



SYLLABUS: COMM 3404 (HYBRID)

Media Law and Ethics

Spring 2022

Wednesday: 1:50-3:40 p.m.

280 Pomerene Hall

Please sign up for Slack ASAP: [Slack Signup](#)

Instructor

Instructor: Dr. Nicole Kraft (please call me Nicole or, if you would prefer, Dr. Kraft)

Email address: kraft.42@osu.edu

Phone number: 614-407-6612

Office Hours:

Wednesday 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (in 3045E Derby Hall)

Thursday 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. (in Lantern newsroom conference room)

[Zoom Office Hours](#) (by appointment)

Teaching Assistant:

Asia Atuah

Email: atuah.3@osu.edu

Office Hours:

By appointment

Course overview

This HYBRID course explores the world of law and ethics as they pertain to Journalism and the First Amendment. The course will feature legal and ethical issues facing journalists—as dramatized in the movies. It is a unique adaptation of the case study approach often used in journalism law and ethics classes.

Journalists have been major characters in the movies since film began, and use of film in this course will help you visualize and understand the basic protections and restrictions offered by legal interpretations of the First Amendment, as well as to see and deal with the ethical problems and dilemmas journalists face.

Examining these issues through film will let us see media law and ethics in “real-life” situations to better understand First Amendment rights and journalists’ legal and ethical responsibilities and limitations while looking at them from a practical, historical and societal context. In this course, students will learn by examining these fictional and true-life scenarios—as well as recreating significant court cases that have shaped journalism law, crafting arguments

representing both sides of legal and ethical issues, and debating key issues that arise in the films.

The focus will be on such core concepts as:

- Libel
- Privacy
- Prior restraints
- News gathering
- Privilege
- Objectivity in reporting
- Bias and transparency
- Conflicts of interest
- Sources

This is not a class where students can be passive and do well. Engagement and participation are key parts of student success in the course. The goal is that by the end of the semester, students will be able to understand how the First Amendment is interpreted through U.S. legal decisions, as well as the ethical considerations that reporters face.

You will also be able to: identify the significance of key court decisions in the history of American journalism; distinguish between ethical and non-ethical conduct by journalists; demonstrate an ability to think critically and make fair and reasoned judgment about news, issues and events; employ journalistic standards and practices in a variety of newsgathering settings; and demonstrate a professional work ethic by being on time and prepared to contribute to each class session.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the semester, you will have the ability to:

- a. Develop an understanding of how the First Amendment is interpreted through U.S. legal decisions
- b. Develop an understanding of the ethical considerations reporters face and how they make decisions in those areas.
- c. Identify the significance of key court decisions in the history of American journalism that have shaped modern-day media law.
- d. Distinguish between ethical and non-ethical conduct by journalists.
- e. Demonstrate an ability to think critically and make fair and reasoned judgment about news, issues and events.
- f. Employ journalistic standards and practices in a variety of newsgathering settings.

Mode of Delivery

This class is a HYBRID course, which means we will meet together one day a week and you will also have ASYNCHRONOUS materials to consume and produce. Please note the workload is the same as a conventional three-credit class, which should equal about 12 hours of work per week.

How this course works

This class follows what is known as the “flipped, active learning model.” That means students develop a knowledge foundation through readings and videos before class. Class time (in person and via Zoom) is then dedicated to engaging with the material through a variety of activities and assessments to determine and build comprehension.

We do not have lectures like conventional classes. With this active learning model, students establish the foundation as part of that home pre-work, and then we build the structure

of learning together, allowing us to see and correct weaknesses in the foundation and the structure. That means you must do the readings and watch videos BEFORE you join us for our class sessions. Here is a good schedule to follow:

1. MONDAY & TUESDAY: Do readings and watch videos.
2. Take assessment BEFORE class on WEDNESDAY.
3. Come to class WEDNESDAY ready to put into play the ideas you learned in readings and videos, including in-class activities and assignments.
4. First discussion post is due Thursday at 11:59 p.m.
5. Any additional assignments are due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

The quality and quantity of in-class learning means that student attendance and participation are crucial to your success. Being organized is key.

All students are expected to follow Ohio State's Safe and Healthy Campus Expectations and Accountability Measures, as it relates to wearing masks and maintaining safe distances. Please review them. Please remember we are all in this together, and your adherence to these policies helps to keep you and your fellow Buckeyes safe.

