

# COM411 – Strategic Communication Ethics and Law

## Syllabus - Spring 2019

**Instructor:** Mary M. Hills, ABC, Six Sigma, IABC Fellow, FRSA  
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219.613.8591 (text enabled)  
Office Hours: Before class and by appointment.

### Class Meetings

Class will meet in Maguire Hall, Room 401, on Mondays from 7 – 9:30 p.m., beginning on Monday, January 14, 2019. Consult the Course Schedule below for details.

### Required Course Texts and Resources

- Johnson, C. E. (2018). *Organizational ethics: A practical approach* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. ISBN-13: 9781506361758

Additional required course readings will be available on Sakai and/or handed out in class.

**Course Description:** This course explores various approaches to ethical decision-making and applying them to diverse aspects of strategic communication in professional settings. The course examines legal and regulatory aspect of diverse communication disciplines with a focus on the First Amendment. 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. The course examines applying abstract principles to specific cases in applied ethics (deductive approach) as well as using a bottom-up (inductive approach) in developing students' ethical decision-making skills. Students will gain knowledge of moral decision-making and begin exploring contemporary topics in strategic communication ethics, such as political communication, public relations, advertising, digital media, marketing and health communication as well as current legal cases. (*no prerequisite*)

### Course Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Obtain the course text.
- Review the syllabus for weekly reading and assignments.
- Prepare for weekly class meetings by completing the reading assignment for the week prior to the class meeting and checking Sakai for supplemental resources/handouts (slide deck) to access in class.
- Attend class and participate in class discussions and activities.
- Submit assignments to the instructor when due.

### Course Objectives (CO)

Students will be required to comprehend and demonstrate through class discussions, assignments and exams their grasp of the following:

- A. Develop individual and organizational ethics principles that inform decision-making.
- B. Demonstrate ethical communication practices in coursework and activities.
- C. Recognize U.S. laws/regulations impacting organizational communication.
- D. Examine current ethical and legal issues in organizational communication.
- E. Develop and evaluate positions in persuasive/argumentative content.

**Course Schedule** (Subject to change if necessary. Students will be notified of changes in advance.)

<b>Week</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Reading &amp; Assignments</b>
<b>1</b> January 14 CO A & D	<b>Course Intro</b> – legal vs. ethical, information cycle, decision making & decision points  <b>Individual Ethics</b>	<b>Johnson, Text Introduction, Chapters 1-3</b>  <b>Course Presentation/Paper Discussed</b>
<b>January 21</b>	<b>MLK Holiday</b>	<b>No Class</b>
<b>2</b> January 28 CO A & D	<b>Ethics in Organizational Exchanges</b> – org. culture, org. policies, processes & procedures	<b>Johnson, Chapters 4-6</b>  <b>Additional Readings</b>  <b>Assignment Due: Codes of Ethics Comparison</b>
<b>3</b> February 4 CO A & D	<b>Ethics in Global Society</b>	<b>Johnson, Chapters 11 &amp; 12</b>  <b>Additional Readings</b>
<b>4</b> February 11 CO A & D	<b>Ethics in Org. Groups</b>	<b>Johnson, Chapters 7-8</b>  <b>Additional Readings</b>
<b>5</b> February 18 CO B	<b>Ethics Practices</b>	<b>Johnson, Chapters 9 &amp; 10</b>  <b>Additional Readings</b>
<b>6</b> February 25 CO D	<b>Course Project - 1/1 Meetings</b>	<b>1/1 Meeting Prep</b>  <b>Case Research Report Due at noon on this day– glossary of terms, existing ethical/legal cases that impact topic/issue.</b>
<b>March 4</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>No class</b>
<b>7</b> March 11 <b>Online/On-Demand</b> CO C & D	<b>Intro to Communication Law</b> – organizational communication, building a case (evidence, witnesses)	<b>Assigned Readings</b>  <b>Assignment Due: First Amendment Paper</b>
<b>8</b> March 18	<b>Public &amp; Investor Relations</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>  <b>Speaker: Financial Communication</b> <b>Maryellen Thielen, APR, ABC, MBA</b>

