Media Ethics
COMM XXXX
Date | Time | Room

Instructor Information

Instructor Name
Title

Contact Information
Email:
Office:
Student Support Hours:

Course Description

Catalog Description: "Ethical Problems of Mass Communications": The practice of mass communication as ordered by moral principles.

Course Description: Media ethics represents an opportunity to discover the rights and responsibilities of media professionals by identifying and applying moral principles and values to situations and contexts unique to our professions and the people we serve. Stephen Ward[1] argues that media ethics is a matter of media ecology, meaning we must act in certain ways responsive to the broader, interconnected social and cultural environments we live within. He also implies that media ethics as a part of media ecology is a global concern. The globalized media ecosystem means wrestling with definitions, roles, and frameworks in new and unique ways but acknowledging that ethical systems may vary by culture, political body, and subgroups.

In this course, we will operate within Ward's three global media ethics imperatives[2]:
1. Act as global agents
2. Serve the citizens of the world
3. Promote non-parochial understandings

How we do this is part of the learning experiences involved with this course, which foundational centers on you, your learning, and your relationships (i.e., with yourself, others, media, and beyond). In this course, we will work to understand foundational approaches to ethical decision-making, explore values and loyalties, apply philosophical thought to practical problems, and reflect critically on personal beliefs to create more opportunities for moral professionalism in your work futures. The hope is that this course helps provide you with a way to navigate your personal and professional lives with a healthy respect for yourself and others.

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[1] https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/digital-media-ethics/
[2] https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/global-media-ethics/

We will approach this course vis-à-vis a course theme. The theme will allow us to operate on a common understanding of what media ethics is, how to approach problems, and ways to evaluate outcomes and situations. The ultimate goal, however, is not just for students to know ethics within the context of this theme. Still, it is for students to approach a communication problem of their own choosing and apply the skills and knowledge they've learned in this course in an independent manner.

Course Theme: Ecomedia Ethics

Recent Pew Research Center in-depth interviews[3] show that some Americans "widely rejected the national news media as a credible source for climate information." The reluctance "to put full faith in information from national media outlets" comes from an assumption that "media sources each have their own agenda and thus cannot be trusted." In a second report[4], support for addressing climate change as a primary issue in America also waned. Climate change ranks 17th out of 21 national issues. However, those under 30 on both sides of the political aisle believe this issue is a moral battle that Americans must fight.

In this section of Media Ethics, we will explore the intersection of media, the environment, and ethics by interrogating how media professionals' values, roles, and responsibilities engage with moral obligations to the environment. Students will have the opportunity to reflect upon their own professional industries in relation to varied issues associated with the environment while also exploring a broader question of moral purpose both as citizens of the world and pre-service professionals in the media industry.

This class will wrestle with a variety of questions of ethics, and we will do so by engaging with different media types and genres. Students will ultimately respond to the course's essential question in a way best suited to their learning and professional needs while also contending with the problem of living within a healthy environment – whatever that may mean to the student.

Course Design

Essential Question
This course is grounded in promoting professional inquiry and healthy environments. Therefore, the entirety of this course is designed with the following question in mind:

> *How do we create ethical media careers, content, and products for sustainable purposes?*

We will think about and return to this question throughout the course. Additionally, the summative assessment for this course will be a student's opportunity to answer this question.

Course Objectives:
Based on the essential question, students will work toward proficiency in the following objectives by the end of the semester:
- Understand complex terminology:

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[3] https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2023/08/09/why-some-americans-do-not-see-urgency-on-climate-change/
[4] https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/08/09/what-the-data-says-about-americans-views-of-climate-change/

- o Types of ethics
- o Ethical frameworks
- o Environmentalism
- o Ecomedia
- Develop a nuanced understanding of media ethics related to environmental journalism, digital media, and strategic communication.
- Analyze media's role in shaping public perception of environmental issues.
- Apply ethical principles to real-world scenarios in media production.
- Enhance critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills.
- Promote responsible and ethical media creation using environmental contexts as a guide.

Individual Class Objectives
The above objectives represent the outcomes and goals of the course itself. Throughout **Media Ethics,** students will explore individual class objectives. Each class objective is meant to help students build toward the ultimate course objectives. Individual class objectives will be noted within the D2L module for each lesson.

Course Needs

- Texts
  - o *Jaws* by Peter Benchley
  - o Articles and book chapters assigned on D2L
  - o Videos, television episodes, and movies assigned (available on D2L or streaming services)
  - o Read the following for environment, sustainability, and climate-related coverage:
    - Washington Post "Climate" / @postclimate on Instagram
    - The New York Times "Climate and Environment" Climate Forward Newsletter
    - Reuters "Environment"
    - Associate Press "Climate"

- Materials
  - o University Email: I will communicate through this
  - o Journaling notebook: I would like this to be print and with you in class each session. Feel free to get whatever type, format, or design you want. This is for your personal thinking and processing.

Diversity and Discussion

This class will discuss current events and contemporary social issues, including potentially sensitive subjects. We will also be discussing political and cultural topics from various perspectives. In this class, we support the open presentation and discussion of viewpoints, even those we don't like or disagree with, and we will also respect others' ideas. This course is a place to explore new ideas and to think through the complexities of our socially mediated lives.

