Proposal for a New Course

NOTE: All gray text boxes must be completed (even if you just put N/A into them), otherwise the committee must consider the form incomplete.

1. Department: Communication

2. Course Number and Title: **COMM 315 Ethical Communication**
   Number of Credits: 3  Total hrs/week: 3
   Lecture: ☒  Lab: ☐  Recitation: ☐  Seminar: ☐

For Independent study courses:
   Research: ☐  Field experience: ☐
   Clinical Practice: ☐  Internship: ☐
   Practicum: ☐  Independent Course Work: ☐

3. Semester and year when course will first be offered:
   Fall 2011

4. Catalog Description (please limit to 50 words):
   This course uses case studies and the analysis of historical and contemporary issues to illuminate ethical concerns in or across specific communication contexts. Topics vary depending on the course section and instructor. When course topics vary, the course is repeatable for elective credit with the permission of the department chair.

5. Check if appropriate: Humanities: ☐  Social Science: ☐ (meets minimum degree requirements)

6. Check if appropriate: ☐
   This course will be cross listed with: n/a
   Rationale for cross listing: n/a
   Please attach letters of support from the chairs of each department indicating that the department has discussed the proposal and supports it.

7. a) Could another department or program also be a logical originator of this course (i.e. History of American Education could originate in both the Teacher Education and the History departments)? If yes, what department/program? Please contact the department chair/program director and request a note or email that they are aware of the proposed new course and include that note with the proposal.
   no

   b) Please explain overlap with any existing courses.
   none
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8. Prerequisites (or other restrictions):

COMM 104 or COMM 110; COMM 214 or COMM 215; or permission of instructor

9. Rationale/justification for course (consider the following issues):

a) What are the goals and objectives of the course?

The goal of this course is to provide a case study driven analysis of specific historical and contemporary instances that illuminate the abiding ethical concerns of communicators and is grounded in perspectives on ethics that are communication theoretic. Students will be able to:

- Recognize and engage the ethical issues inherent in communication.
- Critically examine their ethical responsibilities as senders and receivers of communication.
- Analyze and expand personal ethical capacity.
- Improve the ability to recognize, analyze, and resolve ethical dilemmas.
- Create and critique ethical arguments in both public and private spheres.
- Engage primary research in the fields of communication ethics.
- Demonstrate effective oral communication and written communication competence.

b) How does the course support the mission statement of the department and the organizing principles of the major?

At a time of great change in communication professions, our distinctive, integrated curriculum discourages specialization in technologies and professional practices that quickly become obsolete. Instead, communication students are exposed to ideas and develop proficiencies that will sustain them for a lifetime. In our department, students become communication experts who write beautifully, speak eloquently, and research effectively. Our students and faculty understand communication as a liberal art.

This course, situated at the middle to end of our curriculum will allow students to think critically about the relationship between ethical decision making and communication behavior. Using a case study driven approach, students will carefully consider contemporary and historical instances that warrant ethical analysis. Students are required to participate in group presentations, formal presentations of course material and make and defend arguments regarding those materials and model effective public presentation as taught in introductory communication courses.

10. a) For courses in the major, how does the course enhance the beginning, middle, or end of the major?

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COMM 315 enhances the middle of our major by building on the argumentation skills developed in COMM 110/111 and by preparing students for ethical considerations in upper level courses such as the Capstone.

b) For courses used by non-majors, how does the course support the liberal arts tradition including linkages with other disciplines:

n/a

11. Method of teaching:

lecture, discussion, case study analysis, group work

12. a) Address potential enrollment pattern shifts in the department or college-wide related to the offering of this course:

none

b) Address potential shifts in staffing of the department as it relates to the offering of this course:

none

c) Frequency of offering:

[ ] each fall: ☒ [ ] each spring: ☒
[ ] every two years: [ ] every three years: [ ]
[ ] other ☐ (Explain): _____

13. Requirements for additional resources made necessary by this course:

a) Staff:

none

b) Budget:

none

c) Library:

none

14. Is this course to be added to the Degree Requirements of a Major, Minor, Concentration or List of Approved Electives?

a) ☒ yes ☐ no

b) If yes, complete the Change Degree Requirements form(s) and list the name(s) of the major, minor, concentration and/or list of approved electives here:

Major: Communication
Minor: Communication (approved elective)
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15. Paste syllabus, reading lists, or any additional documentation that can help the committee evaluate this proposal (a syllabus is mandatory).

COMM 315

Ethical Communication in Organizational Life

Professor:  
Office:  
Email:  
Phone:  
Class times:  
Office hours:

Course Objectives: This course focuses on the everyday challenges of ethics in professional life. Using classical and contemporary ethical theory and critique, we will explore issues related to leadership, followership, gender, life-work integration, ethical group problem solving, conflict, diversity, social responsibility, and communication with multiple publics. This course is grounded case studies, current events, fictional critiques and media to engage students in this exploration of ethics in organizational life. This course will equip students to practice ethical organizing through moral behavior and moral influence. Students will:

• Recognize and engage the ethical issues inherent in organizational life.
• Critically examine their ethical responsibilities as senders and receivers of communication.
• Analyze and expand personal ethical capacity.
• Improve the ability to recognize, analyze, and resolve ethical dilemmas.
• Create and critique ethical arguments in both public and private spheres.
• Engage primary research in the fields of communication ethics and organizational communication.
• Demonstrate effective oral communication and written communication competence.

Books and Materials:

Required:


Fletcher, J. K. (1999). Disappearing Acts: Gender, Power, and Relational Practice at
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Additional Primary texts and Case Studies will be made available each semester based on current events.