Course materials

Required readings:

Leslie, G.P. (2011). *The First Amendment Handbook*. Arlington, VA. The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. *Open Access (Free)*

Moore, R.L. and Murray, M.D. (2011). *Media Law and Ethics*. Routledge; 4th edition (*Free inside Perusall*)

The majority of your readings will be done through a program called Perusall. Links to all readings are found in your weekly class module on Carmen. Once you click on the link, it will take you to Perusall where readings are listed by date. Please see Carmen for a complete explanation of Perusall, which will be demonstrated in class.

Course technology

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions or requests, contact the OSU IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available [here](#).

□ Carmen:

- Carmen, Ohio State's Learning Management System, will be used to host materials and activities throughout this course. To access Carmen, visit [Carmen.osu.edu](https://carmen.osu.edu). Log in to Carmen using your name.# and password. If you have not setup a name.# and password, visit my.osu.edu.
- Help guides on the use of Carmen can be found at: <https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmen>.
- This course requires use of Carmen and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

□ **Slack: Sign up here for our community!**

- This online message and work space will be utilized for all class communication and some sharing of files.
- Help guides can be found here: <https://slack.com/resources>.
- [Please review Slack's privacy policy](#).

□ Zoom

- The webinar tool Zoom will be used to host office hours. You can log in

through a link provided weekly in Carmen.

- Help guides on the use of Zoom can be found at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697-Getting-Started>.

□ **Perusall Readings**

- Perusall helps you master readings faster, understand the material better and get more out of your classes. To achieve this goal, you have the opportunity to collaboratively annotate the textbook with others in your class. The help you'll get from and provide your classmates (even if you don't know anyone personally) will get you past confusions quickly and make the process more fun.

While you read, you'll receive rapid answers to your questions, help others resolve their questions (which also helps you learn), and advise the instructor on how to make class time most productive. You can start a new annotation thread in Perusall by highlighting text, asking a question, or posting a comment; you can also add a reply or comment to an existing thread.

Each thread is like a chat with one or more members of your class. Your goals in annotating each reading assignment are to stimulate discussion by posting meaningful questions or comments and to help others by answering their questions.

□ **Turnitin:**

- Students at The Ohio State University are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Therefore, you should be familiar with the guidelines provided by the [Committee on Academic Misconduct \(COAM\)](#) and [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your papers to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following [Section A of OSU's Code of Student Conduct](#) as appropriate. For more information about Turnitin, please see [the vendor's guide for students](#). Note that submitted final papers become part of the OSU database.

Baseline technical skills necessary for courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

Necessary equipment

- iPad or computer with high-speed internet connection.

Necessary software

- OSU students have access to Microsoft Office products **free of charge**. To install, please visit https://osuitsm.service-now.com/selfservice/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=kb04733.
- Word processor with the ability to save files under .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf. Most popular word processing software programs including Microsoft Word, Google Doc and Mac Pages have these abilities.

Making Deadlines

All assignments are due either at the beginning or end of class on the date listed on the syllabus. In journalism, stories that miss the deadline often do not make it to publication. In this class, late

assignments will not be graded. Assignments will be submitted to Carmen. This course, like journalism as a whole, relies heavily on access to computers, specific software and the Internet.

Computer: Friend or Foe?

At some point during the semester you will likely have a problem with technology. Your laptop will crash; your iPad battery will die; a recording you make will disappear; you will accidentally delete a file; the wireless will go down at a crucial time.

These, however, are inevitabilities of life, not emergencies. Technology problems are not excuses for unfinished or late work. Bad things may happen, but you can protect yourself by doing the following:

- Plan ahead: A deadline is the last minute to turn in material. You can start—and finish—early, particularly if challenging resources are required, or you know it will be time consuming to finish the assignment.
- Save work early and often: Think how much work you do in 10 minutes. I autosave every two minutes.
- Make regular backups of files in a different location: Between Box, Google Drive, Dropbox and iCloud, you have ample places to store and back up your materials. Use them.