Communication & Professional Boundaries

If you need me, email is the best way to contact me. Emails should be respectful and brief, with complex matters addressed during my student-support hours.

I firmly believe that we can only give so much in our daily lives. For many, they function solely under the premise of *chronos* – meaning we have 24 fixed hours in our day to use. And that's true. When it comes to time, you can expect that come 5 p.m. each day, I will not be attached to my email, and the likelihood is that if you email me, I won't respond until after 8 a.m. the next day. Faculty are not expected to answer emails after business hours or on weekends. Creating boundaries between work and life is incredibly important to me and my mental health. I hope you learn to do the same.

But I also believe that you should give yourself grace. Therefore, I also believe in the Greek concept of *Kairos*. In this understanding of time, we don't think about life as being tied or related to specified hour-by-hour appointments but rather by moments that are more important or influential than others. A clock cannot measure these types of moments, which aren't meant to be equal. When we are in class together, I expect this time to be critical to understanding the content and the building of our culture. When you need space and time for yourself, I hope you take that time and recognize how important those moments are to your well-being and mental health. Both classroom and personal moments are essential; they're critical to all our success together. But they each have their place. Give yourself grace.

Come to class and be in the moment. When you leave, make sure you also give yourself the gift of grace and time. In a class about moments and movements, it will be important you step away and reflect.

Technology

Yes, this course is about media. Yes, the readings for this class can be done digitally. And, yes, we will be engaging in digital investigations. However, I ask you to be mindful of your use of technology in this course. As I shared in the previous section, I expect our classroom time to be meaningful and culture-focused. Unless we must use it, I will ask you to remove your tech. Because of this, I operate under the "phone stack" rule, where we work to support thoughtful dialogue and respectful interactions by removing our technology from being a potential distraction. I will explain this entirely on the first day of class together.

Attendance

Life happens. Because of this, I don't want you to feel as though you must share a personal reason why you aren't in class. While I am here to support you, I also want you to feel comfortable missing class without providing a reason. I ask that you tell me you won't make it that day so I can help get you whatever you miss. Your attendance does factor into your overall participation grade in class; the more you aren't present, the fewer points I will be able to give you. Additionally, missing class means missing in-class activities. You cannot make this up for points, but you are encouraged to complete them for feedback. #growthmindset

D2L

We will use D2L for all course management. It will be the most up-to-date syllabus and have several resources for your success inside and outside this class. Each class session will have its own module. And in that module will be readings, objectives, and plans for that day's class. Your assignments will be included in their module, as will resources and course materials. If you are ever confused as to what we are doing in class or if you've missed class that day, D2L will be the first place to look.

All assignments will be submitted and graded through D2L.

Assessment Plan

To be successful in this course, you will be asked to participate in several formative (ungraded, oftentimes in-class) and summative (graded, outside of class) assessments. Your assessments and associated grades will all build toward answering the course's essential question and objectives. You must understand the journey to understand how you will get to the end of our course story.

Assessment Breakdown
- Participation (attendance, preparedness, contribution, and cooperation): 20%
- Project Assignments: 40%
- Final Project: 40%

Grading System and the Use of +/-
Final grades will be awarded based on the following ranges:

A	B	C	D	F
	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	
A 93-100	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9	F < 59.9
A- 90-92.9	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D- 60-62.9	

PARTICIPATION
At the end of the semester, I'll review your attendance, preparedness, contribution, and cooperation. If I see issues in any of these areas, I will reach out so we can discuss what's going on and together come up with ways to improve.
- <u>Attendance</u> means showing up. Communication is crucial here. If you're struggling or have reasons you need to miss class, please let me know so we can work together.
- <u>Preparedness</u> means you show up having read what I've assigned for the week. Lively informed discussion is the most important part of learning, and you should read deeply enough to have an educated discussion with your classmates.
- <u>Contribution</u> means sharing your ideas. A class thrives when people feel free to share their ideas. We all have different comfort levels with sharing. If you share a lot, try to pause and consider before jumping in so you can leave space for others. If you struggle to share, push yourself to speak up even if your ideas aren't fully developed.
- <u>Cooperation</u> means showing care for our community. We don't all need to agree, but care means considering how your words may land for those around you and being open to constructive comments if something doesn't land as intended.

DAILY TRIVIA: CURRENT EVENTS AND READING
Part of your participation will be us starting class in teams participating in trivia. The trivia questions will come from current events (especially those related to media issues and criticism, ethical lapses, and environmental justice) and readings. Your group will be able to earn **5-10** trivia points (TPs) each class session. You accrue TP as a team but spend it as an individual.

You may redeem these TPs at any point in the semester for the following rewards:
- 10 Trivia Points: A sticker or sucker
- 30 TP: 24-hour assignment extension
- 60 TP: Extra absence or 48-hour assignment extension
- 100 TP: 72-hour assignment extension
- 175 TP: +/- grade bump at the end of the semester

When you redeem TP for a reward, those points will be deducted from your individual TP account. You cannot use your TP on the final assignment.

