

TEACHING THE MODULE:

Creating Safe and Fair Newsrooms¹

There are a variety of ways to teach these materials for in-person, online and hybrid courses in one or more sessions. We recommend that the case “#MeToo, CharlieRose and Newsroom Practices” serve as the centerpiece of the module and that instructors begin with the case and follow up with lectures/discussions of networks of complicity, behavioral ethics and sexual harassment law. Beginning with the case prompts students to wrestle with the issues themselves and to consider what they would have done if they had been working in a newsroom with Rose and had heard about or observed him bullying and/or sexually harassing their coworkers. It is important for students to recognize that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act bans not only sexual harassment in workplaces but also any discrimination in employment that is “based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.”

Single Session Approach

If an instructor wants to cover the module in a single, 75-minute session, the following materials could be assigned as pre-class work:

Assignments:

- Video: “Understanding Sexual Harassment Through the Behavioral Ethics Lens”
- Video: “Networks of Complicity” by Dr. Minette E. Drumwright
- Case: “#MeToo, Charlie Rose and Newsroom Practices” or the Washington Post articles by [Irin Carmon and Amy Brittain](#) and/or [Brittain and Carmon](#).
- Reading: “Unethical Newsroom Behavior: Paradoxes and a Perfect Storm”²

Instructors who would like to provide follow-up viewing after a single session could provide students links to the four short videos in the Ethics Unwrapped series “Being Your Best Self,” which illustrate the steps to acting ethically and explain how understanding behavioral ethics concepts contributes to ethical decision making: “Being Your Best Self, Part 1: [Moral Awareness](#)”; “Being Your Best Self, Part 2: [Moral Decision Making](#)”; “Being Your Best Self, Part 3: [Moral Intent](#)”; “Being Your Best Self, Part 4: [Moral Action](#).”

Three Session Approach

Another approach would be to cover the module in three 75-minute class sessions. In the first session, the case “#MeToo, Charlie Rose and Newsroom Practices,” networks of complicity and sexual harassment law would be discussed. In the second session, the focus would be on behavioral ethics and newsroom practices and culture. The third session would focus on acting ethically by drawing on the Ethics Unwrapped series “Being Your Best Self.”

Assignments for session 1 of 3:

- Case: “#MeToo, Charlie Rose and Newsroom Practices.”
- Video: “Networks of Complicity” by Dr. Minette E. Drumwright
- Video: Alisyn Camerota’s keynote address and account of her experiences
- Reading: “Networks of Complicity: Social Networks and Sex Harassment”³

Assignments for session 2 of 3:

- Video: “Understanding Sexual Harassment Through the Behavioral Ethics Lens” by Dr. Robert Prentice
- Reading: “Unethical Newsroom Behavior: Paradoxes and a Perfect Storm” by Drumwright and Cunningham (2020)⁴
- Videos: Watch a selection of Ethics Unwrapped videos on behavioral ethics concepts: “Moral Myopia” ([video](#), glossary [definition](#)); “Moral Muteness” ([video](#), glossary [definition](#)); “Self-serving Bias” ([video](#), glossary [definition](#)); “Obedience to Authority” ([video](#), glossary [definition](#)); “Conformity Bias” ([video](#), glossary [definition](#)).

Assignments for session 3 of 3:

Drawing on the work of James R. Rest, the four videos in the Ethics Unwrapped series “Being Your Best Self” illustrate the steps to acting ethically and explain how understanding behavioral ethics concepts contributes to ethical decision making.⁵

- “Being Your Best Self, Part 1: [Moral Awareness](#)”
- “Being Your Best Self, Part 2: [Moral Decision Making](#)”
- “Being Your Best Self, Part 3: [Moral Intent](#)”
- “Being Your Best Self, Part 4: [Moral Action](#)”
- Reading assignment: pages 431-441 of “Behavioral Ethics and Teaching Behavioral Ethics” provide a brief primer on behavioral ethics and an overview of Rest’s four steps.⁶

See “Teaching Note: #MeToo, Charlie Rose and Newsroom Practices” for guidance for leading a discussion on the case and related materials.

¹This teaching note was written by Dr. Minette E. Drumwright for the purpose of aiding instructors in teaching the module, “Creating Safe and Fair Workplaces.”

²Minette E. Drumwright and Peggy H. Cunningham, “Unethical Newsroom Behavior: Paradoxes and a Perfect Storm,” *Journalism Practice* (2020): 1-21.

³Peggy Cunningham, Minette E. Drumwright and William K. Foster. “Networks of Complicity: Social Networks and Sex Harassment.” *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 40, no. 4 (2021): 392-409, DOI 10.1108/EDI-04-2019-0117

⁴Drumwright and Cunningham, “Unethical Newsroom Behavior.”

⁵James R. Rest, ed. “Moral Development in the Professions: Psychology and Applied Ethics.” (Psychology Press, 1994).

⁶Minette E. Drumwright, Robert Prentice, and Cara Biasucci, “Behavioral Ethics and Teaching Ethical Decision Making,” *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*, 13, no.3 (2014): 431-458.