



CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

FAITH • INTEGRITY • EXCELLENCE

JANUARY SEMESTER RESIT EXAMINATION: 2021/22

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES

COMS 204: MEDIA ETHICS

TIME ALLOWED: 1 1/2 HOURS

STUDENT ID No.

INSTRUCTIONS:

READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY AND THEN CIRCLE THE CORRECT
ANSWER

DO NOT TURN OVER THIS PAGE UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN TOLD TO DO SO BY
THE INVIGILATOR.

Lecturer: Dr. R. Kimani

1. Which of the following ethical precepts can be used in media?
 - a. The Golden Rule: do unto others as you would have them do unto you
 - b. The Golden Mean: finding a middle way is better than an extreme
 - c. The Categorical Imperative: rules or laws should only be used that would apply to everyone at all times
 - d. All of the above can be used

2. Utilitarianism is an approach to ethics that means
 - a. Whatever does the most good for the most number of people is best.
 - b. Fairness is the fundamental aspect of ethical conduct and people in a dispute should look at the situation outside of their own vested interests in the outcome to decide what is right.
 - c. Journalists often face conflicts among ethical principles in the course of their work and must often make difficult decisions.
 - d. Not all ethical precepts can be applied in all situations, but they do provide useful guidelines for media professionals in their behavior.

3. Business interests in media organizations can often supersede the public interests entrusted to that organization. This can happen in which of the following ways?
 - a. Advertisers threaten to stop advertising unless the media organization stops or changes coverage of the company or a controversial issue
 - b. Lack of consumer power among disadvantaged groups can mean they get less news coverage or are mostly portrayed in a negative light
 - c. Cutting staff to save money can affect the quality of news coverage as journalists get even more overworked
 - d. All of the above

4. SPJ's Code of Ethics includes all but which one of the following?
 - a. Seek truth and report it
 - b. Be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information
 - c. Never distort the content of news, photos, or video
 - d. Bounce ideas off sources or potential sources before launching into a story

5. Ethical issues in entertainment media would not include which of the following?
 - a. Actors portraying characters in stereotypical roles in TV shows or movies
 - b. Gratuitous depictions of sex or violence in TV shows or movies
 - c. Product placements in children's programs on TV
 - d. All of the above

6. Puffery in advertising is an ethical
 - a. Grey area (sometimes ok, sometimes not)
 - b. Violation at all times

- c. Standard media should strive toward
 - d. Any of the above
7. Which of the following best describes the attitude most news organizations have about credibility?
- a. People depend on news media for their information, and media must be credible to succeed as businesses.
 - b. People get information from multiple sources other than the news media, so no one will be hurt if news organizations make mistakes now and then.
 - c. Almost no one believes the news media, so a lack of credibility does not put an organization at a competitive disadvantage.
 - d. Credibility helps a news organization win awards, but sensationalism attracts readers, viewers and advertisers which make for commercial success.
8. In weighing the value of publishing a story, journalists should consider harms and benefits and publish the story if it
- a. harms more people than it benefits.
 - b. would attract an audience no matter how many benefit.
 - c. would attract an audience no matter how many are harmed.
 - d. benefits more people than it harms.
9. "Plagiarism" is defined as
- a. making up quotations or sources for a news story.
 - b. taking someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as one's own.
 - c. pretending to be someone other than a reporter to get an interview.
 - d. accepting gifts or bribes from sources.
10. Journalists looking for sources should try to use
- a. a variety of sources representing different opinions.
 - b. close friends and relatives.
 - c. officials who will expect some favor in return.
 - d. officials with whom the journalist has a close personal relation.
11. The practice of electronically recording an interview with a source without the source's knowledge is
- a. devious and unfair.
 - b. sneaky but expected of reporters.
 - c. easier than asking permission.
 - d. essential for accurate reporting.
12. The two main components of objectivity are
- a. absence of emotion and adherence to routine.
 - b. absence of bias and adherence to routine.
 - c. absence of bias and accuracy.

- d. absence of emotion and accuracy.
13. Which of the following is NOT among the problems with interviewing victims of crimes or disasters immediately after the incident?
- They may be in shock and inadvertently twist the facts.
 - They may want to please reporters and answer questions even if they are not certain about the answers.
 - They are likely to have clear recollections and be eager to talk to reporters.
 - They may recant their story later and accuse the reporter of having made it up.
14. Journalists sometimes create misleading impressions about victims of crime or accidents because
- they want to portray the victims in the best possible light.
 - they want to portray the victims in the worst possible light.
 - they rely too heavily on the victim's version of events.
 - they speculate in the absence of knowledge of the facts.
15. In deciding whether to broadcast or publish graphic images of violence or disasters, producers and editors must weigh
- unnecessarily offending viewers and readers against the need to increase viewership or readership.
 - unnecessarily offending viewers and readers against the need to inform them of harsh realities.
 - the need to inform viewers and readers of harsh realities against the possibility of offending high government officials.
 - the need to inform viewers and readers of harsh realities against the popular desire to read and watch pleasing news stories.
16. In covering rape cases, the almost universal practice of news organizations is to
- withhold the name of the victim and the suspect.
 - publish the name of the victim and the suspect.
 - publish the name of the victim, but withhold the name of the suspect.
 - withhold the name of the victim, but publish the name of the suspect.
17. If a news reporter hears a rumor that a public official has engaged in an illicit sexual relationship, the reporter should
- publish a story immediately before any other news organization can.
 - publish a story only after the rumor has been confirmed and if it has some news value.
 - publish a story if the source of the rumor seems reputable.
 - never publish a story about a rumor even if it is newsworthy and can be readily verified.