CO C & D		<b>Forest Glen Communications, LLC</b>
<b>9</b> <b>March 25</b> CO C & D	<b>Marketing &amp; Advertising</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>
<b>10</b> <b>April 1</b> CO C & D	<b>Digital &amp; Intellectual Property</b>	<b>Assigned Readings</b>  <b>Guest Speaker: Social Media Liability</b> <b>Lisa A. Dreishmire   Attorney at Law</b> <b>Masuda, Funai, Eifert &amp; Mitchell, LTD.</b>
<b>11</b> <b>April 8</b> CO D	<b>Issue - Mock Trials</b>	<b>Course Presentations/Evaluation/Discussion</b>
<b>12</b> <b>April 15</b> CO D	<b>Issue - Mock Trials</b>	<b>Course Presentations/Evaluation/Discussion</b>
<b>13</b> <b>April 22</b> CO D	<b>Issue - Mock Trials</b>	<b>Course Presentations/Evaluation/Discussion</b>
<b>April 25</b> CO D	<b>Opinion Paper Due</b>	<b>Submit in Sakai</b>

### Grading

All course requirements will be graded on point values. Total point value for the course is 1,000 points. The points/weight of each requirement is:

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>Codes of Ethics Comparison Paper</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>First Amendment Paper</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Research Report – Case Topic/Issue</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>1/1 Meeting</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Mock Trial Presentation</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Majority Opinion or Minority Report</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Class Discussion (20 pts./week for 11 weeks)</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

At the end of the course, a letter grade will be assigned based on total points gained using the table below.

Letter Grade	Points	Percentage
A	930 - 1000	93% - 100%
A-	900 - 929	90% - 92%
B+	870 - 899	87% - 89%
B	830 - 869	83% - 86%
B-	800 - 829	80% - 82%
C+	770 - 799	77% - 79%
C	730 - 769	73% - 76%
C-	700 - 729	70% - 72%
D+	670 - 699	67% - 69%
D-	601 - 669	60.1% - 66%
F	600 or below	60% and below

### Written Assignments

Students will receive an assignment outline that includes a description and requirements for each assignment one week prior to its due date. Late assignments will not be excepted. The course project assignment will be handed out in week one (1).

### APA Style Guide

All work should be prepared according to the APA Style. As with other editorial styles, [APA Style](#) consists of rules or guidelines that a publisher observes to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material.

APA Style<sup>®</sup> originated in 1929, when a group of psychologists, anthropologists, and business managers convened and sought to establish a simple set of procedures, or style rules, that would codify the many components of scientific writing to increase the ease of reading comprehension. It concerns uniform use of such elements as

- selection of headings, tone, and length;
- punctuation and abbreviations;
- presentation of numbers and statistics;
- construction of tables and figures,
- citation of references; and
- many other elements that are a part of a manuscript.

Additional resources available:

- [Citing Sources](#)
- [APA Elements](#)
- [Purdue OWL Lab](#)
- [APA Tutorials](#) – Access via Hoonuit (upper left corner).

## Turn-It-In

Turnitin is a service used in Sakai assignment submissions that reviews submitted documents for citation mistakes or inappropriate copying by comparing submitted documents to text in its database of student work, websites, books, articles, etc. A Similarity Report is generated upon submission that identifies possible instances of plagiarism or incorrect attribution. To view the Similarity Report for an assignment [follow these steps](#).

## Class Discussion

To gain full points for class discussion, students must interact with the class discussion/activities. Participation can be

- Providing additional information to the topic being discussed
- Sharing a personal experience on the topic being discussed
- Enhancing comments made by other students on the topic under discussion
- Clarifying/paraphrasing the topic under discussion to support understanding, or
- Presenting a brief critical assessment of the topic under discussion.

## Technology Help Desk

The ITS Help Desk is your single point of contact for technology support. Please contact the ITS Help Desk for help with your password self-service setup or to schedule technical support, including hardware and software questions, consulting, installations, and network connection requests.

