

## Syllabus Fall 2019

### MEDIA ETHICS **ONLINE**

COMM2254 Section EO1 | Dr. Hazel Cole | Fall 2019 | **ONLINE**

**IMPORTANT: Students should view this syllabus as a *contract for the semester*. By remaining enrolled in the class, you are accepting this contract and will be expected to follow the rules and regulations listed herein.**

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**Instructor:** Dr. Hazel J. Cole

**Office Hours:** Office Hours (contact by phone 678-839-4937 or in person): Tuesday 12:00-2:30 and Wednesday 11:00 am – 1:00 pm **—and by appointment.**

**E-Mail Address:** Please log on and use the CourseDen Mail tool to communicate with me. Do not use my [hcole@westga.edu](mailto:hcole@westga.edu) email account unless authorized to do so.

**Office Phone:** (678) 839-4937

**This is an online class. Office hours will be virtual only unless you wish to make an appointment.** The very best way to reach me is by CourseDen email. Please make sure your email is detailed and professionally written at a college level. If you need to call, please do so **during BUSINESS HOURS (9-5) only**. If you get voicemail, leave a message with your name and phone number pronounced clearly and your reason for calling. I do my best to make myself available to students within reason. While I am especially easy to reach via email, it is not inconceivable that your email message might get lost in the shuffle. So, if you call or email and don't get a response within a day, call or email again. Although you can access course content 24/7, I am only available for consultation during the above listed times.

**Course Description:** COMM2254 is an examination of the ethical dimension of the decision-making process as applies to media issues, especially those concerning freedom or restriction of speech, regulated forms of media content, and privacy.

#### **Mass Communications Program Learning Outcomes**

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: As a unit seeking accreditation from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), the Department of Mass Communications is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. The Department has adopted as its degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. These include the six (6) values and six (6) competencies listed below. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog](#) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction](#).



### Learner Outcomes:

- To experience a variety of communication situations
- To be able to demonstrate ability to analyze case studies and employ appropriate creative problem-solving skills to ethical problems
- To demonstrate knowledge of the manner in which different publics are affected by media decision-makers
- To become a more effective listener/interpreter
- To improve critical thinking skills

### Textbook:

Day, L. A. (2006). *Ethics in media communications: Cases and controversies* (5<sup>th</sup>ed.). Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

### CourseDen

We will use various CourseDen tools through the semester. **Please become familiar with the entire CourseDen website on the first day of class.** Just log in and look around. Be aware of all announcements and assignments related to whichever learning module is assigned. **Please use the CourseDen Mail tool to communicate with me and your classmates. Do not use my westga.edu email account.** With the exception of Friday afternoons, weekends and holidays, I will respond to your email within 24-48 hours.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Assigned Readings:** This class is structured in a reading-intensive format. This is to say that there is simply no way to succeed in the course without reading the assigned material for each module. It is especially important that you read and study the assigned material before online discussions, quizzes and exams.

**Exams:** There will be three exams. **All exams are administered online through the CourseDen quiz tool.** Each exam will include multiple choice and discussion style questions. You will have access to the exams from 8 a.m. on exam day to 11:59 p.m. the following day. **Exams 1 and 2 will open on Friday and close on Saturday.** During the last week of class, **Exam 3 will open on Thursday at 8 a.m. and close on Friday at 11:59 p.m.** You will have one hour to complete the exam once you have started it. Exams are mandatory. Make-up exams are allowed only in cases of absence due to unavoidable situations substantiated with APPROVED documentation. If you miss an exam, *it is your responsibility to contact me immediately to discuss.*

**Discussion Posts:** There will be **five required discussion posts** valued at **five points each**. Discussion postings will be open for the week of the module only. All discussion post assignments will open at 8am on Sunday mornings and close at 11:59pm on Saturday evenings. Discussion post assignments are scheduled for Modules 3, 7, 9, 12 and 14. For details, see **Discussion Post Guidelines** in Module 1. Students will not be allowed to make up for missed discussion postings.

**Learning Module Accessibility and Assigned Readings:** Each learning module will cover the assigned reading material from the schedule posted in Module 1. Once each learning module is accessible, it will remain accessible on the CourseDen site for the remainder of the semester (for content purposes only). It will only be possible to make the discussion postings during the designated times allotted for that a particular learning module, however.

