

COMM 3310
Communication Law and Ethics
The University of Texas at Arlington
Summer I, 2015
8:00 – 10:00

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Office Hours: M, W: 1-2

Read this syllabus **CAREFULLY**. Ignorance of the policies of the class **is not** an acceptable excuse.

Textbook and Materials

(1) Communication Law; Practical Applications in the Digital Age. Dom Caristi and William Davie

(2) Additional readings will be required as the semester progresses.

Note: Material in class supersedes material in the book.

Once you have the book begin to read it. It will be hard to pass the class without regularly attending class and reading the assigned readings.

Class lectures will not cover everything in the assigned readings. You are still responsible for reading and learning the material.

Course Description/Goals

In this course you will study constitutional, statutory, and administrative regulations as applied to print media, broadcast media, the Internet, advertising, and film; rights, responsibilities, and ethics.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the American legal system, its institutions, and some of its terminology;
- Students will demonstrate a broad understanding of First Amendment principles as they relate to mass communication;
- Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws that directly restrict or enhance information gathering and message dissemination in the mass media, and an understanding of the rationales behind those laws.

Attendance/Drop policy

Regular class attendance is required by the University and necessary to keep up with assigned readings, lectures and assignments. Excessive class absences, lateness and/or failure to keep up with assigned readings will result in lower grades.

Lateness (particularly when it is habitual) is disruptive to the entire class. Unexcused tardiness will be considered an absence. Students leaving class early will not be given credit for attendance unless excused in advance by the professor.

It is the student's responsibility to drop or add the class—not the faculty or staff's.

There is to be no texting or use of cell phones in any manner during class.

Exams, Legal Brief, and Grading

There will be four exams. Each exam will contain 60 multi-choice and true/false questions. Each exam is worth 100 points. There will be no make-up exams.

Each student will also write one legal brief during the semester and post to a discussion board. Instructions for these assignments will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

Exams: 80%

Brief and Discussion Board: 20%

There is no extra credit. The best predictor of a good grade is regular attendance in class and reading of the assigned material.

I will post grades on Blackboard following each exam/assignment. The grade scale is as follows:

90 – 100	A
80 – 89	B
70 – 79	C
60 – 69	D
0 – 59	F

You are expected to be on time for each scheduled exam.

If you miss a class, get notes and any handouts from your classmates. Grades in this class are based solely on performance on the exams and the legal briefs.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA): The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of federal legislation entitled *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty of their need for accommodation and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels. Information regarding specific diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability. Also, you may visit the Office for Students with Disabilities in room 102 of University Hall or call them at (817) 272-3364.

Student Support Services: The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

Academic Integrity: It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Series 50101, Section 2.2)

Drop Policy: It is the responsibility of the student to initiate the drop policy. Students need to go to his/her "major" department to drop a class. (for example, if you are a HISTORY MAJOR, and you want to drop a MATH class, you need to go to the HISTORY DEPARTMENT to drop your class. This is a new rule as of summer 2006).

E-Culture Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University "MavMail" address as the sole official means of communication with students. MavMail is used to remind students of important deadlines, advertise events and activities, and permit the University to conduct official transactions exclusively by electronic means. For example, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation are now sent to students through the MavMail system.

All students are assigned a MavMail account. ***Students are responsible for checking their MavMail regularly.*** Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/email/>.

There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active even after they graduate from UT Arlington.

Tentative Schedule			
Dates		Subject	Read
June			
Mon.	8 th	Sources of Law and Systems of Justice The First Amendment in Principle and Practice	Chapters 1, 2
Tues.	9 th	Sources of Law and Systems of Justice The First Amendment in Principle and Practice	Chapters 1, 2
Wed.	10 th	Forums of Freedom Sedition and Censorship	Chapters 3, 4
Thurs.	11 th	Forums of Freedom Sedition and Censorship	Chapters 3, 4
Mon.	15 th	Exam One	
Tues.	16 ^h	Libel The Right to Privacy	Chapters 5, 6
Wed.	17 th	Libel The Right to Privacy	Chapters 5, 6
Thurs.	18 th	Libel The Right to Privacy Initial discussion board post due	Chapters 5, 6
Mon.	19 th	Exam Two	
Tues.	20 th	Media and the Courts	Chapter 8
Wed.	21 st	Media and the Courts	Chapter 8
Thurs.	22 nd	Freedom of Access	Chapter 9
Mon.	29 th	Freedom of Access	Chapter 9
Tues.	30 th	Intellectual Property	Chapter 14

July			
Wed.	1 st	Exam 3	
Thurs.	2 nd	Regulation of Advertising Contracts Legal Brief due	Chapters 12, 13
Mon.	6 th	Obscenity and Indecency	Chapter 7
Tues.	7 th	Telecommunications Regulation	Chapters 10, 11
Wed.	8 th	Telecommunications Regulation	Chapters 10, 11
Thurs.	9 th	Exam 4 Discussion board responses due	