



MEDIA 420 | Emergent Media Workshop: Censorship and Consequences

Spring 2021 – 3 credits – Online Asynchronous – Regular Session 3, March 24 to May 13, 2021

Catalog Description

Ideas are dangerous, and censorship exists all around us. In this course, we will explore the various ways ideas are censored in contemporary media, and debate how individuals, communities, schools, governments, businesses, and other organizations should respond to communication that offends or injures other people. We will examine current instances of censorship to better understand the context and consequences of such controversies.

As a Workshop class, we will create digital analyses in written, audio, or video form and post them online. Students will apply technological skills they’ve learned through the Emergent Media program and other Media and Journalism courses. MEDIA 220: Introduction to Multimedia is a prerequisite.

Quick Links

Assignments	Assignment Descriptions	Class Meetings	Course Objectives
Grading	Instructor and Office Hours	Readings	Schedule

The current version of the course syllabus will be uploaded to BOLT with the revision date included in the file name



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Virtual Office Hours

Mondays: 1-3 p.m.

Wednesdays: 1-3 p.m.

Thursdays: 10-11 a.m.

If these times do not work, please email me three (3) possible times that work better for you. [Please schedule online 2 hours ahead of time using HuskySuccess at this link.](#)

Readings

There are no required textbooks or materials for this course. Every week there will be several online readings which supplement the video lectures and assignments. I endeavor to find resources that are [freely available and easily assessable, to reduce the financial cost of attending college](#). These materials have been selected with much thought and deliberation to give you the best educational experience.

We will discuss numerous current events this semester, so [you should be in the habit of following the news regularly](#). I will regularly ask you to share examples of censorship. Every week, somebody gets in trouble for posting something offensive on social media, businesses get in hot water over questionable advertisements, technology companies are consistently under pressure to police their spaces, and so forth. If you view censorship in broad terms, you'll easily find examples!

Course Objectives

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain what censorship is, and identify current instances of censorship
- Discuss contemporary examples of censorship
- Analyze contextual factors that inspire censorship, and evaluate the consequences of censorship
- Apply media theory on First Amendment and censorship to a variety of situations
- Create and distribute content to a digital audience about censorship

Class Meetings

Because this class is online, there are no set meeting times. There are, however, readings, assignments, tutorials, and lectures every week. This course requires a lot of work and it's easy

to fall behind if you take a week off. [Set aside 2-3 blocks of time each week to devote to this course.](#) Every Monday, I will send an email outlining what’s happening that week. **You should check your school email regularly,** as I may send grading and assignment updates throughout the week. If you develop a routine for online learning, you will be most successful.

Controversial Content

Because the focus of this course is censorship, we will naturally examine ideas that [some people find offensive.](#) These ideas could be sexist, racist, homophobic, bigoted, or discriminatory for other reasons. In the media, imagery often accompanies these discussions that some find offensive: sexual, violent, graphic, or otherwise objectionable. I will forewarn you ahead of time in the Weekly Overviews, found on BOLT, of the types of content we are discussing that week.

[If you suspect that specific material is likely to be challenging for you, I’d be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class or discussions.](#) Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with me individually, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork.

Assignments

Your grade will be based on the following assignments.

Video Completion (3 times)	90
Online Introductions	20
Discussion Cycles (3 times)	240
LinkedIn Learning (3 times)	50
Censorship Analysis 1	150
Censorship Analysis 2	200
<u>Censorship Analysis 3</u>	<u>250</u>
Total:	1,000 points

Grading Scale

Grades are based on total points:

A	925-1,000
A-	900-924
B+	880-899
B	820-879
B-	800-819
C+	780-799
C	720-779
C-	700-719
D+	680-699
D	600-679
F	0-599

The grading scale is non-negotiable. A final grade of 879, for instance, is a B. All grades are final unless questions about grades are addressed in writing within **2 weeks** after the grade is posted. If you have concerns about your grades check with me *sooner* in the semester rather than *later*.

The reason I do not round up grades is to remain fair for all students. If I round up a grade for a student who is one point below the cut-off, what do I do for the student who is 2 points below the cut-off? Three points? Five? At some point, there has to be a cut-off to ensure fairness.