Assignments and Faculty Engagement

Grades

Assignment or category	Points and Percent
Assessments (Syllabus and 12 weekly assessments. Lowest 1 assessment dropped).	120/12%
Discussion Posts (4 @ 50 points, 1 @ 30 points)	230/23%
Our Code of Ethics	200/20%
Film Challenge (5 @ 30 points each)	150/15%
You Be the Justice (Part 1 and 2)	200/20%
Final Exam	100/10%
Total	1000 /100%

These points tallied together will give you your final grade of the following (100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-88 B+; 87-82=B; 81-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-72=C; 71-70=C-; 69-60=D; 59 and below=E). I am not able to negotiate grades, either during or after the semester.

Assignment Guide

Assessments (120 points)

In the first week, you will become acquainted with the syllabus, including our course policies. The syllabus quiz will measure what you have learned and ensure you have gained the necessary knowledge to complete the course. Twelve times in the semester we will assess your absorption and understanding of the material with a 10-point assessment quiz in Carmen. The questions will relate to readings and lecture videos and gauge your understanding and application of key concepts.

Discussion Posts (230 points)

Five times this semester students will be asked to contribute to a discussion about our module readings and reflect on the significant topics that resonated with you. You will be asked to write a discussion post on the topic and then respond to classmates.

Film Challenges (150 points)

This semester we will have five FILM CHALLENGES, where we watch a journalism-related film and evaluate a key journalistic issue through its lens. Themes will include the press's government watchdog role, libel, access to information, media manipulation and investigative reporting.

Major Assignments

Our Code of Ethics (200 points)

As part of the Spring 2021 Ethics Circle, we developed a draft of the new College Journalist Code of Ethics. These are suggestions based on interviews with students and real-life examples that further refine the ethical applications student journalists may use in their pursuit of campus coverage.

Your team has been assigned one section of the College Journalist Code of Ethics.

As a group, discuss the Code and answer the question of why it is important for journalists to be ethical and why it is important to establish a Code of Ethics.

Each team member will select ONE ethical criterion from your assigned section of the code, and identify and write a 500-word narrative from a real-life example of one of these recommendations.

You must ensure there is NO duplication of narratives among group members.

Each student will develop at least three recommendations for additional ethical considerations that should be added to the code, one of which can be a modification of a current ethical consideration in the Code. Include:

- an explanation of the issue.
- why it is significant to collegiate journalists.
- how it will make news coverage more ethical.

You may do some internet research, but you are also required to contact at least one expert from this list of sources:

- student journalist
- professional journalist
- student media adviser
- journalism professor with ethics expertise
- Student Press Law Center
- Poynter Institute

Join together as a team on Zoom and record a conversation discussing and answering the following:

1. Which items on the Code stand out to your group as most important and why?

2. Which items do you not understand, are a little confusing or need more clarification?
 - Share the story of your narrative example.
 - Discuss your suggestions for additions/modifications.
 - Discuss your overall view of the code and how it might impact coverage and source relationships on Ohio State's campus. Create a video of your group discussing these points. Total timing of the video should be about 3 minutes for each person speaking in the video (3 people = 9 minutes; 4 people = 12 minutes; 5 people = 15 minutes).

You Be the Justice

Part 1 (100 points)

This assignment will provide you the opportunity to actually embody a member of the Supreme Court of the United States and share with us how and why they made a legal decision in a [fabricated court case](#). These cases are based on real events but HAVE NOT been considered at the Supreme Court level.

"You Be the Justice" lets each student become a Supreme Court justice from pre-selected cases in two different ways.

Become your justice and join with other justices to record a video on Zoom in character discussing your case and rendering your decision to affirm precedent, modify precedent or revise precedent.

Part 2 (100 points)

Submit a written "decision" that either supports the majority opinion or justifies your dissent.

Final (100 points)

Cumulative of all the cases and ethical theories we cover in our weekly assessments and discuss in class. It will entail 60 questions and be taken on Carmen.

All assignments are explained fully inside the weekly Carmen modules.

Additional information

Extra Credit

Everyone will have the opportunity to earn extra credit by doing research related to key legal cases inside each module. Throughout the semester you may also attend events and meetings for Scarlet and Grey Sports Radio, Society of Professional Journalists and the Sports and Society Initiative for extra credit, up to 20 points. All extra credit will be reported in Carmen. The deadline for completion and reporting to me all of the extra credit is in Carmen.

Syllabus

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described herein.

Every effort has been made to create a syllabus that is as comprehensive and accurate as possible, but each class is a living entity and changes may arise. Please know I will notify you by email and in our next class session as soon as any syllabus change may arise.

