



The University of Southern Queensland

**Course specification**

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at <http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>. Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

**Description: Media Law and Ethics**

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
JRN	2006	90498	2, 2009	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

<b>Academic group:</b>	FOART
<b>Academic org:</b>	FOA003
<b>Student contribution band:</b>	1
<b>ASCED code:</b>	100703

**STAFFING**

Examiner: Usha Rodrigues  
Moderator: Karey Harrison

**REQUISITES**

Pre-requisite: JRN1000

**SYNOPSIS**

This course provides a legal and ethical framework for professional practice in the field of journalism. Students will examine the Australian legal system, defamation law, contempt of court and parliament, and the law of copyright. The study of major developments in moral philosophy will form a foundation on which to analyse specific case studies, with particular reference to the MEAA (Journalists) Code of Ethics.

**OBJECTIVES**

On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. differentiate between code and common law;
2. identify copy that is defamatory, contemptuous, or infringes copyright;
3. describe the principles of ethical decision-making;
4. recall and interpret the MEAA Code of Ethics;
5. demonstrate ethical research and enquiry skills appropriate to the profession of journalism by;
6. demonstrate written communication skills by submitting 2 essays;
7. demonstrate academic and professional literacy skills by describing and interpreting ethical codes, laws and decision making principles.

**TOPICS**

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Australian legal systems	5.00

2.	Principles of defamation	25.00
3.	Principles of contempt	25.00
4.	Other legal issues	5.00
5.	History of moral philosophy	5.00
6.	AJA Code of Ethics	15.00
7.	Current ethical issues	20.00

### **TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED**

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

Hirst, M & Patching, R 2007, *Journalism ethics arguments and cases*, 2nd edn, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

Pearson, M 2007, *The journalist's guide to media law*, 3rd edn, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards.

### **REFERENCE MATERIALS**

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

### **STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Directed Study	80.00
Private Study	85.00

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date	Objectives assessed	Graduate skill	Level assessed
CMA TEST	100.00	0.00	24 Aug 2009	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7		
1500 WORD LAW ESSAY	100.00	30.00	11 Sep 2009	All		
1500 WORD ETHICS ESSAY	100.00	30.00	16 Oct 2009	All		
2 HOUR EXAMINATION	100.00	40.00	END S2 (see note 1)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7		

### NOTES

1. The examination date will be advised when the examination timetable is finalised.

## IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:  
There are no attendance requirements for this external course. However, it is the student's responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:  
To successfully complete an individual assessment item, a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks or a grade of at least C-. This statement must be read in conjunction with Statement 4 below.
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:  
If students submit assignments after the due date without extenuating circumstances and without prior approval, then a penalty of a maximum of 5% of the assigned mark may apply for each working day late, up to a maximum of 10 working days, at which time a mark of zero can be recorded for that assignment.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:  
To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:  
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the weighted aggregate of the marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:  
The exam for this course is a RESTRICTED EXAMINATION, and candidates are allowed access to : \* writing materials (non-electronic and free from material which could give the student an unfair advantage in the examination) & course text books
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:  
Any deferred or supplementary examinations for this course will be held during the next examination period.
- 8 University Regulations:  
Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6. Assessment, and 5.10 Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might contravene

University Regulations. These regulations can be found at the URL  
<http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm>

## **ASSESSMENT NOTES**

- 9 (a) The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner. (b) Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be despatched to USQ within 24 hours if requested by the Examiner. (c) In accordance with University's Assignment Extension Policy (Regulation 5.6.1), the examiner of a course may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances such as documented ill-health. (d) In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a Show holiday, the due date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the examiner's convenience. (e) Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner of the course to negotiate such special arrangements. (f) Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in the course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of the course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete-Makeup). An IM grade will only be awarded when, in the opinion of the examiner, a student will be able to achieve the remaining objectives of the course after a period of non-directed personal study. (g) Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or sit for an examination at the scheduled time, may apply to defer an assessment in the course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded: IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination); IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- 1 Use of correct English is essential to Journalism. Spelling, grammar and punctuation will be taken into consideration in marking assignments. Severe deficiencies could mean failure in the course.
- 2 If assignments in the course require the use of surveys, interviews, etc., students should be aware of the University and Faculty of Arts ethical requirements/guidelines. (The course syllabus distributed to students in the first week of teaching provides this information.)
- 3 Students can expect that questions in assessment items in this course may draw upon knowledge and skills that they can reasonably be expected to have acquired before enrolling in the course. This includes knowledge contained in pre-requisite courses and appropriate communication, information literacy, analytical, critical thinking, problem solving or numeracy skills. Students who do not possess such knowledge and skills should not expect to achieve the same grades as those students who do possess them.
- 4 Students will require access to email and have internet access to UConnect for this course.