



COMM 4360.05A
Communication Ethics
Summer 2015
Course Syllabus

Instructor Information

Carie S. Lambert, PhD

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Office hours: by appointment on Tuesdays, 9am–1pm (schedule 48 hours in advance; office hours virtual via phone or Skype)

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Gradebook and assignment submission: www.turnitin.com

Class wiki: <http://s15--communicationethics.wikispaces.com>

Course Description

This course examines the conceptual perspectives and approaches for understanding and evaluating communication ethics in a variety of contexts. Contexts may include interpersonal relationships, small groups, organizations, intercultural encounters, public communication and technology-based communication. The course is designed to reveal values and ethical issues inherent in communication and provide resources for making and defending choices on ethical grounds.

Course Prerequisites

To take this class, you must have credit for

- RHET 1302
 - Upper-division standing
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Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

To succeed in this class, you will

- define *communication*;
 - define *ethic*;
 - recognize and apply basic ethical theories from Western philosophers to communication;
 - research, analyze, and interpret complex topics as they relate to communication ethics;
 - discuss ethical decisions and justify choices that you make in regard to communication;
 - understand the role of ethical codes in corporate America; and
 - improve your communication skills.
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Required Textbooks and Materials

You need access to the textbooks as well as additional sources that are noted on the course calendar.

Required Texts

Lambert, C. S., & Schlobohm, M. (2015). *Communication and emerging media: What's trending now*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

Tompkins, P. S. (2011). *Practicing communication ethics*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Additional Resources

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

We will use APA style to format in-text and end-of-text citations in this class.

Assignment Values

Assignment	Submission Instructions	Value
Assignment One: Ethics wiki	On class wiki page	100 pts
Assignment Two: Definition of <i>ethics</i>	Submit via turnitin.com	100 pts
Assignment Three: Ethical autobiography	Submit via turnitin.com	100 pts
Assignment Four: Group analysis of corporate code of ethics	Submit via turnitin.com	200 pts
Team evaluation	Submit via turnitin.com	50 pts
Assignment Five: Case Analysis	Submit via turnitin.com	150 pts
Case presentation	Present in class	100 pts
Participation, Professionalism, and attendance	No formal submission	200 pts
Total		1000 pts

Grading Criteria

Grades will not be rounded up. Course assignments together are worth 1000 points, and students receive grades according to the following (standard UTD) scale:

- 930–1000 = A
- 900–929 = A–
- 870–899 = B+
- 830–869 = B
- 800–829 = B–
- 770–799 = C+
- 730–769 = C
- 700–729 = C–
- 670–699 = D+
- 630–669 = D
- 600–629 = D–
- 0–599 = F

Your grade in this class reflects if you

- Fulfill objectives for the class and particular assignments;
- Support your ideas and arguments with analysis and evidence from credible sources, focusing on a thesis or main idea;
- Manage your time wisely and effectively;
- Use correct mechanics, strong style, and appropriate organization;
- Edit and proofread **all** work before you submit assignments;
- Ethically present information in assignment documents, address copyright, and correctly cite resources; and
- Present yourself professionally.

A reflects that the student's work shows excellence and meets all objectives with strength, originality, and creativity. B reflects that the student's work is satisfactorily but does not reflect excellence. This work is strong but contains minor issues that detract from your message. C reflects that the student's work fulfills course requirements but does not satisfy the audience's needs and contains issues that decrease the effectiveness of the document. D reflects that the student's work contains numerous issues and therefore does not fulfill the audience's needs or address the rhetorical situation. F reflects that the student's work is unacceptable (L. Bell, personal communication, August 2008).

Course & Instructor Policies

In addition to all UTD policies that students must know and follow (available at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>), the following policies apply.

Preparation for Class

UT Dallas students are expected to study 6–9 hours per credit hour each week per credit. Therefore, for this 3-hour course in 5 weeks, to meet the objectives and criteria for credit, you should plan to study 18–27 hours a week. The writing process takes time, and **you must manage your time and integrate that time into your work and school schedule.** If you are studying consistently more than 27 hours a week, please document your activities and communicate immediately with the instructor.