PROJECT ASSIGNMENTS
I see education as a process. I do not *expect* you to be proficient in the course objectives at the start of the semester. If you were, then I'd question why you were here. As a result, I designed this course so that you participate in activities throughout the semester that build toward your final project.
- Each project assignment (P#) will have its own instructions, but its rubric will come from the final project.
- Each project assignment will be able to be used in your final project; in fact, I encourage you to revise based on my feedback and use it again.
- Each project assignment will not be graded. Instead, you will receive feedback on the assignment and a rubric score to help you see where you are in this course relative to achieving the goals (objectives).
- You will receive a score of **0** on an assignment for one of two reasons: (1) not turning in a project assignment or (2) giving minimal effort on the project assignment. The project assignments are designed so that it will be apparent if you did the assignment last minute. Please do not take my kindness for granted.

For these assignments, you will identify an ethical issue that can be explored through your future professional identity lens. You are welcome to address an aspect of environmental ethics in your profession or select a different social wellness issue that interests you most (e.g., gender, race, class, sexuality, mental health, socioeconomics, immigration, expression).

These activities focus on identifying a problem in your industry related to the issue you want to solve. Solving the problem will involve drawing on the various skills and activities we learn and participate in throughout the semester. You will bring in various texts to contextualize the problem. You will assess the values and loyalties associated with the problem. And you will solve the problem using ethical frameworks and thinking. This will be done in several ways, culminating in your final project.

A brief description of each project assignment is included below. None of these assignments should take more than a week.

P1: ISSUE & TOPIC PROPOSAL
Students will propose an environmental wellness issue linked to media practice to spend time interrogating throughout the semester. The proposal should be two pages long and include the student's desired environmental issue to study, examples of it across different media texts and practices, and research. For research, students will interview five students on campus about this issue. Students should ask the students their opinions on the issue and where they've seen the issue in media spaces.

P2: VALUES AND BELIEFS REFLECTION
In this project assignment, you will explore your values, beliefs, and ethical principles as they relate to media and environmental ethics. Your reflection should encompass three key elements: self-reflection on personal values, discussing personal dilemmas or anticipated challenges in the context of a media career, and demonstrating how loyalties in your life influenced your personal ethical perspectives.

P3: MEDIA ANALYSIS
For this project assignment, you will critically analyze a media text (from your chosen profession) concerning its discussion and presentation of the environmental issue you've selected. Your analysis should delve into the content, messages, and ethical considerations embedded in media production. You will be evaluated based on the depth of your analysis, the comprehensiveness of your ethical evaluation, and the clarity of your presentation. You may choose from diverse ways to perform this analysis, including a traditional written essay, a video analysis, or a podcast discussion. Ensure that your analysis demonstrates a profound understanding of the chosen film and its ethical implications while effectively communicating your insights.

P4: MIDTERM REFLECTION
We've reached the middle of the semester. In place of a midterm exam, students will be asked to write/film a reflection about their experience developing their ethical professional skills. Expect to discuss what you've learned so far, where you expect to go moving forward, and how you will improve your media practice and consumption.

P5: CASE STUDY
For this project assignment, you will select a real-world case where media professionals faced ethical dilemmas related to environmental content, coverage, or advocacy (based on the problem/topic you've proposed you'd spend the semester studying). Your case study should encompass two primary aspects: a clear and accurate description of the chosen case, including key ethical issues, and a thoughtful analysis with ethical recommendations for handling the situation. Your analysis should be clear, concise, and effectively communicate your ideas.

P6: MEDIA PROJECT PROPOSAL
In this project assignment, you will develop a media project proposal (within your industry) addressing your chosen environmental issue. Your proposal should clearly outline the project's goals, target audience, and intended impact. You should also articulate ethical considerations and principles that will guide the project. Additionally, you should address the practicality and feasibility of the proposed project.

P7: CREATIVE EXPRESSION

For this project assignment, you can express an ethical and environmental message using a creative medium of your choice. Your creative piece should demonstrate high creativity and originality, effectively convey an ethical and environmental message, and ensure the production quality is engaging. You have diverse ways to perform this component, including creating a video, podcast episode, written op-ed, comic, infographic, or even an interactive website to express your message. If you choose, you can express your artistic talents through traditional art practices and materials.

FINAL PROJECT

Over the course of the semester, we'll have explored the idea of ethics from the perspective of ecomedia – or media that are both about the environment and how media contribute to environmental sustainability or instability. The final project for this class is a portfolio of your work this semester.

The major component of this project is a reflection that introduces your portfolio, and you will engage in reflective thinking and integration of the various components you've created throughout the course. Your reflection should encompass two key aspects: effectively integrating and connecting the different components of your portfolio and offering thoughtful reflections on your personal and intellectual growth during the course. You will answer the course's essential question in this reflection.

Course Schedule

This course schedule is tentative and subject to change. If there are changes, they will be done through D2L, our course management system. You will be notified of these changes in class and through electronic communication.

All reading materials must be complete by the date associated. Assignments are due by the time identified.

