

McDaniel College Budapest
ENG 2205
Media Ethics

Structured Course Outlines and Course Policies

Professor: Dr. Róka Jolán

Contact information:
jroka@metropolitan.hu

Availability:
on request

Required Texts

A.D. Gordon, J.M Kittross,
J.C. Merrill, W.A. Babcock, M.Dorsher (2011): Controversies in Media Ethics. Routledge

Course Overview

This course is designed to discuss important ethical issues faced by journalists every day. It also gives an introduction to various ethical guidelines used by different news organizations and professional groups. We will also think about the broader ethical issues raised by a rapidly changing media landscape (think Facebook, Twitter, etc) and the growing influence of large advertisers over a shrinking number of newspapers and other mainstream media organizations.

Assignments, Grading, Policies

(10 %) **Attendance, Assignments:** class will be conducted in the form of discussion of the readings required from class to class. The students' attendance is essential, more than three absences will result in less final grading points (unless the student has excused reason for absence). The students are expected to prepare written home assignments on a regular base. Assignments are due at the beginning of each class. Late assignments result in a full letter grade deduction.

(30 %) **Mid-term Examination:** definition, short answer, essay questions covering all textbook reading, lectures, handouts.

(20 %) **Research Paper:** a 6--8 page (double spaced) research paper analysing historical or current issues of mass media functioning or the impact of mediated messages on the consumers.

(10 %) **Oral Presentation:** A short presentation of the content of the research paper using illustrative materials.

(30 %) **Final Examination:** Similar to the mid-term test.

Plagiarism: the students has to be familiar with the term "PLAGIARISM" and with its consequences.

Schedule
(The main topics discussed in classes)

1. Course introduction: What are ethics? Is ethical journalism possible? Ideals vs reality. Ethics vs laws
State of journalism
2. Video: Absence of Malice
3. Theoretical foundations for media ethics
Reading: Controversies, Chapter Overview
4. Ethics and freedom. Mass media accountability
Reading: Controversies, Chapter 1.
5. Individual values, social pressures, and conflicting loyalties
Reading: Chapter 2.
6. Midterm exam
7. Videos: Hate speech, Dangerous speech, Journalists go to jail (By Freedom Forum)
8. Gatekeepers and manipulators
Reading: Controversies, Chapter 3.
Video: The Network
9. Codes of ethics (Bloggers "codes", Journalism codes, Video news releases defy codes, Public relations codes, Advertising codes)
Reading: Controversies, Chapter 5.
10. New technologies and techniques: new ethics? Digitally manipulated content
Reading: Controversies, Chapters 6-7.
11. The ethics of persuasive communication
Video: All the President's Men
Reading: Controversies, Chapter 11.
12. Final exam

Note: Some additional readings will be distributed by the instructor on course related issues/topics and illustrative materials will also be used (video spots, movies).