

**Point Loma Nazarene University**  
**JRN340 Media Ethics & Law**  
**Fall 2017**

**PLNU Mission Statement**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**The Basics**

**Location:** Bond 156

**Time:** Tuesday / Thursday, 3:00 – 4:15 pm

**Final:** Thursday, December 14, 4:30 - 7:00 pm

**Professor:** Stephen Goforth

**Email:** sgoforth@pointloma.edu

**Phone:** 619-849-3458 (office), 678-472-1646 (cell)

**Office:** room 126, Bond Academic Center

**Office Hours:** 1 pm – 2:30 pm Tuesday / Thursday (or by appointment)

**Prerequisites**

Writing 250, Introduction to Journalism

**Course Description**

The study of major ethical journalistic philosophies, codes, and current practices. Interaction with professionals and discussions of ethical problems. Stresses responsible, fair, accurate journalism.

**Multimedia Journalism Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)**

1. Students will exhibit effective research and reporting practices including the creation (**Synthesis**) and editing (**Application**) of a news story based on accepted industry standards and values. [**Written Communication, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking**]

2. Students will display strong interpretive (**Application**) analytic (Analysis), and critical thinking skills by writing (**Synthesis**) news copy clearly and accurately, demonstrating quantitative and qualitative reasoning in forms appropriate to the purpose, medium, and audience. [**Written Communication, Information Literacy, Quantitative Reasoning/Literacy**]
3. Students will identify (**Knowledge**) and apply (**Application**) appropriate ethical and legal standards in their service to their communities and cultures. [**Critical Thinking**]
4. Employ (**Application**) delivery skills appropriate to various news performance situations. [**Written Communication, Oral Communication**]
5. The student will be able to describe (**Knowledge**) how technologies shape the way people perceive and interact with the world and apply (**Application**) these digital tools and technologies appropriately for the communications professions in which they work.  
[**Written Communication, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Reasoning**]

*The terms inside the brackets indicate the relationship of the learning outcome to WASC's five Core Competencies: Written Communication, Oral Communication, Information Literacy, Critical Thinking, and Quantitative Reasoning. WASC is the organization through which PLNU receives accreditation.*

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this semester, students shall be able to:

- discuss and debate the freedoms and responsibilities of mass media in society.
- identify legal and ethical problems in the media and the systems of shared values and social practices that frame them.
- demonstrate in case studies a systematic approach to making ethical decisions based on sound principles and reasoned analysis.
- formulate and defend ethical standards by which one can operate with Christian integrity as a media practitioner.

### **Criterion for Success**

Total points obtained on each of the areas listed in grading will be converted based on the indicated percentage and your final grade will be computed based on the following scale:

- A 90 – 100%
- B 80 – 89%
- C 70 – 79%
- D 60 – 69%
- F Below - 60%

No grades will be given over the phone or by e-mail.

## Breakdown of Grading Percentages:

Daily quizzes and class work	40%
Attendance and Participation	10%
Two tests	30%
Final	20%

## Text and Articles

Articles and links to other material will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. You will be responsible for knowing the material for tests and completing any assignments given out any day you miss. If you miss an in-class exercise for an unexcused absence, you will be given a zero. These quizzes and exercises cannot be made up.

Our text for the class:

*Ethics: Approaching Moral Decisions: 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, Arthur F. Holmes, (2007).  
*The 2017 Associated Press Stylebook*

Recommended for further read:

*Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics, An Introduction to Theories of Right and Wrong*, Steve Wilkens, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (1995).  
*God & Moral Obligation*, C. Stephen Evans, (2013).

## News Awareness

While a member of this class, you will be treated as a journalist. Get into the flow of news. A journalist should have a basic general knowledge of current events. Be able to identify the major players in the major news stories. Currents events questions could be a part of our quizzes. Be prepared by knowing what's happening in national politics, state news, entertainment, business, international events, etc.

## Conduct

When interacting with news sources, act in a professional manner at all times whether in person, through the Internet or over the phone. This includes dressing appropriately for meetings. Your behavior and appearance reflect on our school.

## LJML Departmental Mission Statement

Welcome to the Department of Literature, Journalism and Modern Languages. Embodying the core values of a Christian liberal arts education in the Wesleyan theological tradition, and focusing on the power of language and story to shape us and our world, the LJML Department and programs will provide students with knowledge, skills, and experiences to equip them to understand, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts as linguistic and/or artistic expressions of diverse human experiences. We value reading, writing, researching, speaking, and discussing as

profound means of participating in the redemptive work of God in all of creation. The following document will provide you with the information sources and information guidelines to University and Departmental policies that apply to all courses taken in this Department.

### **Final Exam Policy**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

### **PLNU Copyright Policy**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the U.S. Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

### **PLNU Academic Honesty Policy**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

### **PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy**

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

### **PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy**

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report, which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

### **Attendance Policy**

Missing a class means losing points for attendance, participation and in class work. If you must miss a class for a valid reason (illness, family emergency, school activity, etc.) then documentation will be required.

If you miss an in-class exercise for an unexcused absence, you will be given a zero. There are no makeups for much of the in-class work.

Tardiness disrupts the class environment and hinders your own learning. If you arrive after the roll has been sent around for everyone to sign in, you'll be docked half of an absence. You will also lose half credit for class attendance any day you leave early.

Articles and links will be posted on Canvas related to our discussions throughout the semester. You will be responsible for knowing the material for tests and completing any assignments given out any day you miss.

### **Participation Policy**

This course requires your active involvement. If you want to learn as much as possible, you should come to class ready to initiate ideas, share relevant experiences, reflect on what others say, and discuss the readings, videos, etc. Strive to see other points of view and consider them critically. As a member of this class you are expected to be respectful toward others and their views, even when they radically oppose your beliefs. Listen respectfully to others but don't shy away from expressing your own ideas. Don't be afraid to wade in and soak up all you can.

I'll be asking your opinion on some controversial issues. I don't want you to simply reflect back what you believe I already think. I want to hear your own opinion. Be ready to not only explain but also defend your positions.

### **Public Discourse**

Much of the work we will do in this class is cooperative, by nature of the class discussions and general feedback given to written work and/projects; thus you should think of all your writing and speaking for and in class as public, not private, discourse. By continuing in this class, you acknowledge that your work will be viewed by others in the class. Thinking of our class work as public and shared also gives us the chance to treat one another with gentleness and compassion.

### **Inclusive Language**

Because the Literature, Journalism, and Modern Language department recognizes the power of language, all public language used in this course, including written and spoken discourse will be inclusive. This standard is outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and is the norm in university-level work.

## **Diversity Statement**

Point Loma Nazarene University is committed to diversity in the classroom, in its publications and in its various organizations and components. Faculty and staff recognize that the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of their colleagues and students are best served through respect toward gender, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture and other personal characteristics. In addition, the department of Literature, Journalism, and Modern Languages is committed to taking a leadership position that calls for promoting a commitment to diversity in and out of the classroom and in the practices of writing, journalism, and the study of literature and languages.

## **FERPA**

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publically posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (each faculty member choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

## **Flexibility**

The aforementioned requirements, assignments, policies, evaluation procedures, etc., are subject to change. Students' experiences and needs, as well as emerging knowledge, will be considered in modifying this course syllabus.

## **Disclaimer**

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the student and the instructor or Point Loma Nazarene University.