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
1.15	*No School	MLK Day*	
1.17	Who do I want to be?	Syllabus Quiz (for TP) – due Sunday (1.21) at 11:59 p.m. to D2L
1.22	What do I stand for?	P1 due Sunday (1.28) at 11:59 p.m. to D2L
1.24	Guest Speaker: Ginger Zee, ABC News Chief Meteorologist and Head of the Climate Unit	Start reading Jaws; due on 2.28
	Ethical Theory	*Add / Drop / Swap / Audit / Credit Change deadline (11:59 p.m.)
1.29	Values and Duties	
1.31	Loyalties	
2.05	Environmental responsibilities to future generations	P2 due Sunday (2.11) at 11:59 p.m. to D2L
2.07	Ecomedia	
2.12	Environment and the Professions	
2.14	Environment and the Professions	
2.19	Media analysis; Starting watch *The Thing* (1982) in class	
2.21	Finish *The Thing*	
2.26	Discuss *The Thing*	
2.28	The Jaws Panic	
3.04	Sharks in the news	P3 due Friday (3.08) at 11:59 p.m. to D2L
3.06	Sharks in documentary (Shark Week)	P4 due to D2L before you leave for Spring Break
3.11	*No School	Spring Break*	
3.13	*No School	Spring Break*	
3.18	Climate Change	Potential Guest Speaker from the LA Times	P5 due Sunday (3.24) by 11:59 p.m. to D2L

3.20	Climate Change	
3.25	Climate Change	
3.27	Guest Speaker	
4.01	*No School	Easter Monday*	P6 due Sunday (4.14) by 11:59 p.m. to D2L
4.03	Digital Extractivism	
4.08	Artificial Intelligence	
4.10	Protection of Indigenous populations and land	
4.15	HAGGERTY VISIT	
4.17	Work time on P7	
4.22	*Earth Day* Creative project show-and-tell	P7 due in class today
4.24	Greenwashing, CSR, & ESG	
4.29	Greenwashing, CSR, & ESG	
5.01	Futures Thinking	
5.10	Final Exam	Final Project due by 10 a.m. on D2L
5.14	Grades due	

January 17, 2024 | Who do I want to be?

Readings: None

Notes: You must complete the syllabus quiz on D2L by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 21. The quiz will be an opportunity to gain Trivia Points (TP) and help you navigate the critical information in this syllabus.

As you read the syllabus, make sure to annotate it for questions or points of clarification. Your goal should be to interact with it, not just skim it as you possibly have with other class syllabi. As part of the quiz, you will be asked to provide any questions or points of clarification. These will be addressed in our next session.

January 22, 2024 | What do I stand for?

Readings: Ethics Unwrapped Video: [Growth Mindset](#)

Notes: We will begin class by clarifying syllabus comments, questions, and concerns. Following that, we will focus on you as a person and think through what you believe matters most to you and your success as a student in this class. Additionally, we will work to recognize how and why our learning experiences shape our ability to make a stand on issues and ideas.

Your first Project Assignment (P1) is due to D2L by 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, January 28. This assignment will ask you to choose an environmental issue that you would like to focus on through the remainder of the semester, and that focus will be through the lens of your future career (or major of study if that makes your life a little easier). We aim to find how media and the environment interact and intersect in many ways and identify your profession's impact relative to that environmental issue.

January 24, 2024 | Ethical Theory

IMPORTANT: In the morning (10 a.m.), we have the opportunity to Zoom with [Ginger Zee](), ABC's chief meteorologist and head of the climate unit. Ginger will be talking to us about the moral imperative of media to address the environment and climate. I will provide the Zoom link on D2L 24 hours before the conversation. Marquette Wire and College of Communication faculty members will also have the link. Please be prepared with questions.

Readings:
- Required:
  - "Ethics: A Brief Introduction"
  - Ethics Unwrapped Videos
    - [Ethics]()
    - [Consequentialism]()
    - [Deontology]()
    - [Social Contract Theory]()
    - [Veil of Ignorance]()
    - [Virtue Ethics]()
- Recommended
  - "Ethical Theories"
  - "Foundations of Ethics"
  - Ethics Unwrapped Videos
    - [Applied Ethics]()
    - [Behavioral Ethics]()
    - [Incrementalism]()
    - [Moral Absolutism]()
    - [Moral Cognition]()
    - [Moral Philosophy]()
    - [Moral Psychology]()
    - [Moral Reasoning]()
    - [Neuroethics]()

Notes: An applied ethics course requires some deep thinking about very abstract issues, and in many respects, this kind of thinking can be difficult because there are complex theories and principles to decipher first. Given that this is an introduction to these theories, I do not expect that you have the same understanding as a philosophy student might. Rather, our goal in today's class is to break down these frameworks to create the best foundation we can for approaching the issues and ideas associated with this class.

Suggestion: I strongly encourage you to begin reading *Jaws*. We will start discussing the book on February 28, but sometimes reading novels can get away from us. Our purposes of reading are academic, so while reading this book, you aren't simply doing so for leisure.

