JCO 2202MEDIA ETHICS AND SOCIETY

**COURSE NAME: MEDIA ETHICS AND SOCIETY COURSE CODE: JCO 2202**

**CREDIT UNITS: 3**

**CONTACT HOURS : 45**

**TYPE OF COURSE : CORE**

**Course Description :**

The course introduces students to professional media ethics and the mutual expectations between the media and society. The course explores theoretical and conceptual frameworks for ethics and responsible media practice. Students learn about: the social responsibility of the media; common ethical violations in the Ugandan media; guidelines in making ethical decisions; ethics in the age of new media; institutional frameworks under which the media industry operates; the ethical challenges journalists face in their work.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To give students an appreciation of responsible media practice through observing professional media ethics that they will apply in their work in the media and other communication areas.

2. To equip students with the skills and practical tools on how to deal with ethical dilemmas and how to ethically justify their actions.

3. To expose students to the institutional frameworks that guide media practice in Uganda.

**Course Outline:**

**a. Introduction to Media Ethics**

• Rationale for media ethics

• Social responsibility of the media

• Professionalism and media ethics

• Institutional regulatory frameworks in Uganda

**b. Theoretical & Conceptual Premises of Ethics**

• Aristotle’s ‘Golden Mean’

• Immanuel Kant’s ‘Categorical Imperative’

• John Rawl’s ‘Veil of Ignorance’

• Stuart Mill’s ‘Principle of Utility’

• Judeo-Christian ‘Agape principle’

• John Merril’s ‘Imperative of Freedom’

**c. Guides to Making Ethical Decisions**

• The Potter Box

• Consequences approach

• Principles approach

**d. Applying Ethics**

• Case studies

• Code of ethics (Uganda)

• Minimum broadcasting standards (Uganda)

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, students should:

• Have an appreciation of what constitutes responsible media practice

• Be able to act ethically in their work

• Be aware of the institutional frameworks that guide media practice in

Uganda

**Methods of Teaching/Delivery:**

• Lectures

• Group discussions

• Case studies

**Methods of Assessment:**

3. Coursework of at least 2 assignments/tests will constitute 40%

4. Final examination will account for 60%

**Readings/Reference Materials/Learning Resources:**

• Foreman, G. (2010). The Ethical Journalist: Making Responsible

Decisions in the Pursuit of News. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

• White, A. (2008). To Tell You the Truth. Brussels: The Ethical Journalism

Institute/International Federation of Journalists.

• Nassanga, G.L, 2008, ‘Journalism ethics and the emerging new media culture of radio talk shows and public debates (Ekimeeza) in Uganda.’ Journalism 9(5) 646-663 London: Sage.

• Christians, C. et. al, 2005, Media Ethics, Longman: New York

• Gurevitch, M. et al, (eds) 1994, Culture, Society and the Media, Routledge: New York

• Black B. S. et al. 1993, Doing Ethics in Journalism, EBSCO Media: Birmingham