Please check the START HERE module on BOLT for full Grading Policies, including the late work policy.

Assignment Descriptions

The following are brief descriptions of your assignments this semester. More detailed directions are provided on BOLT, along with grading rubrics.

Video Completion (30 points each; 90 total)

Three times a semester, you will be assessed on your completion rate of online videos. In a face-to-face class, you would have an attendance grade to incentivize you to make it to class: this is the online equivalent. To do well in this course, you need to watch the videos (i.e., attend class).

Online Introductions (20 points)

Introduce yourself to the class on BOLT and tell us a little about yourself! This will familiarize you with BOLT Discussions, plus help you get to know your peers. You will share with the class one type of censorship that you are interested in learning more about.

Discussion Cycles (80 points each; 240 points total)

When it comes to censorship, people have varying perspectives on what is appropriate and what is not, which ideas are offensive and which are not. Three times this semester, you will discuss different types of censorship. Each discussion cycle features four rounds: an initial prompt that you will respond to, and then three rounds of replies to your classmates. This way, we can discuss relevant issues in a deeper fashion than typically happens in online courses. You will be broken into discussion groups of roughly 10 students, and remain in these groups the entire semester. That way, you will get to know a few classmates very well.

LinkedIn Learning (15-20 points each; 50 points total)

Three times throughout the semester, you will complete short courses on LinkedIn Learning related to podcasting, blogging, and other media production topics. After completing the course, LinkedIn Learning will generate a PDF certificate. Download this certificate and submit it to BOLT. Additionally, write a short reflection essay highlighting some of the techniques or practices from the course that you find useful.

Censorship Analyses (100 points, 150 points, 200 points, 250 points; 700 points total)

After each of the four discussion cycles, you will create a digital analysis on some aspect of censorship. These analyses can take the form of blog posts, podcasts, or vlogs. Your analysis will then be posted to the class blog. The discussion cycles are meant to prepare you for these analyses. You will discuss among your classmates different types of censorship, and then examine a new issue on your own. Each analysis will get progressively more sophisticated, hence the escalating point values.

The Academic Honesty, Discussion Cycle, Grading, and Special Needs Policies are available on BOLT under the START HERE module. You should review these policies periodically.

[Course Schedule and Checklist](#)

How to Use: Please print off this checklist, and use it week to week to keep track of assignments, readings, and other activities. I endeavor hard to never change due dates. The due dates for all assignments are included in the following schedule, as well as on BOLT. You should consider putting these due dates into a planner or digital device.

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 1</u> Wednesday, March 24</p>	<p>Saturday, March 27: DEADLINE FOR ADD/DROP FOR SESSION 3 COURSES</p> <p>Videos (1:39:50 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Course Introduction (17:40) <input type="checkbox"/> Thriving in This Accelerated Format (21:25) <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship Broadly Defined (20:07) <input type="checkbox"/> Sources of Censorship (22:15) <input type="checkbox"/> Common Consequences (18:23) <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (START HERE module on BOLT): Course Syllabus, Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policies, Grading Policies, and Special Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Online Introductions due to BOLT by Sunday, March 28 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Email Dr. Dennis WordPress username or email address by Sunday, March 28 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 2</u> Monday, March 29</p>	<p>Videos (1:27:04 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Offensive Words (15:00) <input type="checkbox"/> Political Correctness, and Authenticity in Communication (16:35) <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship and Comedy (12:37) <input type="checkbox"/> Double Standards (20:34) <input type="checkbox"/> LinkedIn Learning Options This Semester (9:03) <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship Analysis Options (15:15) <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> (START HERE module on BOLT): Discussion Cycle Guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Wolfson, N. (1997). "Chapter 2: Pragmatism and Words That Hurt." In <i>Hate Speech, Sex Speech, Free Speech</i>, p. 11-40. [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 2</u> Continued</p>	<p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Begin working on first LinkedIn Learning course. See the video “LinkedIn Learning Options This Semester” for ideas. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion Cycle 1: Initial Post (Round 1) due to BOLT by Thursday, April 1 at 11:55 p.m. □ Discussion Cycle 1: Replies (Round 2) due to BOLT by Sunday, April 4 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 3</u> Monday, April 5</p>	<p>Videos (1:10:31 total)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Censorship and Social Media (19:23) □ Social Networks and Responsibility (15:40) □ Limits on Technology (18:14) □ Guilt by Association (17:14) <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Finish first LinkedIn Learning course. Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, April 11 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion Cycle 1: Replies (Round 3) due to BOLT by Thurs, April 8 at 11:55 p.m. □ Discussion Cycle 1: Replies (Round 4) due to BOLT by Sunday, April 11 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 4</u> Monday, April 12</p>	<p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Censorship and Sensuality □ Public Shaming □ Pornography and Freedom of Expression □ Body Disparities <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Begin working on second LinkedIn Learning course. See the video “LinkedIn Learning Options This Semester” for ideas. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Discussion Cycle 2: Initial Post (Round 1) due to BOLT by Thursday, April 15 at 11:55 p.m. □ Discussion Cycle 2: Replies (Round 2) due to BOLT by Sunday, April 18 at 11:55 p.m. □ Censorship Analysis 1 posted to class blog by Sunday, April 18 at 11:55 p.m.