Use these questions to guide your reading and annotations:
- How does the author use fear?
- What different values emerge in the story, and how do they emerge?
- Who is loyal to whom or what?
- What role does the shark play in how readers understand values, loyalties, and perspectives?
- How can a novel impact our understanding of ethical and ecological issues?

Today is also the last day for Add/Drop/Swap/Audit/Credit Change. You have until 11:59 p.m. to make schedule changes without penalty.

January 29, 2024 | Values and Duties

Readings:
- Required:
  - Ethics Unwrapped Videos (General)
    - Moral Pluralism
    - Moral Relativism
    - Morals
    - Values
  - Ethics Unwrapped Videos (Values)
    - Altruism
    - Conflict of Interest
    - Fiduciary Duty
    - Harm
    - Hedonism
    - Integrity
    - Justice
    - Obedience
  - Choose ONE
    - "Is the 'Whole Truth' Attainable"
    - "Fairness and Advocacy"
    - "Harm"
    - "Justice"
    - "Privacy"
    - "Some Basic Issues"
    - "Stewardship and Religion"
    - "Truth v Truthiness"
- Recommended
  - Ethics Unwrapped Videos
    - Corruption
    - Loss Aversion
    - Ethical Fading

- - - Framing
        - Moral Agent
        - Moral Emotions
        - Moral Imagination
        - Moral Myopia
        - Rationalization
        - Tangible and Abstract
    - "Introduction: Ethical Foundations and Perspectives"

Notes: While we all have values that play a part in our daily actions, some are more common and consistent than others. Your individual values will be explicated in P2. In class today, we will discuss some of these common ethical values and attempt to determine how these can support one another, come in conflict with one another, and align more commonly with different ethical theories.

Project Assignment 2 (P2) is due on Sunday, February 11, by 11:59 p.m. In the assignment, you will be working to explain the values that guide you. Use today's class to consider how some of these shared values may contribute to your philosophy.

January 31, 2024 | Loyalties

Readings:
- Required
    - Ethics Unwrapped Videos
        - Altruistic Cheating
        - Bounded Ethically
        - Cognitive Dissonance
        - Conformity Bias
        - Groupthink
        - In-Group / Out-Group
        - Role Morality
        - Subject of Moral Worth
    - "Duties and Methods"
    - "Ethical Decision Making in Seven Steps"
- Recommended
    - Ethics Unwrapped Videos
        - Cognitive Bias
        - Confirmation Bias
        - Diffusion of Responsibility
        - Fundamental Attribution Error
        - Moral Equilibrium
        - Moral Muteness
        - Overconfidence Bias
        - Prosocial Behavior
        - Self-serving Bias

Notes: This session will have dual purposes. The first is to discuss what loyalties are and who we are personally loyal to in our personal and professional lives. The second is to think about how values and loyalties frame our decisions and then how we go about interrogating those in our ethical decision-making. When we look at methods for answering ethical questions, we will do so simply as a brief overview. The method will be applied in future sessions, which means we will return to it again.

In P2, you will consider your own personal loyalties and how they intersect with your values and professional goals. Use today's class as a starting point to brainstorm who and what you are loyal to in your life and profession.

February 5, 2024 | Environmental Responsibilities to Future Generations

Readings:
- Required
    - "Chapter 2: Some Key Concepts"
    - "Environmental Responsibilities to Future Generations"
    - Ethics Unwrapped Video: Sustainability
    - Choose ONE:
        - "Sustainability and Preservation"
        - "Million Year Panic"
        - "The High Price of Meat"
- Recommended
    - "Becoming a Moral Adult"

Notes: We will spend our class time interrogating the idea of "the future" by drawing from the readings. Our goal is to conceptualize what "the future" is, how you fit within it, and how the future helps to define your growth as a moral media professional.

This Sunday, February 11, your second Project Assignment (P2) is due to D2L by 11:59 p.m. This assignment is incredibly reflective but requires you to draw from the introductory ethics materials we've been discussing in class. While the assignment is more of a reflection, I implore you to be conscientious of your ability to think critically about your learning and growing processes. Please do not treat this assignment with a surface-level understanding of self.

February 7, 2024 | Ecomedia

Readings:
- Required
    - "Introduction" by Antonio Lopez et al., in *The Routledge Handbook on Ecomedia Studies*
    - "Ecomedia Literacy: Bringing Ecomedia Studies in the Classroom," by Antonio López, Chapter 9 in *The Routledge Handbook on Ecomedia Studies*
- Recommended
    - "When do Media Become Ecomedia," by Adrian Ivakhiv and Antonio López, Chapter 1 in *The Routledge Handbook on Ecomedia Studies*
    - "Three Ecologies: Ecomedia as Ontology," by Adrian Ivakhiv, Chapter 2 in *The Routledge Handbook on Ecomedia Studies*

Notes: The readings for today's class are difficult as they are more academic than most of the other readings we will do all semester. While I would like you to try and read them without additional support, I will provide you with a reading guide and my notes to assist you.

In class today, we will work to conceptualize ecomedia and how it relates to a course on media ethics. To do this, we will attempt to identify common and differing traits between the two, bringing us to a definition of ecomedia ethics that we can work from for the remainder of the semester.

