.apastyle.org/>)
- SPELL CHECK. **Three misspelling or grammatical errors and the grade will drop.**
- Bring one hard copy of your assignment to class the day it is due and email a soft copy me by 11:59 p.m. the day the assignment is due; please copy Jackie Titus on these emails. (Note: I will use the hard copy delivered in class to grade.)
- **Late work will not be accepted.**

Assignment #1	Date assigned	Date due	Grading value
First Case Analysis	Sep 14	Sep 21	10

This will be a 2-4 page paper outlines what has helped impact your ethics, what adjectives you would use to describe your personal ethics and assess what friends, family and co-workers would say about your ethics.

Assignment #2	Date assigned	Date due	Grading value
Second Case Analysis	Sep 28	Oct 5	15

This 2-4 page analysis compares and contrasts two professional association codes of ethics (i.e. IABC, PRSA, Arthur Page, AMA, NIRI). You will be asked to sign up for specific codes of ethics for this assignment. Codes that we did not discuss in class must be approved by me before the paper is due.

Assignment #3	Date assigned	Date due	Grading value
Group Project (paper)	Oct 5	Oct 12 (identify/ approval of teams and institution to Jackie.titus@gmail.com) Nov 9 (paper due) Nov 9 and Nov 16 (oral presentations)	20
Group Presentation (oral presentation)		Nov 9 and Nov 16	5
Peer Evaluation		Nov 16	10

This Group project combines teamwork on a written paper and oral presentation and gives your colleagues an opportunity to weigh in with a peer evaluation. A significant portion of your grade is based on each of these three components. Each team of 4-5 students first selects an internal or external ethics program from a corporation, government institution or an association. Teams work collaboratively on a 12-15 page analysis of the code of ethics for the approved organization. Papers need to site at least three sources. Each group of 4-5 will be required to give a 10-minute presentation highlighting the organization and code of ethics. These oral presentations will be on weeks #9 and #10.

Assignment #4	Date assigned	Date due	Grading value
Final Project (paper and oral presentation)	Nov 9	Nov 23 (paper due) Nov 23 and 30 (oral presentations)	35

The final project consists of a 10-15 page paper outlining your personal ethics code. It should be written in the format of an ethics code (sample to be provided). This code will become the cornerstone of your personal ethos and will be used in the capstone course. A portion of the grade is based on the three-to-five-minute oral presentation on Nov 23 and 30. You will need to site at least three sources in the paper.

Team Work

Your team members will be asked to evaluate you on Nov 16 on the final project. An evaluation sheet will be provided in class.

Class Participation

To gain the full benefit of this class, your attention and active participation is critical. While I will provide topics and materials for discussion each week, I encourage and recommend active dialogue. Our class will be a two-way conversation where learning occurs through the readings, the materials presented and also through your own

contributions to the class. This includes participating in class discussion, in working groups as determined and in the weekly news presentations.

Bonus Points

There is an opportunity to earn bonus points by identifying ethical situations in current events. For 10 minutes each class, we will discuss current ethical situations that have been in the news. To qualify for bonus points, turn in one copy of the ethics article to me at the beginning of class with your name on it. Be prepared to introduce the situation with a brief summary during discussion time. You will receive up to 5 bonus points.

Schedule

<p>Week 1 Sep 2</p>	<p>Goal: Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Introductions • Overview of Syllabus and course • Materials review • What are ethics? • 10-minute update – Every class, first 10 minutes open discussion on ethical situations arising in the media that week
<p>Week 2 Sep 14</p>	<p>Goal: Understand basic ethical philosophy</p> <p>Guest speaker: John A. Reuscher, Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Philosophy Department, Georgetown University</p> <p>Philosophical overview, may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden Mean • Utilitarianism • Absolutism / deontological ethics • Situational ethics • Enlightened self-interest • Relativist / teleological ethics • Golden Rule • Veil of Ignorance • Principled reasoning <p>Reading due: <i>Legal and Ethical Restraints on PR</i> (Chapter 1) <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Chapter 1 and 3)</p> <p>Assignment #1: First Case Analysis assigned (due Sep 21)</p>
<p>Week 3 Sep 21</p>	<p>Goal: Understand differences between values, personal, professional and cultural</p> <p>Guest speaker: Denise Keyes, Associate Dean, Master of Professional Studies in Public Relations and Corporate Communication, School of Continuing Studies, Georgetown University</p> <p>Georgetown's view on ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs, ethics • Personal values • Cultural values • Organizational values • What makes our perspectives different? <p>Discussion and in class exercise: Google Code of Ethics</p> <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Chapters 2)</p> <p>Assignment#1: First Case Analysis due</p>