18. Generally, news organizations do not publish the names of juveniles who have been arrested for crimes unless
- the juvenile is being tried as an adult.
 - the victim of the crime is socially prominent.
 - the juvenile suspect is socially prominent.
 - the crime involved the theft or destruction of property valued at \$1,000 or more.
19. Photojournalists see the use of computer software to alter images as comparable to
- cropping photos or increasing the contrast in the image.
 - the artistic license novelists take with facts.
 - a reporter's making up facts for a news story.
 - a mild form of exaggeration.
20. Which one from the following is the threat for the journalism?
- accuracy
 - bias
 - all of these
 - none of these
21. A source who wants his/her identity kept secret because as a former gang member, he/she fears for his/her safety may ethically be granted _____.
- immunity
 - the right to review
 - control of the story
 - anonymity
22. When you write, "According to the *Daily Graphic*, Friday's power outage was due to a traffic collision that took down a power pole," you are using _____.
- fabrication
 - plagiarism
 - attribution
 - scrutiny
23. Errors in published media should be corrected quickly without drawing attention to the mistake.
- True
 - False
24. An ethical journalist will promise the school's football coach that she will make the team look good in her story in exchange for information.
- True
 - False

25. Something is considered obscene if it _____.
- is said in front of children
 - makes someone mad
 - offends local standards
 - none of the above
26. Which of these is protected by the First Amendment?
- Freedom of speech
 - Freedom of the press
 - Freedom of assembly
 - All the above
27. What are exemptions of free speech (i.e. you wouldn't be protected by the First Amendment)?
- Speech posing a clear and present danger
 - Speech that offends someone
 - Speech that makes people uncomfortable
 - None of the above
28. Ethics are based on
- Personal standards of right and wrong
 - A group standards of right and wrong
 - A gut feeling
 - If it is legal or not
29. Morals are based on
- Personal standards of right and wrong
 - A group standards of right and wrong
 - A gut feeling
 - If it is legal or not
30. Providing context and taking care not to misrepresent, or oversimplify in promoting, previewing or summarizing a story is an example of the ethical standard of
- Seek the truth and report it
 - Minimize harm
 - Act independently
 - Be accurate and transparent
31. Balancing the public's need for information against potential harm or discomfort is an example of the ethical standard of
- Seek the truth and report it
 - Minimize harm
 - Act independently
 - Be accurate and transparent

32. Showing compassion for those who may be affected by news coverage is an example of the ethical standard of
- Seek the truth and report it
 - Minimize harm
 - Act independently
 - Be accurate and transparent
33. Refusing gifts, favors and special treatment is an example of the ethical standard of
- Seek the truth and report it
 - Minimize harm
 - Act independently
 - Be accurate and transparent
34. Acknowledging mistakes and correcting them promptly and prominently is an example of the ethical standard of
- Seek the truth and report it
 - Minimize harm
 - Act independently
 - Be accurate and transparent
35. Journalists have access to records generated by a public body through
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
 - Freedom of Speech Laws (FOSL)
 - Freedom of Journalism Act (FOJA)
 - Freedom to Inquire Act (FIA)
36. What allows journalists to protect the anonymity of their source?
- Journalistic ethics
 - Freedom of the press
 - Shield laws
 - Sunshine laws
37. The fundamental right of freedom of expression is guaranteed in the 1992 constitution by
- Article 12
 - Article 162
 - Article 17
 - Article 166
38. As a journalist, what are important to keep in mind alongside your rights?
- Your colleagues
 - Your bank balance
 - Your responsibilities
 - None of these

