

## **Advertising and Public Relations Law and Ethics**

Spring 2019

ADV 353 (06405) | PR 353 (06880)

TH: 11-12:15 | CMB 2.102

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**Course Description:** Many of the courses offered in advertising focus on methods for developing persuasive communication. This class has a different purpose and examines the ethical issues related to the practice of advertising and marketing communications.

Are some practices in advertising or public relations unethical? How can we recognize, define, assess, reprimand, and prevent unethical practices? What impact do these acts have on individuals, the industry, and society?

Toward answering these questions we will consider ethical principles, industry codes, legal and regulatory issues, and larger macro societal issues related to the institution and practice of advertising and public relations. The overarching objectives of this course are to (1) build an awareness of ethical and legal issues related to advertising and (2) help students learn how to critically think and

assess these issues.

### **Course Objectives**

1. Identify ethical issues in advertising and public relations by exploring beliefs about human nature, philosophical perspectives, ethical principles, and industry ethical codes.
2. Deconstruct the complex interactions among advertising/public relations and individual, economic, legal, and social issues impacting ethical assessments of advertising.
3. Think creatively to solve ethical problems facing the advertising industry.]
4. Recognize how ethical issues impact the advertising and public relations industries, and *you*, as both an advertising/public relations professional *and* as a consumer.
5. Articulate a sense of *your* personal and professional ethical beliefs and behavior.

### **Course Topics**

*Personal Ethics, Heuristics, and Moral Philosophy:* Topics include an examination of personal values, individual ethical perspectives, moral philosophy, human heuristics and behaviors, personal values, moral myopia and moral muteness.

*The Legal Environment of Advertising and Public Relations:* Topics include an examination of commercial speech, the FTC, deceptive advertising, puffery, copyright, and trademark law.

*Advertising/Public Relations & Society:* Topics focus on the aggregate effects of advertising and public relations and their intended and unintended consequences such as the obesity crisis, creating and/or reinforcing problematic stereotypes, advertising to vulnerable populations, privacy issues, and advertising controversial products.

### **Required Reading**

- *Controversies in Contemporary Advertising*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2013, by Kim Sheehan, ISBN-13:978-1452261072, available from the University Co-op

- *Advertising & Marketing Law: Cases and Materials*, 2nd edition, 2014, by Rebecca Tushnet and Eric Goldman can be purchased for \$11.50 from the following website:  
<https://gum.co/vnCkL>
- Additional assigned readings will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to keep updated on the assigned readings. The course schedule on Canvas includes the assigned reading for the semester.

#### COURSE EVALUATION

Assessment Tool	Percentage of Overall Grade
Quizzes	40%
Team Debate and Summary	10%
Mini Research Papers (2)	30%
Participation and Professionalism	20%
Total	100%

\*Subject to adjustments according to the average of your peer evaluation

**Quizzes:** Quizzes will include material from assigned readings, in-class discussion, and examples shared by the professor, your peers, and guest speakers during class. Quizzes will be taken in class and will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Quizzes will typically be administered at the beginning of class; **latecomers will not be administered a quiz after a quiz has already been turned in.** There are no exceptions to this rule.

**Debate Information on Canvas:** Your debate teams and debate critique assignments will be available on Canvas. You can find this information in the module on Canvas titled "Debate Information." **It is your responsibility to look up the topics and dates that you have been assigned to debate and critique.** The information about your assigned debate team, topic, stance, and your assigned debate critique topics are in the same excel file. Note: you will need to download the file to see all of the pertinent information – simply looking at the document in the Canvas view does not allow you to see all necessary information.

**Team Debate and Summary:** Depending on final course enrollment, you will be assigned to a team of 5-6 people. Your team will be assigned a debate topic and stance. Your team will engage in an in-class debate **and** prepare a written summary of your assigned

topic and stance. Not all group members are required to participate in the actual debate. Typically, 2-3 students will participate in the debate. Students not participating in the debate are responsible for writing the majority of the team debate summary. You can find the instructions and rubric for the in-class debate and the written debate summary on Canvas.

Your individual grade for the team debate/ debate summary is subject to adjustments according to the average of your peer evaluation. Your final debate/ debate summary grade will be significantly lowered by poor peer evaluations. If your group does not think you have put forth the same amount of effort and the same quality of work as they have throughout the length of the project, your peer evaluation will negatively influence your final grade.

**Mini Research Paper:** You (individually) will write two mini research paper for two different debate topics. You are expected to be an expert on both assigned topics. You can find instructions and the rubric on Canvas. The mini research paper must be submitted to Canvas by 11 AM no later than one week following the debate you are assigned to critique. **Note: This is an individual assignment. You do not complete this with your group. No late work will be accepted.**

**Assignments:** We are fortunate enough to have a “smaller” class size this semester! As a result, we will have lots of in-class activities. Ideally, there will be one in-class activity per week. To facilitate the learning experience, you will conduct all in-class activities in your debate teams. It is my hope that you will build fruitful and thoughtful discussion in your groups (which cannot always be accomplished with 90+ students). You will sit next to your debate group members on these days. There is no opportunity for makeup points for any in-class assignment. You must be present in the classroom to receive credit. **Any attempts to obtain credit when not present will be considered academy dishonesty.**

There will be a few out-of-class assignments throughout the semester. You are to submit out-of-class assignments on Canvas. Please be sure to include your last name, first name, and EID. This will assist the TA's with grading. **No late work will be accepted.**

### **Participation and Professionalism**

You are expected to participate both in class and on the course Facebook page. On the first day of class you will be provided a name card. Please bring these to each class.

