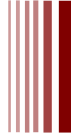


# Syllabus

## Spring 2018



# JOUR 608

## Ethics and Professional Practice

Course #54453  
TR 12:30 to 1:45  
Stauffer-Flint 206

Instructor:  
John Broholm  
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Office hours:  
M 9:30-11:00  
T 3:00-4:30  
W 9:30-11:00  
R 3:00-4:00  
*and by appointment*

### ***Course Scope and Objectives***

This course examines ethics and the ethical decision-making process for media practitioners. It has four components — or themes.

- 1. Foundations:** historical background for the way we think ... philosophies and philosophers ... morals, values and principles ... four major dilemma models
- 2. Reasoning with reality:** using decision models to resolve moral dilemmas in a complex and diverse world
- 3. The "scene":** ethical scrapes and conflicts in current events
- 4. Forward:** your own ethical identity

**You should come to understand the rationale of this statement:**

**There isn't the ethics *of* this or that profession or activity. There's only *ethics* — period.**

We will read about, talk about and debate interesting and tough issues. You will:

- learn the history and development of ethical reasoning.
- consider how race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and sexual identity affect values and morals.
- confront ethical dilemmas with well-developed reasoning based on core values, and considering multiple perspectives.
- follow current events and recognize ethical issues, problems and dilemmas in communications.
- critically analyze philosophies, models, cases and ethics codes.
- ground yourself in American media standards and practices.
- participate in class and group activities.

Everyone *must* participate. You will be part of a group and will develop presentations for case studies. You will do a 10-minute Quick Hit presentation. We will also discuss readings, various codes of ethics and current events; you need to be prepared to discuss this material. I will **NOT** give pop quizzes. You'll see what that means when I give the first non-quiz. We may have guest speakers.

The course borrows heavily from the work of Tom Volek, the late John Ginn, Lori Demo, Chuck Marsh, Linda Lee and Peggy Kuhr. I try to stand on their shoulders. Each of them is, as T.S. Eliot called Ezra Pound, “*il miglior fabbro*” – the better craftsman. All problems in the design and execution of this course are solely my fault.

## **Materials & Resources**

**Day-to-day “staying with it” duties:** Keep up with entries at these sites:

Poynter Institute: <https://www.poynter.org/channels/ethics>

Margaret Sullivan column: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/people/margaret-sullivan/?utm\\_term=.a5498980b304](https://www.washingtonpost.com/people/margaret-sullivan/?utm_term=.a5498980b304)

Jack Shafer column: <https://www.politico.com/staff/jack-shafer>

iMediaEthics <http://www.imediaethics.org>

**Required book:** Kidder, Rushworth M., *How Good People Make Tough Choices*, 2009 edition. Take notes on the assigned readings – good notes – and bring them to class. No open books in class. I’ll give quizzes and call on people randomly, so be ready.

**Download class assignments from KU Blackboard** <http://courseware.ku.edu/>.

It has links to PDF documents and websites, assignment sheets, this syllabus, your running grade and other course materials.

**Watch email.** When I post an announcement on the Blackboard site, an email goes out.

## **Requirements**

### **Group work**

Students will be assigned to groups. Each group will produce case studies based on group discussion and analysis.

Problem members of groups become pretty obvious. Groups shouldn't cut slack for slackers — and they don't. Group members will evaluate each other and themselves for their contributions and participation. Those evaluations go into the “group participation” grade component, which is worth 10 percent of the final grade. Don't try to take a free ride on others' work – you'll pay a price.

### **Attendance & participation**

I take roll at every class meeting, and **attendance is mandatory**. Attendance is 7 percent of your grade. If you don't show up for a class, it's an unexcused absence. **(No “free” cuts. See next graph for policy on excused absences.)** Each unexcused absence costs 1 percent of your final grade. If you don't show up on a day when your group presents, that's 5 percent, plus whatever hit your group mates mete out for non-participation. And if you're late on the day of a group-presentation, you'll lose a chunk of your grade.

