

# How to introduce ethic competences in multimedia/transmedia courses

## Integrated Journalism Workshop

**Main Issue:** The inclusion of the public in the production of news media, has generated a debate about the "culture of permissiveness" and gratuity, copyright and authorship, informed consent and limitations applicable to the subject (McKee, 2008). There are still essential and inalienable features from ethical and deontological aspects to be strengthened such as verisimilitude, the public interest, pluralism, respect for privacy, independence, credibility, and accuracy.

The tipsheet refers to Recommendations no. 2 and 3 in the IJIE State of the Art analysis (Ten Tips Guide):

Rec. no. 2: "Keep a fair balance between journalistic fundamentals, a good general knowledge in social sciences, technological skills and practical onthejob training. More attention should be paid to new journalistic principles in the light of technological change."

Rec. no. 3: "Update professional charters in order to cope with new deontological stakes; teaching staff and media professionals encourage students to use new tools which often question the fundamentals of journalism."

The EJTA (European Journalism Training Association), have also highlighted some changes that faculties of journalism should incorporate (Drok, 2013) in their so-called Competence Project that started in 2005. From the seven recommendations, we could select for this topic the following:  
(II) Process - Transparency - Guaranteeing accountability and a trustworthy, open working method  
(III) Product content - Navigation - Offering a relevant and reliable content, whether or not through in-depth research, and putting it in a meaningful context

Therefore those should be included into the curricula in transmedia/convergence/new media subjects.

**Website:** [www.upf.edu/facom/en](http://www.upf.edu/facom/en)

**Keywords:** multimedia, web, production, ethics, industry

<b>Courses:</b>	<b>Study program:</b>	<b>Level:</b>	<b>Students</b>
Integrated Journalism Workshop	Journalism Degree	Bachelor	76

### Short description:

Cetrencada is the publication where third year Journalism students of the Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF) implement their knowledge to create their own journalistic product within the subject of Taller Integrat de Periodisme (Integrated Journalism Workshop). This subject takes place in a multimedia editing environment where they concurrently carry out products intended for the press (a supplement in the newspaper El Punt Avui), radio (UPF.Ràdio), television (BTV) and the Internet (vilaweb.cat/cetrencada).

Students in this subject will develop the ability to think critically and practice journalism ethics in a professional simulation environment. For that purpose they develop skills in comprehension and evaluation of ethical dilemmas on micro levels. Based on the premise that journalism has a duty of responsibility to society, the subject provides an insight into the nature of deontology, the differences between ethics and morality, the boundaries and overlaps between deontology and the legal system or law applicable to communication, and the ethical principles that are the cornerstone of the profession's self-regulation, among many other matters. The subject links well with theoretical knowledge acquired over the previous courses (deontology of journalism) regarding professional practice, just before students begin their compulsory practicum in the media. It is a subject that enables students to develop a thorough awareness of the media's function.

To do	Topic	Teaching method
Translate the Transversal competences into Specific competences to Journalism Education.	TUNING Competences	Debate about how those competences are included in the journalist deontological code. How can they be applied in their in-class everyday practice. Make them analyse one of their articles or features to see if they apply
<p><b>GENERAL COMPETENCES RELATED TO ETHICS</b>            ("TUNING Educational Structures in Europe started in 2000 as a project to link the political objectives of the Bologna Process and at a later stage the Lisbon Strategy to the higher educational sector" // 31 general competences // <a href="http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/">http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/</a>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to be critical and self-critical</li> <li>• Ability to show awareness of equal opportunities and gender issues</li> <li>• Ability to act on the basis of ethical reasoning</li> <li>• Ability to act with social responsibility and civic awareness</li> <li>• Appreciation of and respect for diversity and multiculturality</li> <li>• Commitment to the conservation of the environment</li> </ul>		