*Facebook Page:* The purpose of the FB page is to share interesting and current events related to course material – as well as to keep each other updated on course deadlines, assignments, etc. Some students do not always feel comfortable discussing some course-related topics in class, and so this is another outlet to express viewpoints and opinions, which I think some of you will be more comfortable with.

**You are expected to post/comment on current events related to the course.** Although you are not expected to post each week, your online presence should be consistent throughout the semester. The TA will complete random activity reports, which will be counted as part of your participation grade.

Course FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327990398057361/> or ADV/PR 353 Spring 2019.

*Debate Evaluations:* Part of your participation grade will be to attend each debate and assist your debate team with constructing an evaluation of the debate. The directions and rubric for this assignment can be found on Canvas. **Note: It is very important to attend class for each debate and pay close attention to the debate as this assignment will be graded for content (not merely completion).**

*Professionalism:* Arrive on time, do not pack up early, and stay the duration of the class period. Arriving late and packing up early causes disruption to everyone in the classroom. If you must come late or leave early, please find a seat in the back of the classroom. You are responsible for any information missed during an absence. **Attitude and professionalism will be considered in determining final class professionalism grades.**

**Final Grades:** Final grades will be determined on the basis of the following rubric.

A	94-100
A-	90-93.9
B+	87-89.9
B	84-86.9
B-	80-83.9
C+	77-79.9
C	74-76.9
C-	70-73.9

D+	67-69.9
D	64-66.9
D-	60-63.9
F	< 60

**Additional Words on Grading:**

- When your work is graded you start with zero points. You earn points based on the quality of the work and the accuracy, appropriateness and detail of your answers. You do not start with 100 points and then lose them based on mistakes you might make. **Your final points represent the total points earned for that assignment, not the number of points “taken away” for errors or omissions.**
- Any disagreements about grades MUST be submitted in writing within seven days of when the grade is posted on Canvas.

**Student Responsibilities**

**Class Attendance:** It is your responsibility to attend class. To reward attendance, exams will include material: presented in class, from in-class assignments, and examples shared by students and Dr. Pounders during class.

Be prepared to take notes during class. Laptops may be used for class referencing and note-taking purposes. All other electronic devices (including phones) should be put away. **Any student caught surfing the Internet, texting, checking e-mail etc. for non-class purposes will be asked to leave immediately.** If the behavior persists, points will be deducted from the student’s final course grade each subsequent time this occurs. In addition, talking and other distracting behavior may result in students being asked to leave the classroom.

**Email:** As e-mail has become a favored way to communicate, you must learn to use it appropriately. Keep your emails formal; write professionally, as if you are writing to your boss at work, not to your friend. **The TA is your first point of contact for your queries about grades.** I am your first contact about the course material. The TA and I will try to return your e-mail within 24 hours of receiving it on Monday through Friday, or by Monday evening if we receive it on the weekend. E-mail is an excellent way to communicate if done appropriately.

**Canvas:** In this class, you will use Canvas to monitor class announcements, access assigned readings (in addition to the required books) and check grades. It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly.

### **My Responsibilities**

Although this is a large class, my goal is to make it as interactive and participatory as possible. While there will be days when I have to devote much of the class time to lecturing, I will set aside ample opportunities for discussion and participation.

I will make myself readily available if you have questions, concerns or just want to chat about the material. The best way to get a hold of me is to stop by during office hours or to contact me via e-mail.

I recognize that individuals learn in different ways and will use teaching and testing methods that acknowledge this. As far as possible and as appropriate, lectures will draw on multiple media formats, including video, still images and audio, in addition to written texts. Quizzes and assignments will be structured in a variety of ways, including multiple choice, true/false, and short answer.

**Policy on Lecture Slides:** I will post slides on Canvas prior to class; these slides are my intellectual property. **Students who post them online are infringing on my intellectual property.** This activity is prohibited. By accepting this syllabus you must adhere to this policy.

### **UT Class Related and Other Policies**

More information can be found at: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/index.html>

**Counseling and Mental Health Services:** Taking care of your general well-being is an important step in being a successful student. If stress, test anxiety, racing thoughts, feeling unmotivated or anything else is getting in your way, there are options available for support.

For **immediate** support:

- Visit/Call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC): M-F 8-5p | SSB, 5th floor | [512-471-3515](tel:5124713515) | [cmhc.utexas.edu](http://cmhc.utexas.edu)
- CMHC Crisis Line: 24/7 | [512.471.2255](tel:5124712255) | [cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html)

**CARE Counselor** in the Moody College of Communication is: Abby Simpson, LCSW

- M-F 8-5p | CMA 4.134 | [512-471-7642](tel:512-471-7642) (Please \*leave a message\* if she is unavailable)

**FREE Services** at CMHC:

- Brief assessments and referral services
- Mental health & wellness articles - [cmhc.utexas.edu/commonconcerns.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/commonconcerns.html)
- MindBody Lab - [cmhc.utexas.edu/mindbodylab.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/mindbodylab.html)
- Classes, workshops, & groups - [cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html)

**Religious Holy Days Observance Policy:** The Texas Education Code specifies that an institution of higher education shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence. Please notify me of your pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day.

**Documented Disability Statement:** Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329- 3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g. instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).

Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) of reference SSD's website for more disability-related information:

[http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for\\_cstudents.php](http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php)

**Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:** The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also



includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor.

By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University.

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis.php>

**Drop Policy:** The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

**Emergency Evacuation:** Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Additional information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):** The Behavior Concerns Advice Line is a service that provides The University of Texas at Austin's faculty, students and staff an opportunity to discuss their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance

Program (EAP) and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). An individual can either call the line at 512-232-5050 or report their concerns using the online submission form available at <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/b>