

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME IN  
JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

**PAPER VIII - MEDIA ETHICS AND THE LAW**

**Rationale-** This course will introduce students to the ethical discourse and practices surrounding media messages and will lead to an awareness of the position that selected laws take on these issues. These ethical issues may vary with the ethical relativity of diverse cultures, location and subject positions. This paper seeks to acquaint the students with some of these, while critically engaging them in selected contemporary events.

**Background-**This course will introduce students to the study of ethical issues in the media. It provides an examination and discussion of the impact of ethical issues, studying the related laws that journalists confront in India and around the world in a variety of social, political and economic contexts.. Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of issues like freedom of the press and the ability to analyze important ethical issues involved with the mass media industry.

**Expectation:** Students are expected to have an awareness of and critical engagement with ethical issues which inform media practices in the society and the world that they inhabit. Teachers and students must refer to important and relevant case studies at appropriate places while dealing with major issues and topics.

**Unit-I Ethical Framework And Media practice**

**L-3 weeks**

Freedom of expression and censorship(Article 19(1)(a) and Article 19(1)2)  
Freedom of expression and defamation- Libel and slander  
Issues of privacy and Right to Information  
Idea of Fair Trial/Trial by Media  
Intellectual Property Rights  
Media ethics and cultural dependence

**Student Presentations-** Photocopied material for Study Packs in India; Aaron Swartz.

Attack on Freedom of artists and authors

**Unit 2 Media Technology and Ethical Parameters**

**L-3 weeks**

Live reporting and ethics  
Legality and Ethicality of Sting Operations, Phone Tapping etc  
Ethical issues in Social media ( IT Act 2000, Sec 66 A )  
Discussion of Important cases-eg- Operation Westend  
Some Related laws- Relevant sections of Broadcast Bill, NBA guidelines

**Student Presentations-** Tehelka's Westend .

School Teacher Uma Khurana case

### **Unit 3- Representation and ethics**

**L- 3 weeks**

Advertisement and Women

Pornography

Related Laws and case studies- Indecent representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 and rules 1987, Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment Bill, 2007, Sec 67 of IT Act 2000 and 292 IPC etc

Regulatory bodies, Codes and Ethical Guidelines

**Student Presentations-** Students will submit on above mentioned topics.

### **Unit 4- Media and Social Responsibility**

**L-3 weeks**

Self Regulation

Media Content, morality and Accountability

Economic Pressures

Media reportage of marginalized sections- children, dalits and tribals.

Media coverage of violence and related laws - inflammatory writing (IPC 353), Seditious- incitement to violence (section 121 IPC) IPC 121 read with 511, hate Speech.

**Student Presentations-** Students will present case studies and written assignments given by the teacher from time to time eg- Attack on civil liberties of individuals and social activists

#### **Essential Reading list:**

- Thakurta, Paranjy Guha, Media Ethics, Oxford University Press, 2009
- Barrie mc Donald and Michel petheran Media Ethics, mansell, 1998
- Austin Sarat Where Law Meets Popular Culture (ed.), The University of Alabama Press , 2011
- Vikram Raghvan, Communication Law in India, Lexis Nexis Publication, 2007
- Iyer Vekat, Mass Media Laws and Regulations in India- Published by AMIC, 2000