

**Human Communication 213: Introduction to Communication Ethics**  
**Spring, 2014**  
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**CSU Monterey Bay**

**TEXTBOOK:**

Makau, J., & Marty, D. (2013). *Dialogue and deliberation*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

Additional instructional resources will include a reading packet with excerpts from essays and books. Participants will also be asked to secure information and insights through the Internet, Library Learning Complex, and other sources.

**COURSE PURPOSE:**

This course focuses on the ethics of communication in interpersonal, professional, and civic contexts. We will explore diverse ethical frameworks, principles, and guidelines for help discerning what rights and responsibilities, if any, communicators have to themselves, to their families and communities, and to the broader global community.

The course fosters development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with statewide general education requirements in oral and written communication and critical thinking skills, as well as CSUMB's requirement in Ethics.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES (General Education Requirements A-2 and A-3):**

**Outcome 1 - Comprehend and Interpret Controversies:** Students demonstrate the ability to understand multiple perspectives on significant controversies presented by diverse authors on the authors' own terms and to explain the intent, purpose, and underlying values of the advocates of these perspectives at an intermediate collegiate level.

**Outcome 2 - Identify and Understand Ethical Dimensions of Controversies:** Students demonstrate the ability to recognize, understand, and effectively explain the ethical dimensions of significant controversies.

**Outcome 3 - Use Diverse Ethical Frameworks to Analyze Controversies:** Students demonstrate the ability to effectively apply diverse ethical frameworks to analyses of multiple perspectives on significant controversies.

**Outcome 4 - Identify and Evaluate Potential Options for Responding Ethically and Effectively to Controversies:** Students demonstrate the ability to recognize, understand, accurately represent, and effectively evaluate multiple options for responding responsibly to significant controversies.

**Outcome 5 - Communicate Orally and in Writing:** Students demonstrate the ability to use written and oral communication ethically and effectively at an intermediate collegiate level.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Personal case narrative:** For this assignment, you will be asked to provide a reflective narrative regarding an ethically complex situation in which you made the decision to deceive someone close to you. This assignment is worth 10 points.
2. **Essay exams:** You will have **two** such opportunities to demonstrate your ability to understand the content covered in the course readings, lectures, and discussions, as well as to apply the knowledge and skills you've acquired to concrete, "real-world" cases. Each exam is worth 10 points.
3. **Group Forum and Collaborative Written Report:** In collaboration with others, you will develop a creative means of conveying findings regarding options available to decision makers confronted with representative "real-world" communication ethics challenges within an interpersonal, professional, or civic communication of special interest to you. Following the forum, you will work together to prepare a written report articulating the group's findings. These assignments are worth a total of 10 points (up to 5 for the group's performance as a whole and up to 5 for the individual's contributions).
4. **Forum Response Essay:** For this assignment, you will identify a group forum you found especially engaging and illuminating and explore what made the selected forum especially helpful to fulfillment of our shared goals. This assignment is worth up to 10 points.
5. **Final Essay:** This assignment calls upon you to prepare an argumentative essay articulating and thoughtfully supporting a reasonable and responsive proposal for how best to address one of the communication ethics challenges explored during our work together. In preparation, you will be completing a **Position Paper** and **Draft Argumentative Essay**. You will also be provided peer feedback on these assignments. Worth 20 points.
6. **Critical Review:** This in-class assignment affords you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to discern and thoughtfully convey strengths and areas for improvement in a peer's draft argumentative essay. Worth 10 points.
7. **Portfolio:** This assignment affords you the opportunity to demonstrate fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. You will be asked to include a reflective essay, all preliminary drafts of assignments (with instructors' comments), and peer reviews of your Position Paper and Draft Argumentation Essay. Only scores received on "final" drafts will be used to determine your final grade.
8. Students will complete ungraded **Impromptu Essay Assignments** throughout the term. Additionally, due to the nature and purposes of this course, the quality of your **Participation and Contributions** will play a significant role in assessing your overall performance. See the notes below for details.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

### Week One:

**Day 1&2:** Introduction to the course & to each other  
Communication, Agency, and Related Issues  
Ethical Reflection and Practice in Everyday Life  
Preliminary exploration of potential group project topics

