

Dr. Terry Carter
Southern Polytechnic State University
Department of Humanities and Technical Communication
TCOM 2150 Ethics and Communication
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: Tues. 12-1PM
Thurs. 2:15-3:15 by Appointment Only
Wed. and Other Times by Appointment

TEXTS and REQUIREMENTS

Christian, Clifford, Kim Rotzoll, Mark Fackler, Kathy Brittain McKee, Peggy J. Kreshel, Robert Woods.
Media Ethics: Cases and Moral Reasoning (8th edition--2009; ISBN-10: 0205579701)

Additional Readings: Relevant articles or book chapters will be placed on Library Reserve and E-Reserve. You will be required to make copies of these readings.

Additional Course Materials:

- **Letter Size Manila Folders**
- **Photocopies of Selected Writings**
- **Access to computer**
- 2 computer disks (IBM Formatted)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class we will explore the theoretical and practical dimensions of ethics and communication. The course will focus on analysis of relevant case studies in fields of communication. Emphasis will be placed on critical reading, writing and thinking. Comprehension of ethical issues in case studies and other readings will be demonstrated through completion of weekly writing assignments, formal and informal written examinations, research reports, and active class participation.

OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen awareness of current ethics and communication case studies
- Increase ability to identify ethical dilemmas in particular case studies relevant to communication
- Increase ability to apply ethical theories as solutions to problematic communication situations
- Provide opportunities to improve analytical skills relative to ethical dilemmas in communication
- Improve ability to articulate rational responses to problematic ethical communication scenarios
- Provide space for building a community of learners through common readings and classroom interaction

LEARNING OUTCOMES (UCC APPROVAL APRIL 2009)

- Demonstrate awareness of current ethics and communication case studies
- Identify ethical theories for contextualizing ethical dilemmas in written case studies
- Identify ethical dilemmas in particular case studies relevant to communication
- Apply ethical theories to problematic ethical communication scenarios

ASSESSMENT: COURSE GRADING COMPONENTS

Course grade will be determined as follows:

Research Project	15%
Weekly Journal Writings	15%
Participation	20%
Major Examination (s)	50%
Total	100%

Research Projects will deal with subject matter that you choose and that I approve. If your project does not seem feasible or appropriate for this course, then I will respectfully require you to consider an alternative topic of your own choosing. Each of your projects must include outside research that will need to be documented in proper MLA or APA format. Your writing projects will receive a letter grade and number grade. Grade Scale: 100-90 points =A; 89-80= B; 79-70= C; 69-60 =D; 59-0 = F.

For students enrolled as TCOM majors, you might consider a project that you will be able to use in your TCOM Project Portfolio at the end of your degree program.

Journal writings that I take up in class or require you to post to WebCT will receive one of the following evaluations marks in my grade book: Check Plus (Excellent Work and Engaging) Check (Satisfactory Work and Engaging), Check Minus (Needs Improvement and/or Lacks Engagement), and Zero (Unacceptable Work). Based on the overall quality of your journals, I will assign you a number grade between 0-100 (see Grade Scale above) at the end of the course.

Your journal writings are for sharing ideas and concerns with your instructor and peers. I will often ask you to read your journal writings aloud. The purpose of your journals will also be to provide you with ideas for writing assignments. I want you to write about ideas or questions that come up during your readings or writing assignments.

Journal writings in this course are in essence tools for learning and discovery; much of what you read and respond to will require you to think about the interrelatedness between reading, thinking, and writing. Your journal writings will allow you to make sense of the readings and other topics from your own perspective and understanding. I would argue that the majority of what you learn in this course will develop from your own writings that attempt to make meaning out of what we read and discuss in class. I cannot stress enough the importance of spending time to produce your journal writings for the members of this course who are your primary audience.

Each entry should be approximately 500 words or approximately 1.5 to 2 full pages (double-spaced and in MLA format) unless instructed otherwise. Although I will not be putting a letter grade on these entries on a daily basis, I want you to use this as an opportunity to continue developing your writing skills. In other words, take some time to draft, revise, proofread and edit your journal entries.