Make-up and Late Work

In this class, you are scholars as well as professionals in training. Professionals who miss deadlines present poor work ethics and damage their reputations as well as lose contracts, increase costs, delay results, decrease profits, and lose their jobs.

You may not submit late or incomplete work or makeup exams unless you are hospitalized and provide a valid physician excuse. Missed work results in a zero (0) on the assignment. You may not request an incomplete in this class unless you meet the university's criteria for an incomplete.

Extra Credit

Do not ask if you can earn extra credit. Instead, strive for excellence in assigned work.

References, Copyright, and Plagiarism

UTD has a no-tolerance policy for plagiarism, copyright infringement, or scholastic dishonesty (including missing citations). I support and enforce that policy in my classes. *If you do not cite your sources with in-text and end-of-text citations or if you publish copyrighted work without permission, you will receive a referral to the Office of Judicial Affairs.* (We will use APA style for all in-text and end-of-text citations.)

Attendance

Treat this class as you would a job: Attend class and be punctual. (Your work schedule is not an excused reason to miss class.) If you arrive on time and sign in and then participate in class activities, you are present. If you attend class but conduct nonrelated work, you will be considered absent. The classroom door will close 10 minutes after class begins; if you are not in the classroom, you are absent. You may miss one class without penalty; after one absence, you lose 20 points of your 1000-point grade for each absence.

UTD excuses absences for religious holidays; however, the student is responsible to inform the instructor *before* the holiday and to submit missed work *before* the absence.

Classroom Citizenship

You will receive a grade for participation, professionalism, and attendance. You should prepare for class; attend and participate; communicate professionally; and cooperate, listen, and respect others' opinions. Please leave profanity and other threatening language and behavior outside the classroom. *Also, turn off your cell phones and other electronic equipment during class, and use your laptop for class work only.*

Communication outside the Classroom

You should communicate with the instructor and your classmates outside the classroom. Communication is part of coursework and therefore you should

- Identify yourself in all communication (e.g., email, texts, phone calls) to the instructor AND your classmates;
- Use correct mechanics and style in correspondence;
- Communicate clearly, respectfully, and professionally; and
- Allow 48 hours for a response to e-mail during weekdays. (Do not expect a response on weekends.)

Please communicate about all issues with your instructor throughout the semester.

All official e-mail correspondence must go to and come from official UTD emails. I will not answer emails that come through addresses from other providers (per UTD policy). Email should be professionally written with a relevant subject line, a respectful greeting, a body that informs the recipient of your purpose/need, and a professional closing and signature.

Accessibility Issues

If you are registered with the Office of Student Accessibility, please inform your instructors so they can effectively teach and meet each student's needs. If you are registered, please meet with me at the beginning of the semester during my office hours.

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the professor.



COMM 4360.05A
Communication Ethics
Summer 2015
Course Syllabus Contract

I have read the syllabus for COMM4360 *and the university policies* (<http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>). I understand that content and communication related to this course may be used for future examples and research but that my identity will be blinded and my confidentiality will be protected if content is used.

I also understand that my contact information listed on this contract will ONLY be used for course-related activities and information.

By signing this contract, I acknowledge that I have read the policies and this syllabus and that I am expected to abide by ALL university policies, attend class, and submit quality, unique work by all deadlines to fulfill requirements for this class.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Student ID Number

Mobile Telephone Number



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Communication Ethics
Summer 2015
Course Syllabus Contract—Student Copy