### Week Two:

**Day 1:** Diverse approaches to communication across differences  
Adversarial individualism and related communication models  
Communication Ethics Across Contexts  
Continued exploration of group project topics

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 1-19

**Day 2:** Communication, interdependence, and ethics  
Case study: Focus and group selections

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 21-37

### Week Three:

**Day 1:** Introducing and applying diverse ethical frameworks, including (but not limited to) Consequentialist perspectives (such as Utilitarianism), De-Ontological Perspectives, Virtue Ethics, Cultural and Individual Relativism, Interdependent Ethics, Ethnic Ethics, Natural Law Theory, and Ethics of Care.  
Exploring case studies related to truthfulness  
Exploring the Principle of Veracity

**Readings:** **Reading Packet: “Ethical and Unethical Communication” Essay, Adrienne Rich “Telling it Slant” excerpt, and “Methods of Analysis” excerpts from Michael Pritchard and James Jaksa**

**Day 2:** Deliberative inquiry and communication ethics  
Deliberative questioning skills  
Introducing different types of knowledge, insight, and information  
Facts, values, and beliefs  
Assessing source credibility and information reliability  
Ethics, Deliberation, and Narrative framing

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 39-58

Week Four

**Day 1:** Dialogue and civility  
Truthfulness, deception, and civility

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 61-82

**Day 2:** Dialogic skills and sensibilities  
Moral Development  
Emotional Intelligence  
Constructive confrontation  
**Personal Case Narrative Due**

**Readings:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 83-108  
**Reading Packet: Sandra Cisneros excerpt**  
**Reading Packet: “Ethical and Unethical Communication”**

Week Five:

**Day 1:** Listening

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 109-124

**Day 2:** Understanding  
Dispositions and Moral Maps  
Applying moral frameworks to cases  
Developing responsible and responsive case narratives

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 125-140

Week Six:

**Day 1:** Deliberative framing  
Belief Systems  
Individual, family, and communal influences

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 143-163

**Day 2: Group Work**  
**Complete research contracts**

Week Seven:

**Day 1: Review and Preparation for Exam**  
**Research contracts due**

**Day 2: In-Class Exam #1**

Week Eight:

**Day 1: Cultural Relativity and Cross Cultural Values**  
Applying ethical frameworks to cases

**Reading: Packet: “Ethical and Unethical Communication” essay and excerpts from Clifford Christians essays**

**Day 2: Discernment and Communication Ethics**

**Reading: *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 165-186**

Week Nine:

**Day 1: Cross Cultural Ethical Presumptions**

**Readings: Universal Declaration of Human Rights**  
**Reading Packet: “Ethical and Unethical Communication” essay**  
***Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 165-186**

**Day 2:** Exploring Group Topics  
Finding Common Ground  
Finalizing roles and responsibilities  
Identifying and exploring issues involving communication ethics  
Exploring and giving voice to diverse stakeholders and perspectives  
Anticipating (likely) consequences  
Applying diverse ethical frameworks  
Review of guidelines and assessment criteria for oral presentation

Weeks Eleven & Twelve:

**Forum Presentations**

Week Thirteen:

**Day 1: Group forum reflections**  
Preparation for Exam #2

**Day 2: In-Class Exam #2**

Week Fourteen

**Day 1:** Deliberative Argumentation  
Exploring issues related to communication ethics for final essay  
Shared criteria

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 187-208

**Day 2:** Deliberative Advocacy

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 209-228  
**Response Essay Due**

Week Fifteen:

**Day 1:** Evaluating deliberative arguments

**Reading:** *Dialogue and Deliberation*, pp. 229-248

**Day 2:** Preparing the final essay  
Assignment guidelines  
Exploring ethical issues  
**Position Paper Due**

Week Sixteen

**Day 1:** Reflections  
Preparing for Final Submissions and Critical Review

**DAY 2: Draft Final Essay Due**  
**In-Class Critical Review**

**FINAL SUBMISSIONS: PORTFOLIOS & REFLECTION ESSAYS  
DUE DURING ASSESSMENT WEEK**