Senior Seminar

CM4900.02 CRN: 30406

Spring 2013

Plymouth State University

Communication and Media Studies

**Instructor**: Dr. Annette M. Holba

**Office**: Hyde 129A

**Phone**: 535-2856

**Office Hours**: Monday Wednesday 12:00-2:00pm

And by appointment

**Email**: aholba@plymouth.edu

**Text Book**: *Communicating Ethically* by William Neher and Paul Sandin

(ISBN: 0-205-39363-2)

**Meeting Time and Place**: MW 2:30-3:45pm Hyde Hall 115

**Course Description**

Provides students with the opportunity to reflect upon their major coursework in order to connect theory and application in preparation for their entry into the workforce. Focuses on applying ethical frameworks, including deontology and utilitarianism, to a variety of case studies related to interpersonal, group and organizational communication and to personal and professional consumption and production of media.

**Course Objectives**

By the completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify and articulate the importance, relevance and pervasiveness of ethics in human communication in public, private, and mediated environments.
2. Describe and differentiate three to five communication and media ethics frameworks, including deontology and utilitarianism.
3. Apply three to five communication and media ethics frameworks to contemporary practices through a case study approach to real world situations in public, private, and mediated contexts.
4. Develop and verbally articulate a personal view on basic ethical issues, including untruthful communication, intentional ambiguity, the standard of rationality, ethical responsibilities for listeners, etc., in public, private, and mediated environments.
5. Actively engage and verbally participate in group discussion related to issues of current interest and controversy in communication and media ethics.
6. Identify, apply, and analyze appropriate communication and media ethics frameworks.
7. Engage in an active job search, using current best practices.

**Evaluation**

* **Participation** (**5pts per class X 30classes**) **150pts**
  + This course will be run as a seminar which means that it will focus on discussion. The success of the course requires the full attention and participation of everyone in the course so be sure to come to class prepared and ready to talk.
  + See the statement about participation on Moodle
* **5 sets of questions about reading** **10pts each** **50pts**
  + You will develop 3 questions about the reading before class. These questions will be posted on Moodle and you will bring them to class, ready to raise them at the appropriate time during the discussion.
  + These questions may be things about the reading that you do not understand. Alternatively, they may raise issues that you find to be particularly important in understanding the reading.
  + Note that there are 6 opportunities to post questions about the reading but the lowest grade on these questions will be dropped
  + The questions must be posted on Moodle **BEFORE** the start of class. No late questions will be accepted.
* **Midterm exam** **100pts**
  + The midterm exam will cover chapters 1-5 of *Communicating Ethically*.
  + A make-up exams will be provided ONLY under the following conditions:
    - You notify me BEFORE the exam that you must miss the exam; AND
    - You provide documentation indicating that missing the exam was unavoidable; AND
    - You take the make-up exam as soon as is reasonably possible, preferably before the next class period.
* **Communication and Media Ethics paper** **100pts**
  + The details of this paper will be handed out in class.
  + Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 10% per day (including non-class days).
* **Your Résumé and the Job Search 75 pts**
  + **There are three parts to this assignment**
    - **Personal skills assessment 25/75 due Monday April 1**
    - **Résumé/cover letter draft 25/75 due Wednesday April 3**
    - **Final résumé/cover letter 25/75 due Monday April 29**
      * **The résumé and cover letter needs to be targeted to a particular company you think you want to work for (for real or hypothetically). You will need to do some homework on the company and assessment their business in general and their particular needs in order to write a targeted cover letter and appropriate résumé.**
* **Personal code of ethics** **250pts**
  + The development of a personal code of ethics will be a main focus of the semester.
  + The development of this code will be broken into steps, each of which will be worth a portion of the total 250 points.
  + Missing the deadline for any of the steps in the development of the personal code of ethics will result in a 10% per day penalty (including non-class days).
  + The details of the assignment will be handed out in class.
* **Practice final exam** **25pts**
  + The practice final exam will allow you to practice the skills required for the final exam. If you miss class this day, you forfeit these points.
* **Final exam** **100pts**
  + The final exam will allow you to demonstrate that you understand how to apply your personal code of ethics to actual communicative situations.
  + The exam will be in-class during the final exam period for the course.
  + A make-up exams will be provided ONLY under the following conditions:
    - You notify me BEFORE the exam that you must miss the exam; AND
    - You provide documentation indicating that missing the exam was unavoidable; AND
    - You take the make-up exam as soon as is reasonably possible, preferably before the next class period.