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Signature

Date

Printed Name

Student ID Number

Mobile Telephone Number



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Course Calendar

Date of Class	Topic for Discussion and Preparation
Wednesday, May 27	<p><i>Introduce Course, Instructor, Students, Syllabus, and Assignments</i> <i>Learn APA Style for In-Text and End-of-Text Citations</i> <i>Meet Teams for Semester Assignments</i></p> <p>DUE: Read the course syllabus and sign and submit the syllabus contract.</p>
Monday, June 1	<p><i>Define Communication and Critical Thinking</i> To prepare,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and take notes on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lambert & Schlobohm (2015) chapters 1 and 2, Paul's (n.d.) article "Ethics without Indoctrination," Sockell's (2013) article "Learning to Do the Right Thing," and Tompkins (2011) chapter 1. Print a news story that relates to communication and bring it to class. <p>DUE: Take the Jeng plus Enneagram Test (n.d.), print, and bring results to class.</p>
Wednesday, June 3	<p><i>Define Ethics and Study Ethics Theories</i> <i>Differentiate between Ethics, Law, and Morals</i> To prepare,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and take notes on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lambert & Schlobohm (2015) chapters 9 and 10 and Tompkins (2011) chapters 3 and 10. Register for turnitin.com and the course wiki. <p>DUE: Assignment One (Friday, June 5, at 11:59pm on the wiki)</p>
Monday, June 8	<p><i>Study Ethics Theories</i> To prepare, read and take notes on Tompkins (2011) chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.</p>
Wednesday, June 10	<p><i>Link Communication and Ethics</i> <i>Consider Digital Communication and Ethics</i> To prepare, read and take notes on Lambert & Schlobohm (2015) chapters 4, 6, 7, and 8.</p> <p>DUE: Assignment Two (Friday, June 12, at 11:59pm, via turnitin.com)</p>

Monday, June 15	<p><i>Assess Crisis Communication</i> <i>Consider Communication Ethics and Interpersonal Communication</i> <i>Consider Influences on Your Personal Ethical Standards</i> To prepare, read and take notes on – Lambert & Schlobohm (2015) chapters 3 and 5 and – Tompkins’ (2011) chapter 2.</p> <p>Due: Comment (100+ words) on three classmates’ entries on the wiki by 11:59pm by class on Wednesday, June 17. Integrate sources (with unique citations—Internet as well as print) into your comments and cite sources in APA format.</p>
Wednesday, June 17	<p><i>Consider Your Audience: Community and Intercultural Communication</i> To prepare, • Read and take notes on – Lambert and Schlobohm (2015) chapter 3 and – Tompkins (2011) chapters 8 and 9. • Find a case related to communication and ethics. Start researching this case.</p> <p>DUE: Assignment Three (Friday, June 19, at 11:59pm, via turnitin.com)</p>
Monday, June 22	<p><i>Considering Corporate Ethics</i> To prepare, find three corporate codes of ethics. (Note the definition of “code” in Tompkins and follow that definition.) Search for companies that interest you for internships or future employment. Print two copies of each code and bring those copies to class.</p>
Wednesday, June 24	<p><i>Considering Cases Related to Communication Ethics</i> To prepare, read and take notes on – O’Brien’s (2011) article “American Apparel” and – Connor’s (2010) article “Toyota Recall: Five Critical Lessons.”</p> <p>DUE: Assignment Four and Team Evaluations (Friday, June 26, at 11:59pm, via turnitin.com)</p>
Monday, June 29	<p><i>Assessing Communication Ethics in the Media—Presentations</i></p> <p>DUE: Assignment Five (Wednesday, July 1, at 11:59pm, via turnitin.com)</p>
TBD	Final Examination

Bibliography

- Connor, M. (2010, January 31). Toyota Recall: Five Critical Lessons. *Business Ethics*. Retrieved from <http://business-ethics.com/2010/01/31/2123-toyota-recall-five-critical-lessons>
- Flynn, T. (n.d.). *Free Jung + Enneagram personality test*. Retrieved from <http://similarminds.com/embj.html>
- O’Brien, G. (2011, March 15). American apparel and the ethics of a sexually charged workplace. *Business Ethics*. Retrieved from <http://business-ethics.com/2011/03/15/0852-american-apparel-and-the-ethics-of-a-sexually-charged-workplace>

- Paul, R. (2013). Ethics without indoctrination. *The Critical Thinking Community*. Retrieved from <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/ethics-without-indoctrination/494>
- Sockell, D. (2013, January 10). Learning to do the right thing—Right here, right now. *Business Ethics*. Retrieved from <http://business-ethics.com/2013/01/10/10545-learning-to-do-the-right-thing-right-here-right-now>
- Tompkins, P. S. (2011). *Practicing communication ethics*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Zalta, E. N. (2014). *Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved by <http://plato.stanford.edu>



