

SYLLABUS: COMM 411 – 201 Strategic Communication Ethics and Law (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

SPRING 2020: Loyola University Chicago, School of Communications

Class Location: Corboy Law Center - Room 203

Day/Time: Mo 7:00PM - 9:30PM

Adj. Prof. Eric Bryn - ebryn@luc.edu ; 312-399-3408 (text/call)

Office Hours: Mondays, after class (or text/call to set up an appointment)

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. Enrollment is limited to students in the GSCM-MS Program.

Outcomes: Students will have learned fundamental ethical principles and decision-making processes, examined some of the most pressing ethical issues facing strategic communicators and applied course material to specific strategic communication decisions.

Textbooks & Supplementary Material

Please check with the Loyola bookstore to purchase these textbooks, particularly the *First Amendment, Fifth Edition* textbook.

The First Amendment, Fifth Edition

- Geoffrey R. Stone, Louis Michael Seidman, Cass R. Sunstein, Mark V. Tushnet, Pamela S. Karlan
- ISBN: 9781454868248
- <https://www.wklegaledu.com/Stone-FirstAmendment5>

Ethical Decision-Making: Cases in Organization and Leadership

- Patricia A. Mitchell
- ISBN-13: 978-1975500825
- ISBN-10: 1975500822
- https://www.amazon.com/Ethical-Decision-Making-Cases-Organization-Leadership-ebook/dp/B07VQ97FY6/ref=mp_s_a_1_3

Additional material assigned weekly

Grading

Your grade for **COMM 411 – 201** takes into account your **Class Participation, four (4) Reaction Papers**, and a **Final Position Paper (which functions as your FINAL EXAM)**. Grading is based on a points system. There are 400 total points available.

Grade Point System (Rounded up at .5 and up)			
A = 371-400	B = 333-346	C = 288-306	D = 251-266
A- = 360-370	B- = 320-332	C- = 277-287	D- = 240-250
B+ = 347-359	C+ = 307-319	D+ = 267-276	F=239 and below

Specific grading breakdowns are below:

Class participation

Class participation, 100 points (25%)

At the beginning of the semester you are given full credit for class participation; that is, you already have been allocated 100 points. To keep this point total, you must participate in class discussions and come to class prepared to participate in these discussions. I teach in a Socratic method; as such, if I call on you during class and you are not prepared to answer the questions I pose to you and/or you do not participate in a discussion based on any assignments, I will debit you 10 points from the original 100 points for not being prepared. Class participation is necessary for the success of the class. You are expected to prepare for each class as indicated by completing the required assignments, and any additional work as specified, prior to class, and come to class prepared to discuss these assignments.

Reaction Papers

Reaction Paper (“Papers”), 140 points (35%)

You are required to submit four (4) Reaction Papers about relevant reading assignments, lectures, class discussions, and material (collectively “source material”) as assigned in response to a challenge question. Each Paper is worth thirty-five (35) points. I am not interested in a summary of the source material. Rather, I am interested in what you think about the source material, how these assignments apply and/or relate to the broader themes of the class discussion and topics, etc. Each Paper is due by 5:00 PM CST each Monday before the scheduled class. Each Paper should be at least 400 words. You submit your Reaction Paper via Sakai.

Grading for Reaction Papers is as follows:

Criteria	(26-35 points) Outstanding	(16-25 points) Proficient	(6-15 points) Basic	(0-5 points) Below Expectations
Argument	Fully responds to the questions and/or addresses all topics thoroughly; provides thoughtful and well developed analysis; chooses pertinent, specific examples from the source material to support ideas.	Responds to the questions and/or addresses all topics without fully developing answers; provides substantial analysis; uses appropriate, specific examples from the source material to support ideas.	Responds to some of the questions and/or topics; analysis is thin or commonplace; supporting specific examples are lacking or missing.	Response to questions/topics is incomplete or missing; rudimentary and superficial analysis; examples are missing or lacking; comments are speculative and unsupported.
Critical Thinking	Offers original and concrete ideas; interpretations are well supported; insightful and clear connections are made within and among source material; demonstrates in-depth understanding of source material.	Offers original ideas and/or connections but they lack depth and/or detail; demonstrates accurate understanding of the readings.	Few, if any new ideas or connections; uses vague generalities, rehash or summarize other postings; shows basic understanding of the readings.	No submissions, or shows inaccurate or superficial understanding of the source material.

Position Paper (FINAL EXAM PAPER)

Position Paper, 160 points (40%)

The Position Paper relates to the topics discussed during lectures, assigned reading, and additional class assignments. The Position Paper will be in response to a challenge question. The Position Paper will function as the Final for this class. I will not accept the Position Paper past the due date. If you submit this Position Paper late, you will NOT receive a grade on this Position Paper. To receive full credit, your Paper must address the following:

- Discuss the topic in relation to the required reading, lectures, and assignments (“Class Material”)

- Develop and support an original argument in regard to the topic
- Include relevant scholarly sources with proper citations and documentation
- Be a minimum of 1500 words in length
- Be free of spelling mistakes and errors in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure and mechanics
- Adhere to the elements of a Position Paper as described below

Elements of a Position Paper

Structure

Your Position Paper should include a beginning (introduction), middle (body), and end (conclusion). The introduction should engage the reader, present the topic, and state your thesis. Your thesis is the controlling idea of your Position Paper that will be supported with explanation and evidence in the body of the Position Paper.