**Grade Scale**

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

* 800-850 - A
* 765-799 - A-
* 731-764 - B+
* 715-730 - B
* 680-714 - B-
* 665-679 - C+
* 625-664 - C
* 595-624 - C-
* 570-594 - D+
* 540-569 - D
* 510-539 - D-
* below 510 - F

**Tentative Schedule** (Reading assignments are in *Communicating Ethically* unless otherwise indicated)

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| Date | Topic | Assignment Due |
| Mon  Jan 28 | Introduction to the Senior Seminar |  |
| Wed  Jan 30 | Personal Code of Ethics  Discussion of Chapter 1 | Read Chapter 1 |
| Mon  Feb 4 | Chapter 2: Character in Ethics | * Read Chapter 2 * Post 3 questions about the reading online (and bring those questions to class!) |
| Wed  Feb 6 | Character in Ethics | Continue Chapter 2 discussion |
| Mon  Feb 11 | Chapter 3: Duties in Ethics | * Read Chapter 3 * Post 3 questions about the reading online (and bring those questions to class!) |
| Wednesday February 13, 2013 is Winter Carnival – No Day Classes | | |
| Mon  Feb18 | Duties in Ethics | Continue Chapter 3 discussion |
| Wed  Feb 20 | Chapter 4: Consequences in Ethics | * Read Chapter 4 * Post 3 questions about the reading online (and bring those questions to class!) |
| Mon  Feb 25 | Consequences in Ethics | Continue Chapter 4 discussion |
| Wed  Feb 27 | Synthesize Character (Virtue Ethics), Duty Ethics (Deontological Ethics), and Consequentialism(s) (Consequentialist Ethics) | **We will also discuss part 1 of the PCoE. You should be thinking about this part and already freewriting part 1.** |
| Mon  March 4 | Chapter 5: Relationships and Ethics | * Read Chapter 5 * Post 3 questions about the reading online * (and bring those questions to class!) |
| Wed  March 6 | Relationships and Ethics | Continue Chapter 5 discussion |
| Mon  March 11 | Personal Code of Ethics Revisited | * **First draft of personal code of ethics is due** * Exam Review - Recapping chapters 1-5 |
| Wed  March 13 | Midterm | Study for the exam!!! |
| SPRING BREAK NO CLASSES | | |
| Mon  March 25 | Consequentialism and Dialogic Ethics Revisited | * Read *Utilitarianism in Media Ethics* (on Moodle) * Post three 3 questions and bring them to class! |
| Wed  March 27 | Consequentialism and Dialogic Ethics revisted…..continued | Continue article discussion  Get ready for your Resume! Develop a personal skills inventory for next class. |
| Mon  April 1 | Discussion on resumes, interviewing, your job search, a personal skills inventory, and how to market yourself ethically | Create a **Personal Skills Inventory and bring to THIS Class**.  Use this to prepare a resume draft for next class. |
| Wed  April 3 | Reviewing resumes  Job interviews | **Resume drafts due online prior to class**. Bring two hard copies to class.  Discussion about job interviews |
| Mon  April 8 | Chapter 6: Contemporary Challenges to Ethics | * Read Chapter 6 * Post 3 questions and bring them to class |
| Wed  April 10 | Contemporary Challenges to Ethics | * **Paper on comm and media ethics is due - Discussion** * Continue Chapter 6 discussion |
| Mon  April 15 | Personal Code of Ethics Revisited | **Second part of personal code of ethics is due**  **Peer review in class** |
| Wed  April 17 | Catching up and reconsidering | Returning your personal code of ethics |
| Mon  April 22 |  |  |
| Wed  April 24 | Interpersonal Communication and Ethics | * Read Chapter 7 & Discussion |
| Mon  April 29 | Resumes, the job search, and ethics  Thinking about the job interview | **Final version of resume is due** |
| Wed  May 1 | The Job interview | **Final draft of personal code of ethics is due**  **Class self reflection and discussion** |
| Mon  May 6 | Using the Personal Code of Ethics | Personal Code of Ethics practice exam |
| Wed  May 8 | Exam Review and other housekeeping |  |
| **Final Exam Monday May 13, 2013 at 2:30pm-5:00pm Hyde 115** | | |

**Attendance**

The penalty for missing class is that the student cannot receive participation points for that day. There will be no exceptions to that rule. Missing class on the day that an assignment is due does not excuse you from the assignment. If you do not post the assignment on Moodle BEFORE the beginning of the class period, you will receive the appropriate late penalties. See above for the rules that apply to missing an exam. Missing a substantial number of classes, whether excused or not, may result in automatic failure of the course since you will be missing the most important part of any seminar—the discussion!

**ADA Statement**

Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should immediately contact the PASS Office in Lamson Library (535-2270) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with the PASS Office. If you have a Letter of Accommodation for this course from the PASS Office, please provide the instructor with that information privately so that you and the instructor can review those accommodations.

**Academic Integrity**

* Please read the following statement of departmental policy very carefully: The work you submit in this course must be your own. Whenever possible, it is preferred that students paraphrase/explain key concepts in their own words and cite the original source material appropriately. However, if you include four or more consecutive words directly from any source, be certain to surround them with quotation marks, and to properly cite the source and page number. Plagiarism, however unintentionally it may occur, is a serious violation of academic integrity. A student who is found to have plagiarized on any assignment should expect to receive a failing grade for the entire course. There are no exceptions to this policy.
* From the Plymouth State University Academic Catalog: "Violation of academic integrity includes any act which portrays a member of the academic community as having acquired knowledge through legitimate study or research which, in fact, has been stolen. Violation of academic integrity includes also any act which gains one member of the academic community an unfair advantage over another. This includes any act hindering the academic accomplishment of another." I will pursue violations of academic integrity to the fullest extent possible. Any student who has questions about what constitutes such violations is encouraged to consult the Academic Catalog and/or discuss the issue with me.