Recommended:


Course Requirements:

Exams (each worth 100 points) – There will be two exams over the course of the semester. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, short answer and justification. All exams must be taken at the assigned day and time unless other arrangements have been made with the professor PRIOR to the exam. Students with approved SNAP accommodations are encouraged to provide the SNAP letter during the first two weeks of class, and to provide the professor with scheduling notification no less than one week prior to the exam.

Ethical Position Paper (worth 100 points) - Each student will be required to prepare a paper stating a proposition regarding some ethical issue in organizational communication. Your paper will be structured around a central argument of your choosing. Your proposition should be supported by well reasoned, well researched arguments. Your arguments must draw on established scholarly literature in ethics and communication. Your paper MUST include 5 scholarly sources of information. Your research should come from the library or one of the library based online databases. Internet sources are not acceptable as graded sources and will not be counted toward the research requirement (the Internet can, of course, be used as the basis of your proposition). Papers should be 5-6 pages in length.

Case Study Facilitation (worth 100 points) – Students will work in teams to lead class discussion on assigned cases. Students are expected to conduct background research on the case and the ethical dilemmas addressed. Students should provide a brief lecture or introduction to the case and facilitate a lively and substantive discussion during the class period. Each group member is expected to participate equally in the preparation and facilitation of the case.
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Groups will turn in a summary handout, working outline of the presentation, and reference list prior. Groups will model effective public and team presentation skills. (Case study dates will be assigned at the beginning of the semester)

Ethical Debate (worth 100 points) – Students will work in pairs to select a topic of interest related to ethical challenges in professional life. In a fifteen minute planned debate students will address relevant and conflicting points on the issue at hand referencing both course material and outside research. Students will be evaluated on preparation, organization, and clarity of argument and their public presentation skills. Students will turn in a working summary of main points and a properly documents reference page (using APA guidelines). Dates of debate will be assigned by the third week of the semester.

Class Participation (worth 100 points) - Each student will be expected to be an active class participant, contributing to class discussions and asking relevant questions and providing “real world” examples. Students are expected to keep up with readings, current events and mediated examples of course content. Completion of some in-class assignments will be included in your participation grade.

Attendance: Your regular attendance is expected, but it is not required in this class. A word of caution: You will find it difficult to pass this course unless you attend regularly, take complete notes, participate in the class activities, and remain current on the reading assignments.

Technology and electronic devices: It is expected that students will turn off and/or silence all electronic devices during class time. Use of any of these items is NOT permitted until class has ended.

Honor code: It is expected that all students will adhere to the College of Charleston Honor Code while completing all course requirements. Plagiarism and other violations will not be tolerated in COMM 301. Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved, and College procedures for Honor Code violations will be followed by the professor. Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://www.cofc.edu/generaldocuments/handbook.pdf.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Any discussion of ethics breeds different opinions. I fully expect lively debate on the issues we will be covering. All students should form and state their opinions respectfully with regard to us all. All opinions (even ones we don’t agree with) deserve equal air time. I will do my best to facilitate...
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engaging and balanced discussions in this class. I ask the same of you.

IMPORTANT NOTE #2: This class covers a wide range of topics, from the mundane to the inflammatory and controversial. If we are discussing/viewing something that I feel is potentially controversial or offensive, I will give students as much warning as possible. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you have about class material.

Important Note #3: This syllabus is subject to change by the professor at any time. All changes will be announced in class.

Grading: There are 1000 possible points in this course, and final grades will be determined for all students fulfilling ALL course requirements using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>460-500 (92-100%) A</th>
<th>390-399 (78-79%) C+</th>
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<tr>
<td>450-459 (90-91%) A-</td>
<td>360-389 (72-77%) C</td>
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<tr>
<td>440-449 (88-89%) B+</td>
<td>350-359 (70-71%) C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>410-439 (82-87%) B</td>
<td>340-349 (68-69%) D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>400-409 (80-81%) B-</td>
<td>310-339 (62%-67%) D</td>
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<td>338 and below F</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Why Ethics?</td>
<td>Johnson, Intro</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Basic Issues in Organizational Ethics</td>
<td>Cheney et. al, Chapter 1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Theoretical Issues</td>
<td>Johnson, Chs. 5 &amp; 7</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ethical Motivations</td>
<td>Cheney et al.</td>
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<td>Chapter 2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Living the Good Life</td>
<td>Cheney et al.</td>
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<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Gender, Work &amp; Life</td>
<td>Fletcher (whole book)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Issues of Character</td>
<td>Johnson, Chapter 3,</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Being a Professional</td>
<td>Cheney et al. Ch. 4,</td>
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<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Leadership Ethics</td>
<td>Johnson, Ch. 6</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>The Contemporary Leader</td>
<td>Machiavelli (whole book)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>The Rat Race</td>
<td>Lewis, Position</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Combating Evil</td>
<td>Johnson, Chapter 4</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Ethics and Diversity</td>
<td>Johnson, Chapter 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Building the Communication Climate</td>
<td>Johnson Ch. 9&amp;Cheney Ch.</td>
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Week 15: Looking to the Future

Final Exam: Assigned by the Registrars Office

Prepared for Final Exam

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14. Signature of Department Chair or Program Director:

__________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

15. Signature of Dean of School:

__________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

16. Signature of Provost:

__________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

17. Signature of Business Affairs Official

__________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

18. Signature of Curriculum Committee Chair

__________________________________________________________

Date: ___________________________

19. Signature of Faculty Senate Secretary:

__________________________________________________________

Date Approved by Senate: ___________________________

Completed form should be sent by the Faculty Senate Secretary to the Registrar. After implementation, information concerning the passed course and program changes will be provided by the Registrar to all faculty and staff on campus.