February 12, 2024 | Environment and the Professions

Readings:
- Required
    - Formal Codes of Ethics
    - Choose ONE based on the following major:
        - Strategic Communication: "Selling 'Nature/the Natural'"
        - Journalism: "The Environment as News"
        - Digital Media and Performing Arts: "Popular Culture, Nature, and Environmental Issues"
        - Non-Comm: "Tracing Rachel Carson's Path"
- Recommended
    - Broadband and Agriculture

Notes: Today, you will work with your major colleagues to think about the intersection of values, the environment, and your profession. You will develop a presentation to share with our class on Wednesday to explain what you found and what you think matters to our class moving forward.

February 14, 2024 | Environment and the Professions

Readings: None

Notes: Presentations

Project Assignment 3 (P3) is due on Friday, March 8, to D2L by 11:59 p.m. This assignment will ask you to think critical about the story a media text tells about the environment, climate, and/or sustainability. You are encouraged to focus on media texts related to your chosen career; however, if you struggle to find texts you are welcome to propose something different. I would suggest beginning to think about this assignment and identifying media texts starting now.

February 19, 2024 | The Thing & Media Analysis

Readings: None

Notes: We will begin our viewing of John Carpenter's classic film, *The Thing*. While watching the movie, you are expected to take notes on the film guided by the following question: Should film provide moral commentary on environmental issues? As you take notes, consider the values the film

utilizes and leverages. Who is the film speaking to? Are any ethical principles elevated in the film, or could you see multiple opportunities to think about the issues in the film from differing theories?

The practice of analyzing this film is meant to help you with your upcoming project assignment. We will work through an analysis together as an example of completing P3.

February 21, 2024 | The Thing & Media Analysis

Readings: None

Notes: We will continue our viewing of the film.

February 26, 2024 | The Thing & Media Analysis

Readings:
- Recommended: "Fear and Loathing in Ecomedia: Channeling Fear through Horror Tropes in Invasive Species Outreach," by Katrina Maggiulli, Chapter 35 in *The Routledge Handbook on Ecomedia Studies*

Notes: We will discuss and analyze *The Thing* in class today. In doing so, we will focus our time and attention on understanding how a film can make commentary on ethical issues and, even deeper, should films provide commentary on ethical issues. This process will help you with your own media analysis assignment (P3).

The recommended reading for this week shows how horror can be seen as a source of commentary about ethical and ecomedia issues. While it is academic, it offers a glimpse at how one could think about the same issues.

P3 is due on March 8 by 11:59 p.m. At this point, you should have selected your media text for the assignment. I am happy to have conversations with you to help guide this process.

February 28, 2024 | The Jaws Panic

Readings:
- Required:
  - *Jaws* by Peter Benchley
  - Choose ONE:
    - "We could see the fear it was stirring up…"
    - "Before and after 'Jaws'…"
    - "How Jaws influenced shark perception…"
    - "Seeing Jaws"
    - "Sharks Before and After Jaw…"
    - "Why Can't We be Friends"
  - Choose ONE:
    - "Should Stephen Spielberg 'Regret' the Impact…"
    - "Steven Spielberg Regrets…"
    - "47 Years later…"

- Recommended
  - "Shark Stewards…"
  - "The Predatory Behavior of the White Shark"
  - "White Shark"

Notes: We will spend class today discussing Benchley's book and really consider what he was saying and doing in his writing. Our conversation may take several different directions, but the hope is that we interrogate the ethics of the book and ultimately consider how much of our contemporary understanding of sharks began with his text (and then with Spielberg's *iconic* film). This discussion will build us into our analyses next week.

March 4, 2024 | Sharks in the News

Readings:
- Required:
  - Choose ONE:
    - "Changes in Media Portrayal…"
    - "Increased knowledge about sharks increases…"
    - "Shark attack! A cultural approach"
    - "Shark bite reporting and the New York Times"
  - Choose THREE:
    - "Survey: 'Shark summer' bred fear not facts"
    - "Don't call them 'shark attacks,' scientists say"
    - "How the media stokes needless fears about sharks"
    - "New study on shark attack media coverage…"
    - "Shark attacks are in the news again…"
    - "How many shark attacks happen each year…"
    - "The impact of news media portrayals on sharks…"
    - "The New York Media's fascination with sharks…"
- Recommended
  - "Media feeding frenzies"
  - "Shark attacks: Research and resources"
  - "When sharks don't attack"

Notes: *Jaws* created a cultural panic about sharks, which then led to decades of fearful (and sometimes hyperbolized and sensationalized) media coverage. Our chore in class today is to talk about that by attempting to see how a book (and a film) brought us to the type of coverage we have in journalism today. We will hopefully bridge this conversation to talk about what we've learned from this case can translate to other types of coverage.