Participation will be partly based on a check mark system. For example, if you come to class on-time and participate, then you will receive a "Check." If you are late for class or fail to participate, then you will receive a "Check Minus." If you are absent, you automatically receive a "Zero." *Quizzes and other assigned writings* will affect your overall participation and will receive a letter/number grade (A-F or 0-100).

A final exam and/or a final writing assignment will be due during the final week of class or during the examination period to provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge that you gained during the session. **Poor performance or failure to complete a final exam or a final writing assignment will reduce your overall participation grade by as much as 15 percent.** A good performance and show of effort on the final exam or final writing assignment will ensure that you get the maximum percentage points for participation. Based on the quality of your participation, I will assign you a number grade between 0-100 (see Grade Scale above) at the end of the course.

Most of each class period will be devoted to writing that will assist you in completing your assigned essays and in becoming a better writer. During class you can expect to be reading and evaluating invention assignments as well as drafts of essays. When you are not writing, we will be discussing the assigned readings that will, hopefully, serve as a catalyst for writing ideas.

Since a great deal of writing, evaluation, and instruction will occur in class, attendance is extremely important. (*Everyone is expected to be present, on-time, attentive, prepared, and involved.*) More than **five absences** is **grounds for failure**. Excessive tardiness may result in a class absence and may affect your final course grade. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and make up the assignment(s). **Remember all work is due at the beginning of class or as specified; otherwise, it is late and may not be accepted or may adversely affect your grade for a particular assignment and your overall participation grade.**

THE ATTIC (Advising, Tutoring, Testing, International Student Center)

The ATTIC provides opportunities for individualized tutorial assistance to all Southern Polytechnic students. Academic assistants help students through the processes of invention, organization, writing, revising, and editing of essays and research papers. The ATTIC also offers Regents' Test preparation instruction (678-15-7244). The ATTIC maintains student academic enrichment as its primary mission and students should expect to work to improve their grammar and mechanics. Students should not expect an editorial or proofreading service.

The ATTIC encourages both student "drop-ins" and faculty referrals.
Room J-253 -- Phone: 678-915-7361

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own, including materials taken off the Internet. Students should consult the *Catalog* under Academic Regulations for a fuller explanation of this violation of Academic Honesty (53, 66). The penalty for plagiarism may be failure of the course or dismissal from the university. . Students also must abide by SPSU's Honor Code (<http://www.spsu.edu/honorcode>); acceptance and receipt of this syllabus represents agreement unless a student explicitly states otherwise.

FINAL EXAMINATION

A final examination may consist of an essay or several essay questions that allow you to make sense of your experience in this course.

Conferences

I will have a conference with each of you at some point during the session, and you are free to schedule a conference with me at any point during the session. In addition, I may require you to schedule a conference with our learning support service to work on specific writing skills.

Computer Issues: Storage Device, Conversion and Printing (First Three Listed Points Not Applicable for Online Sections)

Thumb Drive: You will need to Thumb Drive or file storage device to class with you for each class meeting. There is no hard-drive space on these computers so you can only save your work on a disk. Make sure that your disks are labeled with your name and course section.

Conversion: You will need to experiment in order to find the best conversion program in relation to the equipment you use out of class. To be safe, save all documents as a “Rich Text File” (RTF). You might lose formatting but at least you will have your text to bring back and forth. You might want to save your documents in several formats to find the best conversion.

Printing: It is your responsibility to print your homework outside of a class. We will use the printer occasionally for in-class writings and assignments but all homework is due in hard copy form before the start of each class period.

Paper Form: Make sure your papers are typed using 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. You should have **one-inch margins** and **a proper heading** on the first page. Your papers should have **an appropriate title and conform to MLA guidelines unless instructed otherwise. Please staple your papers together—upper left corner of the first page.**

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the counselor working with disabilities at 678-915-7244 as soon as possible to better insure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

*****Please note that you are responsible for preserving the original copies (with written responses from teacher or classmates) of all your work. Also, note that I reserve the right to make changes to the above policies and content of this syllabus as I deem necessary.**