If you need to miss class, act professionally and notify me **in advance**; I'll excuse you (exception: *no* excuses for absence from class meetings immediately before or after spring, fall or Thanksgiving breaks without a medical or other emergency). If you're sick, you must call or e-mail in sick, just as you would for a paying job. I won't necessarily accept after-the-fact notifications of absence, but I'll excuse absences for bona fide

emergencies (my favorite: “The ambulance didn’t have WiFi, so I couldn't e-mail you.”), and I might require documentation.

I keep track of participation, which is 3 percent of the final grade. Students who participate thoughtfully and regularly will get all three points; those who participate somewhat regularly will get two; those who seldom participate will get one; those who never jump into discussions will get zero.

***The "Bookface" warning:*** Doing puzzles, messing around on notebook computers, texting on phones, working on other classes or reading the newspaper in class is unprofessional. Dozing off doesn't make it. Anybody doing any of the above in class will immediately earn an "absent unexcused" for the day and could see further deductions from the participation grade.

You are responsible for assignment deadlines and material covered in class even if you're absent, and it's up to you to make them up as quickly as possible.

### **Journalism School policy on classroom attendance**

"No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

"Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.

"The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting."

"The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid.

"Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid."

### **Exams**

We will have multiple-choice Scantron tests covering primarily the readings and class discussion related to them. You need to know the distinctive elements of the philosophers, ethical principles and major discussion points from class. Bring a #2 pencil to class on test days.

This course has no final examination. We will not meet during finals week.

## **Academic Conduct**

It's an ethics course, right? We shouldn't need to say more, but here it is anyway.

You are bound by the academic misconduct rules found at <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6> and in the J-School policies stated below. **If you have any doubts as to what constitutes academic misconduct, ask the instructor before you do something you'll regret.**

**School of Journalism Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification -- Adopted May 7, 2004:**

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for this course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor(s) of this course.

*The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.*

### **Plagiarism**

Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

### **Fabrication and Falsification**

Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

## **Grade Standards**

Check your running percentage at Grade Center on Blackboard.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Comparative Code of Ethics                           | 5%  |
| Group Case Study presentations (three cases)         | 25% |
| Group participation: case-study prep & presentations | 10% |
| Exams  | 25% |
| Quick Hit presentation (partner assignment)          | 5%  |
| Personal Code of Ethics                              | 20% |
| Class attendance & participation                     | 10% |

Throughout the course and as a final grade, an A is for exceptional work, B is for good work and C is for doing enough to get by. Then it gets ugly. Don't go there.

### **Grade Scale:**

|            |         |            |         |
|------------|---------|------------|---------|
| A = 93.5%  | - 100%  | C+ = 77.5% | - 79.9% |
| A- = 90.0% | - 93.4% | C = 73.5%  | - 77.4% |
| B+ = 87.5% | - 89.9% | C- = 70.0% | - 73.4% |
| B = 83.5%  | - 87.4% | D = 60.0%  | - 69.9% |
| B- = 80.0% | - 83.4% | F = 0%     | - 59.9% |

### ***Other Policies***

#### **Weapons Policy**

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with [state and federal laws](#) and [KU weapons policy](#)**. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position

Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

#### **Disabilities**

The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact your lab instructor as soon as possible. Please be aware that the Student Access Services coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact your lab instructor privately in regard to this course. Additional information can be found at <http://access.ku.edu>.

#### **Graduate students**

The University requires extra assignments for graduate students enrolled for graduate credit in courses numbered between 500 and 699. Graduate students must individually consult the instructor to work this out.

#### **Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, the decision to cancel classes is made by KU officials, **not by your instructor**. To determine whether snow or icy conditions have canceled classes, call 864-7669 (864-SNOW).

#### **School laboratories**

The School provides computer and broadcast laboratories for student use. Check for times the lab in 105 Stauffer-Flint is open. Students sign up for editing time and

equipment on a first-come, first-served basis; instructions are at <http://www.journalism.ku.edu/reservations>. Students may reserve camera equipment no more than three hours at a time and editing equipment no more than two hours at a time.