March 6, 2024 | Sharks in Documentary

Readings:
- Required:
  - Choose ONE:
    - "A content analysis of 32 years…"
    - "Shark Week and the Rise of Infotainment in Science Documentaries"

- - Choose THREE:
    - "Discovery Channel's 'Shark Week'…"
    - "'Shark Week' lacks diversity…"
    - "Every week is Shark Week…"
    - "How Shark Week became a cultural phenomenon"
    - "Shark Attacks Examined in Newish…"
    - "Shark Week 2020: How the Pandemic…"
    - "Shark Week might be hurting Sharks"
- Recommended
  - "The Effect of Background Music in Shark Documentaries on Viewers' Perceptions of Sharks"
  - "Humans, sharks and the shared environment in the contemporary eco-doc"
  - "Ethical considerations in natural history film production and the need for industry-wide best practice"
  - "He just comes and bites"

Notes: We will conclude our investigation of the Jaws panic by looking at how shark documentaries and docuseries have created their own idea of ethics. In particular, we will focus on what values and loyalties emerge and what contradictions and biases exist when documentarians choose to capitalize on a decades-old myth. We will conclude by considering other types of documentaries and docuseries and apply what we've learned from the Jaws panic to different topics and issues.

P3 is due on Friday, March 8, by 11:59 p.m. At this point, you should have selected your media text and working through the analysis.

Project Assignment 4 (P4) is due before spring break, so March 10 by 11:59 p.m. This is your midterm reflection.

March 18, 2024 | Climate Change

Potential Guest Speaker: Sammy Roth, Los Angeles Times climate columnist

Readings:
- Required
  - "The Ethics of Climate Change: Pay Now or Pay More Later?"
  - "A Lack of Expertise…"
- Recommended
  - "Media 'impartiality' on climate change…
  - "The Ethics of Climate Change"
  - "The Media is at the Center of Fighting…"
  - "Covering the Environment"

Notes: We will begin our journey to understand journalism and the climate with a broader look at the ethical implications of climate change and how journalists may begin to contend with it. We will utilize a code of ethics linked to environmental and food journalists to help our discussion, as well as analyze examples from professional media.

Project Assignment 5 (P5) is due by Sunday, March 24. You have until 11:59 p.m. to submit it to D2L. This assignment pushes you to perform a case study analysis. You will use the Potter Box as the guiding analysis model for this assignment.

March 20, 2024 | Climate Storytelling

Guest Speaker | Lindsay Muscato, O'Brien Fellow

Readings: Stories from Lindsay

Notes: Please read the stories Lindsay provided you for her guest lecture. Be prepared to ask questions.

March 25, 2024 | Climate Change: Worldwide Audiences

Readings:
- Required:
  - "Climate change news audiences: Analysis of news use and attitudes in eight countries"
- Recommended:
  - "A review of media coverage…"

Notes: Since we have a foundation, our next step is to look at how audiences interpret climate news around the world. We will work diligently to decipher what can be done based on this information and to critically assess what values and loyalties must be associated with climate coverage. Importantly, we will do our damndest to understand if climate coverage has universal values. Should we be thinking about our coverage in a more individualized nature that is dependent on cultural contexts, or are their shared ideals globally?

We will return to several of the types of bias and perception we first encountered in the loyalties section, particularly those that will have appeared as recommended readings. The idea of different ways of thinking is going to be important to our discussion.

March 27, 2024 | Climate Change: Solutions

Readings:
- Required
  - "Improving Climate Coverage for Trust and Understanding"
  - "Climate, Ethics, and the News"
  - Choose TWO: How to Fix Climate Journalism essays
- Recommended
  - "Ethical News Coverage of Climate Change…"
  - Ethics Code
  - Covering Climate Now

Notes: We conclude our close study of climate coverage by looking forward, as we originally outlined at the beginning of this class. Future thinking matters, and today's class helps us to do just that.

April 3, 2024 | Digital Extractivism

Readings:
- Required
  - "'Moral evil, economic good…"
  - "Extractivism and Extractivismo"
  - "Digital capitalism is a mine not a cloud…"
  - "Digital Extractivism in Africa Mirrors Colonial Practices"
  - "Automated Imperialism…" – read pages 4-13
- Recommended
  - "The Ethics of Extractivism in Science Fiction"
  - "Content moderator in Kenya sues Meta over working conditions"
  - All of "Automated Imperialism…"
  - "Anti-racism and Animal Rights"

Notes: Something we don't often consider in our media production is what powers our media. We will take up that challenge today by looking at digital extractivism and discussing where our power comes from and how we wrestle with the ethics of labor and globalized imperialism.

Project Assignment 6 (P6) is due Sunday, April 14, by 11:59 p.m. on D2L. P6 asks you to imagine a project that you can accomplish using your industry. There are no boundaries, just you and your imagination, to think about how your profession can improve the environment, climate, and sustainability.

April 8, 2024 | Artificial Intelligence

Readings:
- Required
  - "Green Intelligence: Why Data and AI…"
  - "How artificial intelligence is helping tackle environmental challenges"
  - "Some experts see AI as a tool against climate change…"
  - "The Green Dilemma: Can AI Fulfill…"
- Recommended
  - "Technology"
  - "The carbon impact of artificial intelligence"
  - "The environmental impact of AI revolution…"

Notes: While many others in higher education and our respective industries argue about the ethical impact of AI, we will interrogate AI's impact on the environment. In doing so, we will identify hoe and why we should be thinking about ethics as a holistic practice.