<p>Week 4 Sep 28</p>	<p>Goal: Role of ethics in business today</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Corporate Ethics Officer (invited)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal of corporate conscience • Roles, responsibilities and audiences • Recognizing and resolving conflicts of interest • Corporate social responsibility <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Chapter 7, 8)</p> <p>Assignment #2: Second Case Analysis assigned (due Oct 5)</p>
<p>Week 5 Oct 5</p>	<p>Goal: Review professional codes; understand relationship to personal beliefs</p> <p>Guest speakers: Representatives from professional associations (invited) Judith Muhlenberg, Member, The Arthur Page Society Tomeka Rawlings, President, Washington, DC chapter, IABC Gwen Walcoff, Ethics Chair, National Capital Chapter, PRSA Elizabeth Corse, President, Capital Area Chapter President, NIRI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics in public relations • Review Codes of Ethics from these organizations • Understand common elements/themes • Understand protocol for handling ethical dilemmas <p>Reading due: PRSA, IABC, Arthur Page, NIRI, AMA Code of Ethics (online) <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Appendix 1, 2, 3)</p> <p>Assignment #2: Second Case Analysis due Assignment #3: Introduction to Group Project (Teams and institutions due via email to jackie.titus@gmail.com by 9 am on Oct 12.)</p>
<p>Week 6 Oct 19</p>	<p>Goal: Understand of communications law</p> <p>Guest speaker: Bruce D. Brown, Instructor, Masters of Professional Studies in Journalism, Georgetown University and Partner, Baker and Hostetler</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First amendment • Communications law – advertising, copyright • Lobbying laws, FCC, SEC, SOX <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Chapter 5 and 12) <i>Legal and Ethical Restraints on PR</i> (Chapter 2, 3, 4, 5)</p> <p>In class exercise</p> <p>Assignment #3: Continue to work on Group Project</p>

<p>Week 7 Oct 26</p>	<p>Goal: Understand media relations and journalist's ethics</p> <p>Guest speakers: Panel of journalists (invited): Alicia C. Shepherd, Ombudsman, NPR and Instructor, Media Ethics, Georgetown University Susan Squires, Senior Vice President, Powell Tate and former <i>Washington Post</i> reporter Ann Roosevelt, <i>Defense Daily</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media ethics • Ethics and journalism • Case studies of ethical dilemmas in media relations (i.e. military, healthcare) • Important considerations for public relations officers <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Chapter 4, 6, 8-12)</p> <p>Assignment #3: Continue to work on Group Project</p>
<p>Week 8 Nov 2</p>	<p>Goal: Understand ethical implications in public relations, public affairs, community relations and corporate communications</p> <p>Guest speaker: Public relations, corporate communications panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the company/organization responsible for? • What is the role of public relations and corporate communications? • Review and analyze classic case examples: Bhopal, Exxon, Enron, Chinese milk scandal, Tylenol <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Communications</i> (review Chapter 8)</p> <p>In class exercise</p> <p>Assignment #3: Continue to work on Group Project</p>
<p>Week 9 Nov 9</p>	<p>Goal: Understand ethical implications in financial communications and investor relations</p> <p>Guest speaker: Investor relations, financial communications panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEC regulations governing financial disclosure • Role and relationship of the media, investors and financial communications • What's an Insider? What can you say to family and friends? <p>Reading due: <i>Legal and Ethical Restraints</i> (Review Chapter 3)</p> <p>Assignment #3: Group Project -- Papers due; oral presentations begin</p> <p>Assignment #4: Final Project assigned (due Nov 23)</p>

<p>Week 10 Nov 16</p>	<p>Goal: Understand ethical implications in corporate marketing, advertising and promotion</p> <p>Guest speaker: Marketing manager panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising and marketing • Ethics in promotion • How are the rules changing • Case study – when marketing has gone too far <p>Reading due: <i>Ethics in Media Communications</i> (Review Chapter 10-13)</p> <p>Assignment #3: Group Project -- Oral presentations continue and Peer Evaluation completed in class</p>
<p>Week 11 Nov 23</p>	<p>Goal: Understand rules and ethics in lobbying and government relations</p> <p>Guest speaker: Lobbyist panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying ethics • Government relations • Identifying conflicts of interest • What, when, how to disclose <p>Reading due: <i>Legal and Ethical Restraints on Public Relations</i> (Review Chapter 3)</p> <p>Assignment #4: Final Project – Papers due; oral presentations begin</p>
<p>Week 12 Nov 30</p>	<p>Goal: Bringing it all together – Discussing Business Performance and Ethics</p> <p>Guest speaker: Allison Barber, President, Sodenta and Instructor, School of Continuing Studies, Georgetown University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business performance and ethics: do they go hand in hand? • The importance of internal communication • Introduction to capstone course <p>Assignment #4: Final project – Oral presentations continue</p>
<p>Week 13 Dec 7</p>	<p>Goal: Bringing it all together – Putting Your Ethics to the Test</p> <p>In class exercise</p>