To do	Topic	Teaching method
<p>The concern of how to adopt social media habits within existing ethical norms and values, might require new policies and practices. Mimi Sheller (2014): News Now, Journalism Studies, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2014.890324</p> <p>Design a Social Media Communication Strategy according to the ethics and deontological values for our subject publishing media/web.</p>	<p>Social media ethics</p>	<p>Select one or two social media platforms (Twitter or Facebook) to be included as a complementary source for the publication. Work with the students to create a strategy that works for the audience, functions with the content, while still respecting journalistic values.</p>
<p>Consider all dimensions of media convergence—from the fiscal to the compositional—as notions of “authorship”. Who, exactly, composes new media texts, particularly texts that “borrow” from a variety of sources?</p> <p>In multimedia pieces where information/images as drawn from the web, where sources come from participatory sites/citizen journalism/ twitter collaborations...</p>	<p>Authorship</p>	<p>Students exchange the latest features before publishing in our media for them to analyse if there might be any legal issues regarding authorship.</p>
<p>Due to the potential loss of credibility among the student’s publications audience,</p> <p>There should be a priority and a scrutiny on the items to be posted. In addition when there is live coverage of an event that should be increased.</p>	<p>Credibility</p>	<p>Select some events that can be covered live and follow them together with the students. Assess all credibility and authorship elements during the process of publishing. For instance, while there is an election day.</p>

To avoid	Topic	Why?
<p>Focusing more on the technical part rather than the critical thinking. As Canadian Broadcasting Corp.’s George Hoff, observed, slightly more charitably, that, “solo video journalists assigned to a press conference are preoccupied with camera angles and technicalities, not critical reporting” Peter H. Martyn (2009) THE MOJO IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM, Journalism Practice, 3:2, 196-215, DOI: 10.1080/17512780802681264.</p>	<p>Technic vs. Critical thinking</p>	<p>To avoid having reports without content, or with no journalistic features. To minimize the risk of students being unable to act like journalists in a press conference.</p>

---

## Recommended resources

## Topic/Learning outcome

---

### Recommended website:

Center for Journalism Ethics (Wisconsin University) ;  
<http://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/digital-media-ethics/>  
[http://www.journalismethics.info/online\\_journalism\\_ethics/new\\_media\\_trends.htm](http://www.journalismethics.info/online_journalism_ethics/new_media_trends.htm)

Wisconsin University developed a reference website to keep up to date with the topics and discussions regarding ethics and digital media.

It could be used as a complementary reading to prepare the social media strategy or to debate in-class regarding the changes in the profession caused by social media introduction in the newsrooms.

### Recommended readings on New media/ Media convergence and ethics: ((can we point to what is good about these pieces of literature?))

Friend, Cecilia and Jane Singer. Online Journalism Ethics: Traditions and Transitions. Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2007. For studying how the ethics of the profession has evolved and what still remained unchanged.

Ward, Stephen J. A. "Ethics for the New Mainstream." In The New Journalist: Roles, Skills, and Critical Thinking, eds. Paul Benedetti, Tim Currie and Kim Kierans, pp. 313-326. Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications, 2010.

Interesting ideas to keep in mind regarding ethics while working for digital media.

**Mimi Sheller (2014):** News Now, Journalism Studies, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2014.890324

Short article focusing on how new media, audience and user generated content is changing the journalistic practice.

**Contact:**



**Instructor/Contact person:**  
Xavier Ramon, e-mail: [xavier.ramon@upf.edu](mailto:xavier.ramon@upf.edu)

Pompeu Fabra University  
Communication Faculty

**Bonus material:**

**Short quote from instructor**

"The new multiplatform environment, characterized by 24/7 production cycles, high speed information flow, and the impact of social networking sites, poses key ethical challenges regarding the accuracy, quality, and integrity of content.

Young journalists must learn to elaborate their materials with tight deadlines and thinking in various platforms. At the same time, they must also keep the fundamental values of journalism in mind. In our course, we raise our students' awareness about the importance of truth-telling, fact-checking and verification.

We also remind them about the carefulness to comply with the principles of justice, freedom and responsibility.

In addition, we have recently introduced a project by which students create an accountability system (such as an editorial blog or an online ombudsman) connected to Cetrencada, the multiplatform media where they develop their practical coursework. This instrument will help them to increase their consciousness about their routines, ethical standards and the quality of their outputs."

**Teaching environment:**

**Testimonial from a student**

"We never thought that when we published a photo on-line that it would reach so many people, she [one that appeared in it] saw it and contacted us to erase it. She didn't like it. But she wasn't the main focus there!"

