

## **Ethics**

The term ethics denotes a theory or code of right action. The major question that most ethical codes attempt to deal with is how to reconcile one's own actions and interests, or the actions and interests of a group one belongs to, with the greatest common good.

Throughout much of human history, the sphere of one's ethical consideration would have encompassed one's tribe, one's village, one's city, or one's nation. However, today, in an age of increasing global interdependence, when the welfare and well-being of all people is linked, ethical considerations embrace all of humanity.

Ethical decision-making is most meaningful, and most challenging, when one's short-term material interests are pitted against long-term collective concerns. Therein lies the true test of one's ethical commitments.

Within this context, communication can be understood as a form of action with significant ethical implications. The central question of this course will therefore be: How can we reconcile our communicative action with the greatest common good? Stated another way: How can we use our communication skills as ethically responsible citizens within a global community?

## **Prerequisite**

Communication 398 – Research Methods.

## **Texts**

Required: Cosmopolitanism: Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006) *Ethics in a World of Strangers*.

Required: William Zinsser (2006) *On Writing Well*.

Required: Online readings in Canvas.

## **Learning Objectives**

This course supports the following departmental learning outcomes:

Writing - Students are able to write proficiently at college level.

Concepts - Students are able to apply communication concepts.

Critical Thinking - Students are able to employ critical thinking skills.

Team Work – Students are able to work cooperatively in small groups.

Ethics - Students are able to reflect on the ethical dimensions of actions.

## Evaluation Scheme

This course will be run as a seminar, with students actively contributing to their own learning process through readings, discussions, and presentations. Student evaluations will be based on the following four assignments:

40% – seminar participation  
 25% – group assignment  
 35% – writing assignment  
 S/U – exit portfolio

Evaluation percentages translate into letter grades according to the following formula:

A	=	94-100	C	=	74-76
A -	=	90-93	C -	=	70-73
B +	=	87-89	D +	=	67-69
B	=	84-86	D	=	64-66
B -	=	80-83	D -	=	60-63
C +	=	77-79	F	=	less-than-60

## Grade Appeals Policy

The burden of proof in any disagreement over evaluation of student performance rests with the student. If students desire re-evaluation of a grade for an assignment, they must submit a rationale in writing. This rationale should identify the specific change requested and provide a reasoned case, including reference to the original assignment criteria and evidence in support of the change requested. In addition, a copy of the original assignment must be submitted with the appeal.

## Academic Honesty Policy

All university and departmental academic honesty policies will be enforced in this course.