Resources

During the course of this class and throughout your university career, you may find the following helpful:

- **The Writing Center.** This may be the last time in your life that you have easily accessible, free help available for your writing skills—use it. Being a good writer will give you an advantage in every walk of life, and if you are a Communication major, it is

expected. Visit <https://cstw.osu.edu/our-programs/writing-center> to learn more or to schedule an appointment.

- **Strunk & White's "The Elements of Style."** If you are uncertain of what constitutes good writing, this classic book is very straightforward and extremely helpful. The advice and direction offered in this book apply to writing in all fields. Find it at the campus bookstore, or at a used bookstore for cheap.

Attendance and Make-Up Policy

Only students enrolled in this section are permitted to attend class. Attendance (both physical and mental) is key to your success in this class. Your grade is largely contingent on your presence and participation in class. Listen, take notes, and ask questions. Much of the material presented in lecture is not found in your readings. If you miss class for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate; the instructor will not provide notes in any circumstance. If you miss class, you will not be able to make up any in-class work or extra credit opportunities.

Gentle Reminders

At the end of every week, Nicole will send via Slack a "Gentle Reminder" to look ahead at assignments and goals coming in the next week. Reading your Gentle Reminder is required and items in there may be included on weekly assessments.

What's in a Name?

Communicating clearly with each other is important. Please help me by letting me know how to pronounce your name, or what different name you use. Please also let me know your pronouns.

My name is Nicole, and I welcome you to call me that. Let's avoid using the interjection "hey" in messaging, as some of your faculty will likely find it a bit unprofessional.

There has been, since the Wall Street Journal column on Dr. Jill Biden, much discussion about the use of titles.

You can always be safe calling your faculty professor, as in "I am Prof. Kraft." The term Doctor (Dr.) is for professors who have a Ph.D. Ed.D. (or the equivalent). So, if you would prefer to address me with a title, it would be Dr. Kraft, since I have an Ed.D.

Mr., Mrs. and Ms. are often not used in college, although they were likely expected of you in high K-12.

Faculty feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

Grading and feedback

For weekly assignments, you can generally expect feedback within **two days**. For major assignments, feedback will come in **no more than three days**.

Slack

This course uses an app called Slack to communicate inside and outside of class and it will, for all intents and purposes, replace class email. Slack is fundamentally an instant messaging and collaboration system in which "channels" are used to separate communities and

discussions. We can also have private, one-on-one conversations through Slack by sending a direct message. I will respond to comments on Slack consistently between the hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. weekdays, except while I am in class. All students have been invited to the class Slack and are encouraged to sign-up and accept ASAP. I am also happy to meet with you by appointment, or for coffee or lunch. Please reach out so I can get to know you and your class needs better!

Lunch Anyone?

Arts & Sciences has a program called “[Take Your Professor to Lunch](#),” and I would LOVE to have lunch with you! This program is student initiated with an undergraduate student inviting a College of Arts and Sciences teacher to lunch. Meal cards are limited and distributed first-come, first-served.

Discussion and communication guidelines

The following are my expectations for how we should communicate as a class. Above all, please remember to be respectful and thoughtful.

Tone and civility: Let's maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can disagree amicably. Remember that sarcasm doesn't always come across online and is not always appreciated in person. Nicole and Asia both work very hard to provide a positive learning experience. Please keep this in mind and remain civilized and respectful in your class communications.

Attendance

Student participation requirements

We have a lot of material to learn in a short period of time. It is important that you attend all of our class sessions. All of the material is available on Carmen at the beginning of the semester. Readings and videos must be viewed before our live class session so we can work on active learning experiences.

Because this course requires elements of distance education, your attendance is partly based on your activity and participation. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

Readings and lectures:

- There will be readings and lecture videos every week that should be viewed BEFORE class on Wednesday. Also before class, please take the assessment quiz.
- **Weekly assignments**
 - We will have activities (participation) and/or assignments due (for points) in most classes.
- **Kraft Comm Classes Open Office:** We are available to help you to learn, understand and grow as individuals. If your question is something that you believe may be of interest to others in the class, please post to the #comm3404 channel in Slack. Office hours are digital via Carmen Zoom and in person.

Optimal Learning Experience

Students from previous distance learning and hybrid courses have provided their insights on

how to improve the learning experience and optimize outcomes. Here are a few tips from previous students to encourage your success in this hybrid course:

- Students kept up with the schedule and assignment due dates.
- Students did their best to have access to a reliable internet connection or let their instructor know of any challenges.
- Students had access to at least one reliable device and a backup plan in case of a technological issue.
- Students have made plans to back up work. OSU provides free access to data storage through [Microsoft One Drive](#).
- Students reported that completing assigned readings before class helped prepare them to follow along with lectures and participate in discussions.
- Students scheduled time to complete activities at a steady pace during the week. Keeping a schedule prevented a last-minute rush and kept the workload manageable.
- Students approached the material by thinking about the connections between readings, lectures, assignments AND the real world.

Student Academic Services

Arts and Sciences Advising and Academic Services' website provides support for student academic success. Information on advising issues such as tutoring, transfer credits and academic standing, and contact information for Arts and Sciences advisers can be obtained through this website: <http://advising.osu.edu/welcome.shtml>.

Student Services

The Student Service Center assists with financial aid matters, tuition and fee payments. Please see their site: <http://ssc.osu.edu>.

Copyright Disclaimer

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Managing Stress

College can be a stressful time, and I am always here to help you—in this class and beyond. If, however, you feel you need more support, I encourage you to reach out to the Student Advocacy Center at 614.292.1111. They will always work with professors on your behalf.

Student Health

Keeping students healthy and preventing the spread of illness is important to The Ohio State University—and to me. Students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick and may be asked to leave class if they are coughing/sneezing. Students who are sick and cannot attend class must contact me *BEFORE class* to receive any class materials and turn in assignments via the drop box or email. If you do not notify me, your assignment will not be accepted.

Student illness or absence

In the event you must quarantine because of exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 OR you are feeling too ill with COVID-19 or another illness to join a class you will still be able to make progress in the course. Please contact your instructor as soon as you are able prior to the next class meeting, as some accommodations may require extra setup or planning. The quarantine plan for this course is to join

remotely via Zoom. At least 1 hour advance notice is necessary for device and room setup. Extensions may be arranged if you contact us BEFORE assignments are due.

Instructor illness or absence

If the *instructor* is quarantined or is experiencing respiratory symptoms but is well enough to teach, the in-person sessions will be moved online to Zoom. You will be notified via email no later than one hour before class.

If the *instructor* is too ill to teach the course for a period of time, the designated backup for this course will step in. You will be notified via email from the School of Communication.

Campus closure

Should The Ohio State University Main Campus move to full online instruction due to closure, please wait for your instructor to message directions on Slack for the next session. Our in-person classes will be moved to Zoom and links to the meetings will be provided.

Diversity

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g. race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu

Mental Health

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting <https://ccs.osu.edu/> or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and the 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Academic integrity policy

Policies for this course

- **Written assignments:** Your written assignments, including discussion posts, should be your own original work. In formal assignments, you should follow **AP** style to cite the ideas and words of your research sources. You are encouraged to ask a trusted person to proofread your assignments before you turn them in—but no one else should revise or rewrite your work.
- **Reusing past work:** In general, you are prohibited in university courses from turning in work from a past class to your current class, even if you modify it. If you want to build on past research or revisit a topic you've explored in previous courses, please discuss the situation with me.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university’s [request process](#), managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave.

COVID-specific policies

Please note that these policies may be updated to reflect changes in the epidemic, changes in our understanding of the disease and changing University, local, state and federal recommendations/mandates.

Vaccination

The COVID-19 vaccine is the single best way to protect yourself and others from the disease. Widespread vaccination also offers us our best chance of ending the pandemic and getting back to a pre-pandemic lifestyle. If you haven't already, please get vaccinated. It is safe, effective and [free](#).

Masks and social distancing

The university requires that everyone on campus wears masks indoors (for more information, see <https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu/>). Wearing a mask that covers your mouth and nose is important because it can help slow the spread of COVID-19. There are several reasons to do this, even if you are vaccinated. First, the "Omicron variant," which is highly contagious, has caused a huge increase in cases recently. Second, even if you are vaccinated, there have been many cases of "breakthrough" infection, where a vaccinated person becomes ill. These cases are much less severe than cases among unvaccinated individuals, but you still don't want to go through it if you don't have to. Finally, and most importantly, if you get COVID-19, you can spread it to other people, including young children and others who cannot take the vaccine. In short, masks help protect you and they help you protect other people.

Social distancing may also help slow the spread of COVID-19. Although classrooms are no longer configured to ensure that students can spread out, doing so may still be helpful if you have the opportunity.

Attendance

Given the continued high prevalence of COVID-19, including breakthrough cases among vaccinated individuals, **students should not attend class if they are feeling sick**. It is very important that individuals avoid spreading the virus to others. Most students should be able to complete a successful semester despite illness-induced absence. If you are absent due to illness, including but not limited to COVID, I will give you a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work. **You do not need to provide a physician's document of illness, but you should advise me via Slack as soon as you are safely able to do so**. That said, your attendance is expected in class every day that you feel well. Since we only meet once a week, the time we spend in class is very important.

Other related resources

COVID-19 Accommodations: The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's [request process](#), managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. **SLDS contact information:** slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave.

Food Security (<https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org/>, 614-688-2508): The Ohio State University is committed to ensuring that all students have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Drive, Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours.

COVID-19 emergency financial assistance (<https://sfa.osu.edu/contact-us/consumer-disclosure/COVID-19-aid>): Ohio State has emergency grants available to aid students who are facing unexpected financial challenges related to the pandemic. Students may use the funds toward any component of the cost of attendance, or for emergency costs that arise as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic such as food, housing, tuition, health care (including mental health care) or child care. Please visit the website for more information.

Course Schedule

(subject to change)

Complete, accessible schedule is available each week in Carmen under MODULES

Week	Topics
<p>Week 1 (Jan. 12)</p> <p>MODULE 1:</p> <p>Meet the First Amendment</p> <p>Welcome to #osumediaLaw</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand what is covered by the First Amendment.Recognize modern challenges to the First Amendment.See how the First Amendment applies to you.Understand how Media Law and Media Ethics shape journalism. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Resources to review:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Read the syllabusDo course readings<ul style="list-style-type: none">Media Law and Ethics Chapter 1. Sources and Types of American Law (26-44)Media Law and Ethics Chapter 2. The U.S. Legal System (45-82)Watch course videos<ul style="list-style-type: none">The First Amendment in Five Minutes (5:51)Sources of Law (4:40)Assessment (due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)<ul style="list-style-type: none">QUIZ: Syllabus and Course PoliciesDialogue and Reflection (First post due Thursday at 11:59 p.m. Response due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discussion No. 1: Let's meet the legal scholar in you!Practice and Application (at home)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Assignment No. 1: How well do you know the First Amendment?
<p>Week 2 (Jan. 19)</p> <p>First Amendment Law</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand what is covered by the First Amendment.Recognize modern challenges to the First Amendment.See how the First Amendment applies to you.Understand how Media Law and Media Ethics shape journalism. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Do course readings<ul style="list-style-type: none">Part 1 First Amendment (pages 28-53)Part 2 First Amendment (pages 69-73)Murder the media? (2 pages)Watch course videos<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Watergate ScandalMedia Institution: Crash Course in Government (8:45)Journalists Covering Protests Are Being Attacked By Police Across America (3:20)Assessment (due at the start of class)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Court Case Assessment 1 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Practice and Application (in class)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review how well you know the First AmendmentIn-Class Activity No. 1: The Role of the Fourth EstatePractice and Application (at home)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Watch "All the President's Men" by accessing it through the Secured Media Library (Links to an external site.)Film Challenge No. 1: All the President's Men

<p>Week 3 (Jan. 26)</p> <p>Speech and Press Freedoms in Theory and Reality</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the origins of the First Amendment and how it has been interpreted. ▪ Be able to name and provide legal ramifications of key Supreme Court cases related to free speech and free press. ▪ Recognize censorship in modern-day form. ▪ Identify and understand prior restraint of the press. Evaluate how those ethical decisions impact coverage and their effect on journalists and the public they serve. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Do course readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics (Prior Restraint) - Pages 207-288 ▪ Project Veritas v. New York Times Company (2 pages) ▪ <u>Watch course videos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Five Freedoms (7:52) ▪ First Amendment Theories (3:40) ▪ Students Condemn Free Speech (6:43) ▪ Silence U: is the University Killing Free Speech (13:31) ▪ Assessment (due by start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 2 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-Class: When (if ever) should speech not be free? ▪ Dialogue & Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion: Let's discuss Module 1 materials ▪ What do you wish your professors knew? ▪ Practice and Application (at home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At-Home Assignment (Practice): First Amendment Cases
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<p>Week 4 (Feb. 2)</p> <p>MODULE 2: Talking About Ethics</p> <p>The Ethics of Media in Theory</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand how theory shapes media ethics. ▪ Be able to apply theory in media decision making. ▪ Identify core skills and knowledge for first major assignment, Our Code of Ethics. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Do course readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics - Pages 144-206 (4. Ethical Dilemmas, Issues, and Concerns in Mass Communication) ▪ SPJ Code of Ethics - Society of Professional Journalists ▪ Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journalistic Ethics: The four principles and the impact they can have. ▪ <u>Watch course videos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Nature of Ethics (8:30) ▪ The 5 Core Values of Journalism (2:54) ▪ Assessment (due by start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment No. 3 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduce OUR CODE OF ETHICS Assignment ▪ In-class assignment: What is ethical? ▪ Work with team on understanding your ethical focus and researching the topics and the ethical foundation.
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<p>Week 5 (Feb. 9)</p> <p>Ethics of Media in Reality</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understanding how ethics shape ethical decisions. ▪ Being able to apply ethics to real journalistic scenarios and situations. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Do course readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Craig: Journalism Ethics and Best Practices (15 pages) ▪ The Ethical Issues of Social Media in Journalism (3 pages) ▪ Rolling Stone to Pay \$1.65 Million to Fraternity Over Discredited Rape Story (5 pages)
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Watch course videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethics: What is reasonable (6:32) ▪ The Most Important Ethical Issues in Journalism (2:27) ▪ Ethics and Photography (graphic) (8:49) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 4 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-Class: Applying Ethical Decision Making ▪ Dialogue & Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion: Let's discuss Module 2 materials
<p>Week 6 (Feb. 16) MODULE 3: LEARNING ABOUT LAW</p> <p>Libel and Defamation</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand the elements of defamation. ▪ Apply defamation law to real journalistic scenarios. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do course readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics – Pages 493-584 (Libel) ▪ Key libel cases in history (24 pages) ▪ Online Defamation Law Electronic Frontier Foundation (4 pages) ▪ Watch course videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Libel (5:28) ▪ Libel Plaintiffs (4:37) ▪ Libel Defenses (8:03) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 5 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-Class Assignment: What is libel? ▪ Practice and Application (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Film Challenge No. 2: Absence of Malice ▪ At-Home Extra Credit: Libel Cases
<p>Week 7 (Feb. 23)</p> <p>Media and Privacy</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand how privacy and journalism converge. ▪ Applying the laws of privacy to journalistic experiences. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do course readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics - Pages 651-740 (10. Right of Privacy) ▪ Watch course videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ News gathering (6:22) ▪ Right to Privacy (7:03) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 6 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Privacy discussion ▪ In-class Activity No. 6: Privacy ▪ Practice and Application (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At-Home Extra Credit: Privacy Cases ▪ MAJOR ASSIGNMENT DUE <p>Major Assignment: Our Code of Ethics</p>

<p>Week 8 (March 2)</p> <p>Electronic Media- Yesterday and Today</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand how broadcast media has different standards than other media. ▪ How those standards have evolved over time. ▪ How media law is the same and different when related to video images. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review this resource <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Visit the FCC blog to see how the government is regulating technology. ▪ <u>Do course readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics - Pages 413-492 (7. Electronic Mass Media and Telecommunications) ▪ Free speech or censorship? Social media litigation is a hot legal battleground (5 pages) ▪ Trolls, Bots and Fake News: The Mysterious World of Social Media Manipulation (10 pages) ▪ <u>Watch course videos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A brief history of television interviews – and why live TV helps those who lie and want to hide: <i>Please read this article and watch embedded videos.</i> ▪ Media Regulations (9:15) ▪ Electronic Media Profanity (7:58) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 7 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review key concepts from Our Code of Ethics. ▪ Discussing broadcast and its special place in media. ▪ Practice and Application (at home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Film Challenge No. 3: Good Night and Good Luck ▪ At-Home Extra Credit: Understanding Digital and Broadcast Cases
<p>Week 9 (March 9)</p> <p>Reporter's Privilege</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand shield laws and how they may protect journalists. ▪ Identify the legal access all citizens have to public records and public meetings. ▪ Be able to use public record requests and the Freedom of Information Act to access public records. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Do course readings</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics - Pages 741-798 (11. Press and Public Access to the Judicial Processes, Records, Places, and Meetings) ▪ <u>Watch course videos</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Newsgathering and Access (3:56) ▪ Prior Restraint (2:22) ▪ Prior Restraint Examples (4:59) ▪ FOIA (4:17) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 8 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intro to You Be the Justice ▪ In-Class: Understanding Access ▪ Dialogue & Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion: Let's discuss Module 3 materials ▪ Practice and Application (at home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At-Home Extra Credit: Understanding Prior Restraint and Reporter Privilege ▪ <u>Optional Check-In</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are more than 65% of the way through the semester, so I wanted to reach out and see if you had additional thoughts about the semester and our class. I'd love to hear your thoughts and feelings.
<p>Week 10 (March 16)</p>	<p>SPRING BREAK</p>

<p>Week 11 (March 23)</p> <p>MODULE 4: APPLICATION OF ETHICS</p> <p>Cancel Culture and Changing Social Norms</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand how standards change across time, how they are shaped, and what happens when they are crossed. ▪ Recognize how challenging those standards is sometimes required to move society forward. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do course readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why we can't stop fighting about cancel culture (7 pages)\ ▪ How Capitalism Drives Cancel Culture (5 pages) ▪ The Right to Report (26 pages) ▪ Watch course videos/audio <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desi Lydic Foxexplains Cancel Culture (2:15) ▪ Has cancel culture gone too far? (6:07) ▪ What We Talk About When We Talk About 'Cancel Culture' (AUDIO) (35:58) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 9 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-class Activity No. 8: Cancel Culture <p>You Be the Justices Cases and Roles--SELECT YOUR JUSTICE</p>
<p>Week 12 (March 30)</p> <p>Obscenity, pornography and cursing, oh my!</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand how speech restrictions have ebbed and flowed through time. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do course readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Media Law and Ethics - Pages 585-650 (9. Indecency, Obscenity, and Pornography) ▪ Watch course videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Floyd Abrahams on the First Amendment (4:02) ▪ Let's Disagree Morally (17:24) ▪ Do we really need the 1st Amendment? (2:42) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 10 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewing what makes something obscene ▪ Practice and Application (at home) <p>Film challenge No. 4: Nothing But the Truth</p>
<p>Week 13 (April 6)</p> <p>Battling fake news and media manipulation</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognizing how misinformation and disinformation impact journalism and the public. ▪ Learning to become a better consumer of news as fact. <p>Course roadmap <i>Here's everything you need to do and remember BEFORE the class.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do course readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethics for Digital Journalists: Filtering Fact from Fiction (14 pages) ▪ Ethics for Digital Journalists: Live Tweeting and Handling Mistakes (30 pages) ▪ The surgeon general wants Facebook to do more to stop Covid-19 lies (4 pages) ▪ Watch course videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why do our brains love fake news? (5:21) ▪ Chris Wallace interviews Donald Trump (2:07) ▪ Ted Talk: Christiane Amanpour (17:21) ▪ Assessment (due at start of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court Case Assessment 11 <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploring Fake News ▪ Practice and Application (at home) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Film Challenge 5: Spotlight

<p>Week 14 (April 13)</p> <p>You Be the Justice</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand your own media bias. ▪ Prepare for the final exam. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work on You Be the Justice ▪ You Be the Justice Examples from other classes ▪ MAJOR PROJECT (April 17 at 11:59 p.m.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Due: You Be the Justice Part 1 (Court on Zoom) ▪ Due: You be the Justice Part 2 (The Decision) ▪ Points for Class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extra Credit for class
<p>Week 15 (April 20)</p> <p>The End is Here</p>	<p>Learning outcomes for this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for the final exam. <p>Course roadmap</p> <p><i>Here's everything you need to do THIS WEEK.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice and Application (in class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare for the final. • Dialogue and Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion: What Have We Learned? • FINAL DUE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comm 3404 FINAL EXAM (open until Sunday at 11:59 p.m.) ○ Extra Credit for class