The body should be comprised of coherent and well-developed paragraphs. Each paragraph should be unified by a clear topic sentence that supports the Position Paper's thesis. The topic sentence expresses the one main idea/point of the paragraph, and all other points and details in the paragraph should relate specifically to this main idea. The ideas in your paragraphs should be developed by using strong, specific supporting examples from the Class Material. Each paragraph should be ordered in a logical sequence, and transitions from one paragraph to another should be used to ensure coherence.

The conclusion should be interesting and memorable, offer some closing reflections or insights related to the topic, and not merely repeat the introduction using other words.

Writing a Thesis Statement

The strongest thesis is one that is as specific and narrowly focused as possible. Keep in mind that a thesis statement is also the statement of your particular argument on an issue. So it will be helpful to formulate your thesis in terms of defining and taking your stance on the topic you are analyzing. It's helpful to think about your thesis as the "conclusion" you've reached as a result of writing about your topic, only one that you present at the beginning of your paper. Then, the rest of your Position Paper explains how you reached that conclusion.

Use of Sources

Your Position Paper should include specific examples from the primary sources (the Class Material) as well as supporting research from secondary sources (information or interpretations about the Class Material).

Your secondary source(s) should be scholarly works and should be used to support and expand upon your own argument or interpretations or serve as a counter argument or interpretation with which you disagree, to help you better prove your own.

You should use the MLA style for citing and documenting sources. When quoting or paraphrasing a specific passage from the primary or secondary sources, put the page number

or website in parenthesis following the quotation or paraphrase according to MLA style, and provide full documentation of the sources at the end of the paper in a Works Cited page.

This grading breakdown is subject to rules and policies as specified by Loyola University Chicago and the Dean of the School of Communications and, thus, is subject to change as necessary.

Classroom Demeanor

Please treat this class like any professional commitment and attend and actively participate in every class session. Missing class, frequent late arrivals, and leaving early will lower your grade because you will miss valuable content. Quizzes and in-class assignments may be given without prior notice. You are not permitted to make up in-class work.

Conduct yourself courteously in class, which includes refraining from distracting and disruptive behaviors such as texting or talking (to each other or on the phone) during lectures, eating, arriving late or leaving early. Additionally, given the nature of the class subject matter it's not inconceivable to encounter vulgarity and other adult content, and the expectation is for you discuss such content appropriately and responsibly.

You are expected to conduct yourselves in accordance with Loyola University's Academic Integrity Standards (http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml) and the School of Communication Academic Integrity Standards (<https://www.luc.edu/soc/academicintegrity/>). I have included the School of Communication Academic Integrity Standards below:

Academic Integrity

Statement on 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.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The office of the Dean of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances. The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

(The School of Communication policy is based entirely on and is consistent with the Academic Integrity Policy of the College of Arts & Sciences.)

If you are a student with special needs such as those covered under the Americans With Disabilities Act, please contact me early in the semester and immediately get in touch with Loyola University Chicago Services for Students with Disabilities (<http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>).

COURSE LECTURE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Monday, January 13

Overview: Ethics & Ethical Decision making

Overview: First Amendment of the United States Constitution and key provisions and underlying theories of the United States Constitution

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 1.8: pp. 23 – 27

Monday, January 20

Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday, No classes

Monday, January 27

First Amendment & Content Based Restrictions

Overview: Legal decision making and its nexus with ethical decision making

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 3 to 111

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 2.1: pp. 46 – 48

Monday, Feb 3

Video or Podcast review and Q&A

Assignment 1: Reaction Paper 1 (35 pts)

Monday, Feb 10

First Amendment & Content Based Restrictions

Social Media and Free Expression

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 3 to 111, cont'd

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 2.5: pp. 60 – 64

Monday, Feb 17

First Amendment & Overbreadth, Vagueness, and Prior Restraint

Social Media: Privacy, terms of use, and decision making

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 113 to 138

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 3.1: pp. 73 – 76

Monday, Feb 24

First Amendment: Defamation, Commercial Speech, Obscenity

Twitter: Cracking down?

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 139 to 279

Assignment 2: Reaction Paper 2 (35 pts)

Monday, March 2 to Friday March 7

Spring Break, No class

Monday, March 9

First Amendment: Defamation, Commercial Speech, Obscenity

YouTube: Cracking down?

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 139 to 279

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 3.7: pp. 90 – 92

Group Project Assignment

Monday, March 16

Video or Podcast review and Q&A

Assignment 3: Reaction Paper 3 (35 pts)

Monday, March 23

First Amendment: Content Neutral Restrictions

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 281 to 340

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 4.1: pp. 101 – 102

Monday, March 30

First Amendment: Content Neutral Restrictions

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 340 to 383

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 4.3: pp. 106 – 108

Monday, April 6

First Amendment: Content Neutral Restrictions (emphasis on *Citizens United*)

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 383 to 412

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 4.5: pp. 113 - 115

Monday, April 13

First Amendment: Restricted Environments

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 431 to 520

Reading: EDM Textbook case study 5.5: pp. 135 – 137

Assignment 4: Group project work due (35 pts)

Monday, April 20

First Amendment: Restricted Environments

Reading: The First Amendment textbook, pp. 431 to 520, and pp. 541 to 626

Monday, April 27

Final Examination (160 pts)