COMM 4360.001 Communication Ethics Fall 2014 Course Assignments

Assignment One: Ethics Wiki Entries

For two terms, write an entry—a definition of an ethics-related term (in relation to the study of ethics)—on the class wiki. Create a page on the wiki for each term and publish your entry on that page. Each entry should be 300–500 words and **include references from 5–8 credible sources (not just a Web site that you find) with citations in APA format (in-text and end-of-text citations—see your calendar for examples or visit the Purdue OWL).**

Your entry should address the meaning of the term, how it relates to ethics, and (if available) who brought the term into the realm of ethics. Use strong English mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar).

You will then be assigned to comment on two entries from other students. Seek 1–2 additional credible sources and cite those with your comment. Your comment should be 100+ words and each goes in the comment section of the wiki page with your name (so you receive credit for your comments).

Ethics Terms

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| • absolutism | • hedonism | • vice |
| • altruism | • natural rights | • virtue |
| • autonomy | • naturalism | • will |
| • benevolence | • nihilism | • rationalization |
| • conscience | • objectivity | • rhetoric |
| • deontology | • pluralism | |
| • egoism | • relativism | |
| • existentialism | • stoicism | |

Ethics Theorists

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| • Adam Smith | • J. J. Rousseau | • Plato |
| • Aristotle | • Jean-Paul Sartre | • Samuel Clarke |
| • Augustine | • Jeremy Bentham | • Socrates |
| • Bernard Gert | • John Locke | • Thomas Aquinas |
| • David Hume | • John Rawls | • Thomas Hobbes |
| • Epicurus | • John Stuart Mill | |
| • Henry Sidgwick | • Joseph Butler | |
| • Immanuel Kant | • Marcus Aurelius | |

Assignment Two: Definition of Ethic

What is “ethics”? How do philosophers define it? Write an essay of 750–1000 words defining ethics and concluding with a personal definition based on what you have learned from class readings and from your own research. (Go through the writing process and cite your sources with in-text and end-of-text citations in APA style.) **You should cite 5–10 credible sources (with in-text and end-of-text citations) from**

outside of class readings and lectures. Submit the essay via turnitin.com by the deadline on the course calendar.

Assignment Three: Ethical Autobiography

Per the assignment in Tompkins (p. 42), write “an ethical autobiography to identify key elements of your personal ethical standard. Using the outline of moral development presented in this chapter, describe key influences on how you developed your personal ethical standard.” Submit the essay via turnitin.com by the deadline on the course calendar. Cite any outside sources you reference.

Assignment Four: Group Analysis of Corporate Code of Ethics

As a team (assigned), analyze a code of ethics from a corporation. Identify the values addressed in the code, the audience for the code, and the values. Investigate the organization behind the code of ethics and identify if any history or values or tasks related to that organization are related to the code. Address words, patterns, and other data expressed in the code.

This document is a team-written assignment, an analysis of ~3000 words. **Again, provide in-text and end-of-text citations in APA style for all sources.** One team member will submit the analysis via turnitin.com by the deadline on the course calendar. (Include all members’ names on the document.)

After your analysis is complete, please complete the team evaluation form—for yourself and for your team members (each team member completes a form in confidence)—and submit it via turnitin.com by the deadline on the course calendar.

Assignment Five: Case Assessment and Presentation

In lieu of a final examination in this class, you will submit a final assessment—a study of a current affair or case in the media that addresses a recent public situation/event (something in the news). Address the events surrounding the situation (in detail with documented sources), analyze the ethical dilemmas related to the occurrence, and evaluate the outcome. Your assessment will be 6–8 pages singlespaced **with cited sources (in-text and end-of-text citations) in APA format.** Submit your essay via turnitin.com by the deadline on the course calendar.

You will present this case to the class, providing background for the case and considering a variety of ethical dilemmas and theories as they relate to this case.

Participation and Attendance

Students do not need to submit anything to finalize this grade. To earn these points, prepare for and attend classes, participate in discussions, communicate professionally, and be part of small-group activities.