**Grading Scale:**

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79
- D: 60-69
- F: 60 and below

**Missed Exams/Assignment Policies:**

Exams and discussion postings are mandatory. This online format allows 24/7 access to current instruction content. Exams will be offered in a two day window where the student may log in and take the exam over the period of one hour.

**Point Values per assignment/assessment**

3 Exams @ 25 points each = 75% of total possible points per semester

5 CourseDen Discussion Assignments Due Saturdays by 11:59 p.m.:  
(Discussions at 5 points each) = 25% of total possible points per semester

Final grades are based on a total of 100 points. The grades will be computed on a percentage basis such that 90-100% = A, 80-89.9= B, etc. Note: an 89.9 is a B. Please do not ask the professor for extra points. All grades are earned.

**Grading Scale:**

- A: 90-100
- B: 80-89
- C: 70-79

D: 60-69  
F: 59 and below

**PowerPoint MP4's (Important):** Each learning module includes a PowerPoint Presentation with audio commentary, saved as an MP4. PowerPoint presentations do *not* completely explain what is delivered in full in the book. Thus, the PowerPoint presentations should be used to **supplement and focus** your reading—but not as a replacement for it. From the PowerPoint MP4's, you can ascertain which particular parts of each chapter I am focusing on. **Use the PowerPoint MP4's to guide your reading and study of the textbook.** In some cases there are concepts and information in the PowerPoint MP4's that are *not* in the book. (Such content is oh-so-subtly identified as **"NOT IN THE BOOK"** on the PowerPoint slides.) The non-textbook information provided in the PowerPoints should be adequate for use in your study. (In other words, the explanation of non-textbook info on the PowerPoint MP4's will be enough: There will be no need for you to research this information any further than what has been provided.)

**BE THOROUGH.** To succeed in the class you will need to do ALL the readings, listen to ALL of the audio segments, take ALL of the quizzes, make ALL of the required discussion posts, take ALL of the exams—and, of course, study.

**Attendance:** For online courses, attendance is qualified by participation in discussion, submitting assignments, and taking quizzes and exams on time. Your last date of attendance is determined by user progress including last log-in and last submitted assignment or post. All of your participation in the course is being tracked digitally.

**Technical Considerations:** Many of the instructional materials for this course were created using Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. As such, students will need access to Microsoft Reader. (Most of you will have this already.) For a free download of Microsoft Office 365, visit [http://www.westga.edu/its/570\\_3275.php](http://www.westga.edu/its/570_3275.php).

For CourseDen assistance, reference the UWG On-line Connection ([westga.edu/~online/](http://westga.edu/~online/)), the Distance Student Guide ([westga.edu/~distance/distancestudents/](http://westga.edu/~distance/distancestudents/)) and distance Learning Library services ([westga.edu/library/depts./offcampus/](http://westga.edu/library/depts./offcampus/)) internet links. You may also visit the Distance Education Center at the Honors House or contact the staff via email at [distance@westga.edu](mailto:distance@westga.edu). If you have technical difficulties, contact the CourseDen support staff. The staff will document your case and determine whether it is personal or campus technology issue.

**University Policies Pertinent to This Class (Common Language for Course Syllabi):**  
Common Language for Course Syllabi Updated July, 2017

Please take a moment to review the common language course syllabi

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

This link covers important information such as academic support, online courses, honor code, email policy, credit hour policy, campus carry and mental health support.

### **Plagiarism/Cheating**

Any student found guilty of plagiarism or cheating will fail the course. NO EXCEPTIONS! This includes any form of sharing exam questions/answers or taking exams together.

Plagiarism is defined as “an act of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of

another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author." <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/plagiarism>. Other forms of plagiarism would include paraphrasing large portions of a work from another author or passing someone else's speech or paper off as your own.

Students should review the following information each semester, because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. **If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR) during the first week of class, which is available only from Accessibility Services.** Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. All exams are given in an online setting.

### **UWG Email Policy**

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

### **University of West Georgia Honor Code**

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions.