Course Name: JOUR 4470 Ethics, Law and Diversity in Strategic Communications
Section Information: Section 001
Class Meetings: Monday & Wednesday, 2:30 p.m.—3:50 p.m. ES 120

Course Instructor: Samra Jones Bufkins, MJ, APR
Office: GAB 102 C
Office phone: 940-565-2167
Cell phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx (text any time, include name & class, call only if emergency. I don’t get a cell signal in my office, either.)
Office hours: Any time my door is open; after classes and by appointment. I’m always on campus M, T, W.
E-mail: SamraBufkins@unt.edu
Twitter: @samjb

Teaching Assistant: Brittany Flocken
Phone xxx-xxx-xxxx
Email: via Blackboard email.
Twitter: @BrittyBam

Course Description
This course will explore the philosophical bases for ethical behavior as well as the professional codes of ethics for strategic communicators and other journalists. Individually and as a group we will explore various ethical decision-making models in order to make ethical business decisions. We will examine mass communication law, including privacy, defamation, copyright, financial disclosure, legal and regulatory compliance, all within a context of workplace and societal diversity. Readings, class discussions, projects and assignments will also explore tactics and strategies for understanding and working with diverse communities in a pluralistic democracy. (Prerequisite(s): JOUR major status; Senior standing, JOUR 4450 or JOUR 4210.)

Texts
4. Outside readings as assigned or handed out in class.
5. Selected Web links, including articles referred via Twitter (#untj4470), UNT class Blackboard; selected blogs TBD.

Students are never required to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online, as e-books and are available for rental.

Disability Accommodation
The School of Journalism cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodations to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students. If you have not registered with ODA, please present your written accommodation request to me by the 12th day of class.
Communication:
Communication between students and instructor will primarily be via email and Twitter.

- **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK YOUR UNT EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD EMAIL OR FORWARD TO YOUR PERSONAL EMAIL.**
- If you must reach me at night or on a weekend and need a quick response, **DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH BLACKBOARD** because I cannot respond via mobile device. You can email me through Blackboard and then text me about it.
- Email communication will be professional and utilize correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, as in all business communication. Text language is not an acceptable business communication method for anything but texting (and even then I’d be conscious of the audience).
- Please address any confidential or grade-related email through Blackboard, as that is the most secure platform.
- **DO use Twitter to share links to articles you think are relevant to your fellow classmates (and me) and to facilitate class discussion.**

Technical requirements:
- All students will open and maintain a Twitter account and monitor “Tweets” to hashtag #untj4470 for discussion and links to supplemental reading material.
- Students will follow the instructor, TA and other students in the class and are encouraged to follow guest speakers, business and media outlets and strategic communications professionals of relevance to the course material in order to enrich the class discussion and learning environment.
- Sharing of relevant articles, blogs, websites and social media resources is expected in order to stimulate dialogue with a diverse community in and outside of class.
- **Twitter activity will count as a percentage of your class participation grade**—those who do not initiate, RT or reply to at least one course-related Tweet per week will see their grade reduced.
- Students must maintain and use BlackBoard to access course materials and supplemental readings, and regularly access e-mail through BlackBoard and UNT.
- All students will have a blog and post to that blog as assigned.

Course Objectives
After taking JOUR 4470, each student will be able to:

- Understand basic mass media law, especially as it relates to privacy, intellectual property, and financial disclosure requirements used by PR practitioners.
- Identify regulatory agencies that monitor the work of companies & organizations.
- Cite and apply fundamental beliefs contained within various professional codes of ethics, their histories, and contemporary challenges.
- Analyze ethical dilemmas in strategic communications case studies.
- Apply moral and ethical principles to professional situations.
- Understand the need for tolerance when disagreement arises and ways to mediate differences among publics.
- Respect differences brought about by cultural, gender, or religious perspectives within and outside of American and Western culture.
- Understand and apply First Amendment principles and the law appropriate to professional practice.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes in which they work.
ATTENDANCE, PREPARATION AND PARTICIPATION POLICY
You are expected to attend and participate in each class meeting, complete all assignments on time in the proper format and participate in all online and social media activities as assigned. I may periodically give quizzes covering the week’s readings, class discussions and current events—these will occur in the first 10 minutes of class. Be there. I take roll in writing at the beginning of each class.

• All students must sign the attendance sheet at the beginning and end of class.
• Two absences is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me, in writing, from the beginning about an extraordinary problem (like you’re planning to be on life support).
• The third absence will result in 10 points taken off your final course grade, with 10 points deducted for each subsequent absence.
• After the fourth absence I reserve the right to drop you from the class if I do not see sufficient evidence that you are taking the class seriously and making an effort to complete all work.
• Instances of your illness or life-threatening illness or a death in the immediate family (persons residing in your household) must be documented in writing.
• If you are absent you are still responsible for submitting your assignment on time.
• Coming to class late or leaving early constitutes 1/2 of an absence for that day.
• If you need to leave the classroom for any reason during an exam you will not be re-admitted to the classroom, and your exam will be graded based accordingly.
• Failure to meet with your project group during class periods set aside for that purpose will result in an unexcused absence for the day.
• Credit for “extra credit” assignments will be awarded only if all assignments, blogs and online quizzes have been completed. “Extra credit” is just that—it is not make-up credit for missed work.
• Back up your work in Google Docs (or some other cloud server) in case your hard drive fails or your flash drive is lost or destroyed. It is your responsibility to ensure your work is completed and accessible at all times.

ONCE IN THE CLASSROOM SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND PUT THEM AWAY. THIS INCLUDES MUSIC HEADPHONES. I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE ANY UNAUTHORIZED DEVICES IN USE DURING THE CLASS PERIOD. DO NOT USE YOUR COMPUTER DURING CLASS UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO. IF YOU PLAN TO USE YOUR COMPUTER TO TAKE NOTES YOU MUST OBTAIN MY PERMISSION AHEAD OF TIME.

Classroom protocol. Class meetings will consist of a combination of lecture, guest speakers, discussion, case study analysis and group exercises. Participation in class discussion is mandatory and expected to be provocative, but must be conducted in an environment of respect and tolerance for differing perspectives, cultures, backgrounds and opinions. The instructor reserves the right to halt any discussion that crosses any boundaries of civility.

Academic Integrity (Cheating)
Mayborn School of Journalism Academic Integrity Policy
The codes of ethics from the Society of Professional Journalists, American Advertising Federation and Public Relations Society of America address truth and honesty. The Mayborn School of Journalism embraces these tenets and believes that academic dishonesty of any kind – including plagiarism and fabrication – is incongruent with all areas of journalism. The school’s policy aligns with UNT Policy 18.1.16 and requires reporting any act of academic dishonesty to the Office for Academic Integrity for investigation. If the student has a previous confirmed offense (whether the first offense was in the journalism school or another university department) and the student is found to have committed another offense, the department will request the additional sanction of removing the student from the Mayborn School of Journalism. The student may appeal to the Office for Academic Integrity, which ensures due process and allows the student to remain in class pending the appeal.

I have zero tolerance for cheating, and will not hesitate to file a report with the Office of Academic Integrity for any and all instances of suspected cheating including plagiarism, dual submission of work (work you submitted for another class) and falsifying research (including lying about personally interviewing sources or clients). Such actions have resulted in students not graduating from UNT. Do not think for one moment that because you are a senior graduating this semester this cannot happen to you.
When you submit work for this class it is the same as making a statement that you have produced the work yourself, in its entirety, specifically for this class and no other class. Plagiarism, fabrication, copyright infringement, and similar uses of other people’s work and ideas are unacceptable and in most instances illegal. All assignments and blogs in this class are to be submitted via Turnitin. There are no exceptions. Anything not submitted via Turnitin will receive a grade of 0 (zero). Turnitin is also set to lock out late submissions. Group members must ensure group projects are uploaded correctly and on time.

Plagiarism, in a nutshell, is using other people’s written words as your own, including copying from your client’s website or other published materials. Some people consider the use of 7-10 words in a row, copied from another source, as plagiarism. Be sure to include citations when using other people’s writing, because plagiarism is a serious offense in any discipline, especially in journalism. It’s a firing offense in the professional world, and can keep you from graduating.

For this class, copying from websites and other materials without detailed attribution is plagiarism. While there are rare situations in which you must copy verbatim (organizational mission statements, for example), DO NOT ASSUME BECAUSE YOU HAVE THE CLIENT’S PERMISSION SUCH COPYING IS ACCEPTABLE FOR THIS CLASS. This is primarily a class in analysis and critical thinking, not a “copy, paste, attribute” class. If you are in doubt or have a question contact me immediately. It is better to ask for clarification than to find yourself dealing with an academic integrity issue that will go on your permanent academic record.

Quoting large chunks of text, even with attribution, in assignments or blog posts is unacceptable in an academic environment. This is a WRITING class and you are expected to provide critical analysis in your blog posts and other assignments, not copy, paste and attribute. Rewrite source material in your own words.

Submitting previously published work and/or work submitted for other classes (whether or not it was graded) is strictly prohibited by university policy. All work submitted for this class is to be original work created by you for this class only.

Any situations involving potential academic dishonesty will be handled through procedures established by the UNT Office of Academic Integrity. The process also includes the opportunity for students to appeal the outcome. Read specific policies and procedures at http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf

Description of Assignments
A NOTE ON RESEARCH SOURCES: Answers.com, Ask Yahoo!, Quora, Wikipedia and all similar, unverified, user-generated sites are not acceptable research sources, although they are often good places to start looking for ideas. Don’t be lazy and quote the first one or two things that pop up on Google. Use the library resources available to you—you paid for them—and your research will be more meaningful to you and will most likely result in a better grade. Do not depend solely on Internet research—the Willis Library has lots of dead tree media and nice librarians who will help you find stuff.

Blog assignments (5 total, 800-1,500 words) will be graded according to AP style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation, as well as content relevant to the assigned topic. What I’m really looking for is a critical analysis, not just a rehashing of the problem coupled with your opinion. Think of these as mini-term papers, or small op-ed pieces. They must be supported with source materials, either cited in the post, via links, or with a source list attached. Do not think you can provide a link to someone else’s blog with a few paragraphs about why you agree or disagree. This is a critical essay. You must have a blog, and it must clearly identify you as the blogger—no anonymous blogging or commenting allowed. You may not count blog postings for any other class in this assignment, but you may use the same blog link as long as you make it clear which class you’re blogging for. Blog assignment dates in the syllabus are approximate and will vary according to current events and the progress of class discussions.

You will be required to research four case studies, providing a case narrative, facts that should be considered, and all applicable research cited appropriately. Because of the size of the class, these case studies will be researched and presented in groups. Completion of peer evaluation forms will be required for each group project and will be factored into the final grade for each case study. I will choose the groups.
Three tests and one final exam will cover materials from the course-required texts, supplemental readings and from class discussions. Bring a pencil—scantrons will be provided.

All assignments and blog postings will be submitted via Turnitin in Blackboard. Any case study or blog not submitted via Turnitin will receive a grade of Zero. Groups are responsible for ensuring their projects are submitted correctly. No late submissions are allowed. Turnitin is set to lock you out at the time the assignment is due. If inclement weather results in the closing of the university on an assignment due date, the assignment is still due via Turnitin, with hard copy to be submitted at the next class meeting. There are no exceptions. I highly recommend you write your blog in Word, spell check it, print it, proofread it, and correct it before uploading it to Turnitin—and upload it to Turnitin before posting it live on your blog, or it will turn bright red on the screen and give me heart failure because it looks like you plagiarized the whole thing.

Blogs are submitted entirely online as Word or .pdf files via Turnitin, with the link to the blog post included. Case studies are submitted via Turnitin with hard copy brought to class the day of the presentation. Please also bring enough copies of a one-page bullet summary of your case to distribute to the class.

### Evaluation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blog assignments (5)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study research projects (4)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three tests</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation (including Twitter interactions)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Final Exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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### Grading System

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>920 - higher</td>
<td>A (outstanding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>820 - 910 points</td>
<td>B (excellent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>720 - 810 points</td>
<td>C (satisfactory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>620 - 710 points</td>
<td>D (unsatisfactory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 620 points</td>
<td>F (failing)</td>
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### Journalism Requirements and Guidelines

The Mayborn School of Journalism, in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office, has eliminated the need for individual class codes for the majority of journalism courses. Registration will begin on the dates noted in the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program: thus, we are unable to maintain the traditional waiting list as has been done previously.

By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required pre-reqs according to your calendar year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven’t taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your pre-requisites, please see an advisor.

A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all pre-major courses, and Math 1680 and also have applied for major status. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses. Pre-majors must file a formal application for major status in the final semester of pre-major status to be eligible for early registration of major-level classes in the following semester.

Students will not be allowed to take automatically a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for 12 months. Once you have waited 12 months after failing a course twice, you may make an appeal to the professor teaching the course to be allowed to enroll a third time.
SETE
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a university-wide online evaluation and a requirement for all UNT classes. The Mayborn School of Journalism needs your input to improve our teaching and curriculum. This short survey will be available at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Prompt completion of the SETE will mean earlier access to final semester grades. You are a critical part of our growth and success. We look forward to your input through SETE.

Final Note
I come across as a tough old broad but it’s because I’m trying to prepare you for the intensely competitive career you’ve chosen. I’m here to help you, and I care deeply about all my students, personally and professionally. I have 23 years of professional PR experience and I have many professional contacts in the industry—I’m getting to know more folks in the advertising industry and many in the social media realm. Come see me in my office any time, about anything, and if I can help I will. My ultimate goal in teaching is to help you succeed and to inspire you to greatness.
## Course Outline – Journalism 4470 Fall 2011 (Dates are approximate and subject to change.)

There’s a lot of reading in this class—don’t get behind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-test and introduction to the course.</td>
<td>Get started on your readings early—don’t get behind.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2    | Introduction to the need for ethics study, ethics and society, ethics and moral reasoning. | Read before class: Day Introduction, Chapter 1 & 2: Bivins Preface, Chapters 1—3.  
First blog assignment due 11:59 pm Thurs. Sept. 8 Topic: The need for ethics in media and business decision-making. Specifics in handout. |
| 3    | Introduction to classical ethical theories.                         | Read before class: Day Chapter 3, Merrill article (on BB), Bivins Chapter 4 & additional readings TBA. |
| 4    | Theory review. Introduction to writing case studies: Group assignments for 1st case study. | Test on classical ethical theories Monday 9/19. Lecture notes and handouts, TBA, Bivins Chapter 6 & 7 |
| 6    | Guest speaker, Dr. Sheri Broyles, Wed. Oct. 5. Subliminal advertising. Catch up or get ahead in your reading. | First Case Study due online 2:00 pm Monday October 3—discussion in class—bring bullet summaries for everyone. Read Day, Chapter 4 before Wednesday |
| 8    | Let’s tie it all together—ethics in practical applications—ethical decision making models and introduction to codes of ethics. | Test 2 Monday Oct. 17. PR & Advertising ethical issues—all material to this point. For Wednesday, read Bivins, Chapter 5, Epilogue & Appendices, Day Chapter 7 & Week 8 reading materials in Blackboard. |
| 9    | More of what we did last week.                                      | Readings: Bivins Chapter 8 & possibly others TBA.                                |
| 10   | Privacy & First Amendment, Trademarks, Copyrights & Patents.        | Second Case Study 2 due online 2:00 pm Monday October 24—presentations in class, bring bullet summaries for everyone. Blog 3 (Topic TBA) due Tuesday 10/27 11:59 pm. |
| 11   | Commercial Speech, Libel & Slander what’s the difference and why should I care? | Traeger, et. al, Chapters 5, 14 uploaded to Blackboard Blog 4 due Thursday 11/10, Topic TBA |
| 12   | Continue previous week’s discussion & review for Test 3.            | Third Case Study due online 2:00 pm Monday November 14—presentations in class, bring bullet summaries for everyone. |
| 13   | Corporate Social Responsibility and Communicating in a diverse world and workplace. | Test 3 Monday 11/21 Codes of Ethics & all the law and regulatory stuff up till now. Day, Chapter 8 through 10 & 12 |
| 14   | Now what?                                                           | Get caught up on your reading.                                                   |
| 15   | Wrap-up, catch-up and review for final exam. (Exam is comprehensive.) | Fourth case study due 2:00 pm Monday December 5—presentations in class—bring bullet summaries for everyone. Blog 5 due 11:59 pm Thursday, December 8—Topic: What did I get out of this class, how do I anticipate using it in my professional career, and what was my “oh, wow!” moment? |
| 16   | Final exam week                                                     | Comprehensive final exam Wednesday December 14, 1:30-3:30 pm                   |

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