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 5</u> Monday, April 19</p>	<p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Piercings, Tattoos, and Body Modifications <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Appropriation <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship and Sensibility <input type="checkbox"/> Regulation of Media Products <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Tushnet, M. V., Chen, A. K., & Blocher, J. (2017). "Chapter 2: Art and the First Amendment." In <i>Free Speech Beyond Words</i>, p. 70-113. [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> Silverman, D. S. (2007). "Chapter 1: Television Censorship and Regulation." In <i>You Can't Air That: Four Cases of Controversy and Censorship in American Television Programming</i>, p. 1-31. [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish second LinkedIn Learning course. Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, April 25 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 2: Replies (Round 3) due to BOLT by Thursday, April 22 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 2: Replies (Round 4) due to BOLT by Sunday, April 25 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 6</u> Monday, April 26</p>	<p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship Around the World <input type="checkbox"/> Limits on Press Freedom <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Clashes <input type="checkbox"/> The Messiness of Relativism <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Simon, J. (2015). "Chapter 5: Web Wars." In <i>The New Censorship</i>, p. 93-111. [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begin working on third LinkedIn Learning course. See the video "LinkedIn Learning Options This Semester" for ideas. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 3: Initial Post (Round 1) due to BOLT by Thursday, April 29 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 3: Replies (Round 2) due to BOLT by Sunday, May 2 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship Analysis 2 posted to class blog by Sunday, May 2 at 11:55 p.m.

Week Begins	Activities
<p><u>Week 7</u> Monday, May 3</p>	<p>Friday, May 7: Last Day of Classes/Last Day to Withdraw from a Course</p> <p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pressure Campaigns and Cancel Culture <input type="checkbox"/> In My Defense: The Art of the Apology <input type="checkbox"/> To Watch What You Say, or to Speak Boldly? <input type="checkbox"/> Career Implications of Censorship <p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2018). "Chapter 8: The Speech We Hate: The Romantic Appeal of First Amendment Absolutism." In <i>Must We Defend Nazis?</i>, p. 137-162. [pdf reading] <input type="checkbox"/> Current Event Articles found in Weekly Overview on BOLT <p>LinkedIn Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Finish third LinkedIn Learning course. Submit certificate and reflection to BOLT by Sunday, May 9 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 3: Replies (Round 3) due to BOLT by Thursday, May 6 at 11:55 p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Cycle 3: Replies (Round 4) due to BOLT by Sunday, May 9 at 11:55 p.m.
<p><u>Week 8</u> Monday, May 10</p>	<p>Monday, May 10-13: Finals Week</p> <p>Assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Censorship Analysis 3 posted to class blog by Thursday, May 13 at 11:55 p.m. <p>Note: There is NO final exam for this course. Censorship Analysis 3 functions as the final exam, drawing together everything you've learned this semester.</p>