- Find the Help Desk Hours at: <https://www.luc.edu/its/dms/digitalmedialabs/hours/>.
- **Call the Help Desk via telephone at 773/508-4ITS (773/508-4487)**
- Email the Help Desk at [helpdesk@luc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@luc.edu).
- For general orientation to technology at Loyola checkout the Technology Roadmaps at: <http://www.luc.edu/its/resources/technologyroadmap/>

Please note the University does not have a 24-hour Help Desk. This means you cannot connect live to a person for technical support on all days and at all times. The Help Desk is staffed during classroom hours throughout the daytime, evenings, and Saturday mornings. The Help Desk hours of support are posted at: <https://www.luc.edu/its/dms/digitalmedialabs/hours/>.

**ITS Help Desk Campus**– Alison Stillwell, Manager, 8-4487

## Student and Digital Media Resources

Digital Media Services provides access to an array of equipment and software support in Loyola's digital and multimedia lab spaces. Visit its website at <http://www.luc.edu/digitalmedia>.

- Students taking courses have access to a self-service Equipment Loan Program. To use digital media equipment, please make advanced reservations to best make sure of availability. Reservations for equipment can be made through the self-service system at <https://equipmentloan.luc.edu>.
- Hardware, software, and mobile technology recommendations can be found at the TechConnect website (<http://www.luc.edu/techconnect/>).
- A variety of resources can be found on the Online Learning website at <http://luc.edu/online/>. The site holds links to many resources for students taking online courses. The "Tech Check" module, inspects your computer to verify compatibility with the online systems and resources that may be used in an online course. To access the Tech Check, please visit <http://luc.edu/digitalmedia/trainingandsupport/techcheck/>.
- For students studying and/or using computers in the Information Commons or the Corboy Law Center, go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Information Commons or the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Corboy Law Center at the Media Labs for help. Hours of operation are available at: <http://www.luc.edu/digitalmedia/digitalmedialabs/hours/>.
- Digital media is a growing part of many course projects. For support to create video-based projects, working with blogs, recording podcasts or contributing to a Wiki, then Loyola Media (Panopto) is the perfect resource.

Loyola Media is Loyola's digital media repository for individual users to upload videos and audios, and to access blogs and wikis. For more information visit [Panopto Training](#).

Nick Liberatore, Manager, 8-2261; Brendan McCarthy, Digital Media Specialist (WTC), 5-6395; Jared Thomas, Digital Media Specialist (LSC), 8-7764; HSD does not currently have a campus location but you can call 6-5992 for consultation on available resources.

### **University Information Security Office**

The University Information Security Office (UIISO) manages and advises on technology risks, policies, compliance, technology related laws, and regulations. UIISO provides incident handling services if a system or information breach occurs. The office works to keep the campus technology environment safe and productive. An information security incident is an attempted, suspected, or successful unauthorized access or misuse of University information. An incident may be categorized as any interference with information technology services. Questionable activities observed by users of Loyola University Chicago resources should be reported through one method listed here. Incidents you should report include but are not limited to:

- Exposed or disclosed sensitive personal data
- Known or suspected data breach
- Unauthorized access to sensitive personal data
- Lost or missing papers or electronic devices containing sensitive personal data
- Inappropriate access to sensitive personal information
- Suspected phishing emails

Please report concerns by:

- Phone at 773-508-7373
- Email at [DataSecurity@luc.edu](mailto:DataSecurity@luc.edu)
- [Data Security Incident Reporting Form](#)
- [Data Security Incident Reporting Form](#) (anonymous user)
- Find the Help Desk Hours at: [http://luc.edu/helpdesk/aboutus/support\\_hours.shtml](http://luc.edu/helpdesk/aboutus/support_hours.shtml).
- Call the Help Desk via telephone at 773/508-4ITS (773/508-4487)
- Email the Help Desk at [helpdesk@luc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@luc.edu).

Jim Pardonek, ISO, 8-6086; *Information Security Hotline, 8-7373*

### **School of Communication 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.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.