39. What is a 'true' ethical dilemma?
- a. Where there are no compelling options
 - b. Where there is only one compelling option
 - c. Where there are multiple compelling options
 - d. None of the above
40. What are some of the different things we can prioritize in ethical decision making?
- a. Outcomes
 - b. Moderation
 - c. Duties
 - d. All the above
41. Why is consideration of duties particularly useful framework for ethical decision-making for journalists?
- a. Because it is easy to remember
 - b. Because of the role journalists plays in a democratic society
 - c. Because it is always important to prioritize duties over outcomes
 - d. None of these
42. As you work through the various views and arguments in an ethical dilemma, which of the following is particularly important?
- a. Ignoring the advice of colleagues
 - b. Avoiding bias and self-interest
 - c. Being closed-minded
 - d. None of these
43. Bias is most likely to appear in a news story when
- a. the reporter's story is reviewed by a large number of editors and supervisors.
 - b. the reporter is writing about a topic that she or he already knows a lot about.
 - c. the reporter is writing about people she or he has known for some time.
 - d. the reporter relies on one source or gives disproportionate time to space to one side of a controversy.
44. Which of the following is NOT among the kinds of details news organizations avoid including in their stories?
- a. Trade names
 - b. Names of criminal suspects
 - c. Profanity
 - d. Grisly or gruesome photographs

45. Which of the following is NOT one of the factors that leads to inaccuracies in news reports?
- a. Carelessness and laziness
 - b. Lack of understanding of the topic
 - c. Use of generalities instead of specifics
 - d. Having editors check and question a reporter's work
46. One of the goals of public journalism is to
- a. make horse-race coverage of politics more interesting.
 - b. publish information desired by political elites rather than the general public.
 - c. encourage citizens to participate in democracy.
 - d. emphasize the voices on the extremes of the political spectrum and not the center.
47. Journalists looking for sources should try to use
- a. a variety of sources representing different opinions.
 - b. close friends and relatives.
 - c. officials who will expect some favor in return.
 - d. officials with whom the journalist has a close personal relation.
48. The policy most news organizations use on whether to publish the profanities sources may use is
- a. to keep them in the story because profanities are so common in everyday life.
 - b. to keep them in the story because they are common on television and in the movies.
 - c. to delete them.
 - d. to replace them with less offensive words.
49. Which of the following is NOT one of the reasons for attributing information to a source?
- a. It helps readers evaluate the credibility of the information.
 - b. It obscures the responsibility of reporters for the facts in the story.
 - c. It allows reporters to connect controversial statements to the person who made them.
 - d. It enables readers to know from whom the reporters obtained their information.
50. Which of the following best describes how to use anonymous sources?
- a. Use them to launch personal attacks on other people.
 - b. Use them to provide facts that are essential to the story and cannot be obtained elsewhere.
 - c. Use them to provide colorful details, even if they are not essential to the story.
 - d. Use them to impress readers with how well connected you are as a reporter.

51. If a news story reports on a controversy in which one person has made accusations against another, the reporter should
- include the response of the accused party in the same story.
 - write a separate story for the same day's paper on the accused person's response.
 - write a separate story for the next day on the accused person's response.
 - identify the accused person in only the most general terms to avoid a libel suit.
52. The successful public affairs reporter needs to cultivate the following four habits:
- Diligence, knowledge of sources, accuracy, ability to write clear explanations.
 - Diligence, contempt for sources, accuracy, ability to write complicated explanations.
 - Knowledge of sources, ability to flatter politicians, fondness for windy speeches, accuracy.
 - Accuracy, ability to use long words, fondness for bureaucratic detail, knowledge of sources.
53. You are working on your personal homepage and would like to publish a nice graphic you found on the internet. What do you have to think of before publishing?
- The background of the graphic has to be transparent.
 - The copyright – I have to ask the owner for permission.
 - The graphic has to be published in its original size.
 - Nothing particular, I can use it as it is.
54. What is a reason state materials are kept protected from the public?
- Information is classified as sensitive
 - Information is classified as irrelevant
 - To protect the party in power
 - To persuade public opinions on the matter
55. Which ethical orientation calls for use of codes of professional ethics that hold true regardless of situation or consequence?
- Situational
 - Absolutist
 - Relativist
 - Philosophical
56. Who proposed that ethical behavior was based on a golden mean, a midpoint between two extremes?
- Plato
 - Aristotle
 - Alexander the Great
 - Immanuel Kant

57. What is the meaning of the idea by Machiavelli that the end justifies the means?
- A. Ethical behavior is that which generates the greatest good for the greatest number of people.
 - B. You must do whatever you are able to, to save others before yourself.
 - C. There is truly no way to serve your own purposes and still be ethical.
 - D. If your cause is ethical, then any methods you use to achieve your goal is also ethical.
58. Which of the following media ethics controversies pertains to the idea that the outside activities of a media professional may influence the reality that is presented to the public?
- A. Stereotyping
 - B. Accountability
 - C. Conflict of interest
 - D. Investigative fraud
59. In journalism, what does a hoax specifically mean?
- A. A story is based on fact but has not been properly researched.
 - B. A story was selected with the goal of selling newspapers.
 - C. A story is a purposeful deception of the reading public.
 - D. A story is full of wit and humor.
60. The Potter's Box is one of the tools used to solve ethical problems when reporting news. Which of the following is not a situation considered when using it?
- A. moral principles
 - B. the royalties involved
 - C. the values underlying all choices
 - D. the situation