April 10, 2024 | Protection of Indigenous Populations and Land

Readings:
- Required:
  - "Eight principles for indigenous media presence"

- o "Media as a Means to Transmit Indigenous Knowledge"
- o "Strengthening Indigenous and Community Media"
- o "UN highlights vital role…"
- o "We must listen to Indigenous voices…"
- Recommended:
  - o "Queer and Trans Ecologies as Care Practice of Indispensability"
  - o "'The Ocean is Our Legacy:" Values of Care and Reciprocity'
  - o "Breaking Media Stereotypes with Indigenous Storytelling"
  - o "Decolonizing and Indigenizing Media to Uplift…"
  - o "More than News…"

Notes: Our emphasis today is on care and care-based practices. To do so, we will focus on Indigenous peoples and finding ways to honor Indigenous people and their lands.

P6 is due Sunday by 11:59 p.m. on D2L.

April 15, 2024 | Haggerty Visit | Meet at the Haggerty

Readings: None

Notes: In order to help contextualize P7, we will spend class today at the Haggerty Museum of Art looking at how artists have created their own creative media about the environment, sustainability, and climate. We will use class today to understand how creative media can be used to make commentary on the environment, sustainability, and climate, but also the varying ways that creative works can be understood based on how the viewers recognize and understand what values they bring to the table, duties they have, and loyalties they consider.

April 17, 2024 | Project 7 Work Time | No class

Readings: None

Notes: You do not come to class today. Instead, use the class time to work on P7, which asks you to be creative and imaginative. Sometimes, this requires space and time. You are given that here.

April 22, 2024 | Earth Day

Readings: None

Notes: Bring your P7 creative media to class. We will set up the classroom like a walking museum and spend some of our opening time wandering around the room to see what people did. I anticipate this will take 15 minutes. For the remainder of class, we will spend time hearing what our colleagues created, how they came about their projects, what values they believe are employed in their projects, and how they hope it creates a message about their chosen issue.

April 24, 2024 | Greenwashing, CSR, and ESG

Readings:

- Required:
  - Ethics Unwrapped Video: [Corporate Social Responsibility](#)
  - [Corporate Governance Institute](#)
  - "What is Greenwashing?"
- Recommended:
  - "Strategic Communication…"
  - "Social Justice"

Notes: We will spend two class days looking at how Greenwashing, Corporate Social Responsibility, and environmental, social and governance can be understood as ethical agents within strategic communication. In today's class, we will spend time understanding these terms through a Jigsaw activity.

April 29, 2024 | Greenwashing

Readings:
- Required:
  - "SC Johnson launches Windex Bottle…"
  - "Mercedes accused of greenwashing…"
  - Choose ONE:
    - "Patagonia's reversible poem ad…"
    - "Patagonia's next chapter…"
    - "Patagonia's greenwashing ignores workers…"
  - Choose ONE:
    - "Pornhub launches environmental campaign…"
    - "Pornhub is making sustainability sexy…"
    - "Porn with purpose…"
- Recommended: Read all readings

Notes: Today, we will bring the concepts we talked about in the last class into action by looking at four companies' attempts to clean up their acts. Our mission today is to dissect which campaigns were done more ethically, which campaigns were reliant on prosocial or antisocial values, and what loyalties may have come into conflict with those to the environment – as emphasized by purposes we discussed previously.

May 1, 2024 | Futures thinking

Readings: None

Notes: Today, we will work to reflect on the semester and how we can take what we learned to create more sustainable futures. In particular, let's discuss the critical connections between media ethics and sustainability and how sustainability is a value that transcends global boundaries.

May 10, 2024 | Final Project due by 10 a.m. on D2L

University Policies and Procedures

PROTOCOLS REGARDING COVID-19
Following MU's policies, it is your choice to wear a mask over your nose and mouth indoors. Use the [Student Resources](#) site on the [Marquette COVID-19 Response webpage](#) for information and resources. Here are detailed [instructions in case you are exposed to or diagnosed with COVID-19](#). You are expected to inform me about having Covid or Covid-like symptoms. Do not come to class in either case.

SPECIAL NEEDS
If you have a disability and require accommodations, please contact me early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the [Office of Disability Services](#) (ODS). If you are unsure of what you need to qualify for services, visit the [ODS's website](#) or contact the ODS at (414) 288-1645.

COUNSELING CENTER
Sometimes personal or health issues, such as depression, anxiety, stress, career uncertainty, and/or relationships, can interfere with your ability to function as a student. If you feel that this is happening to you, please contact the Counseling Center. The Counseling Center offers free, confidential counseling services for all full-time students. For more information or to make an appointment, call 414-288-7172 or visit their [website](#).

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
To succeed in this course, you must have foundational experience with D2L, the university's learning management system, and the videoconferencing tool Microsoft Teams. If you're unfamiliar with these technologies, review the [D2L Student Help resources](#) and [Students Use Microsoft Teams](#). You can also visit the [Technology for Remote Learning webpage](#). For general questions about technology, contact the ITS Help Desk at helpdesk@mu.edu or 414-288-7799.

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