

COMM 3310 - Communication Law and Ethics Finish@UT – Fall 2019

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Office Hours: I am available by appointment. I am usually quick to respond to emails. If you need to talk about something I can be available by phone or by chat through Canvas.

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

“The materials used in this class, including but not limited to, the syllabus, assignment materials, presentation materials, all lecture materials, exams, quizzes and homework assignments are copyrighted works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing or selling those materials with other individuals.”

Textbook and Materials

(1) Communication Law; Practical Applications in the Digital Age. Dom Caristi and William Davie. Information on the book and a link to renting it are posted under “Course Materials” on Canvas.

(2) There are additional readings and videos to and all of the links are posted on Canvas.

Note: Material in class supersedes material in the book.

Course Description/Goals

In this course students will gain a basic understanding of the American legal system, and of constitutional, statutory and administrative law relating to Communication.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate a basic understanding of the terminology of the American legal system and the working of the court system.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the main points of seminal cases that have shaped Communication Law.
3. Students will examine the tension between ethics and the law by describing an issue, or situation, in society where ethics and the law seem at odds and writing a post about it on the discussion board
4. Students will examine a court case relating to Communication Law in the United States and provide a summary of the case and a critique of the outcome of the case by writing a legal brief.
5. Students will examine the tension between various constitutional rights in today's society by finding examples of such issues and writing posts about it on the discussion board.

Exams, Assignments, and Grading

1. There will be eight quizzes. Each quiz will contain 30 multi-choice and true/false questions. Each question is worth two points. There will be no make-up exams.
2. Each student will also write a legal brief during the semester. This must be on a case from the United States, and a case that fits with the topics covered by the book.

More specific directions on writing a legal brief including a video tutorial, a template to follow, and an example, are include on Canvas section.

3. During each module a discussion board will be open for you to offer your thoughts, opinions, and questions about material covered in the course. Participation is an important part of this course and discussion board participation will be graded in a variety of ways, including engaging in discussion on the discussion boards and posting links to relevant material. Several posts during the semester will be on specific topics assigned to you. The due dates for the posts are listed later in the syllabus and on Canvas.

Please note for the discussion board assignment you are expected to post an original post each week, and respond to two other posts each week. That means by the end of each module you must have two original posts and four responses for a minimum of six posts.

4. There is an introductory Canvas assignment. Completion of that assignment is expected and will also earn you 20 points.

There is no extra credit. The best predictor of a good grade is reading of the assigned material and participation in all activities.

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

Points

Quizzes: 60 points each x 8 = 480 points

Legal Brief: 100 points

Discussion Board: 100 points x 4 = 400 points (Note there is a separate discussion board each week, but discussion boards for each module are graded together).

Introductory assignment: 20 points

Total possible = 1000 points

A 900- 1000
B 800 - 899
C 700 - 799
D 600 - 699
F 0 –599

I realize that not all of the following information may apply to an online class, however the university mandates that I put it in my syllabus, and most of it is good information to be aware of.

Institution Information

UTA students are encouraged to review the below institutional policies and informational sections and reach out to the specific office with any questions. To view this institutional information, please visit the [Institutional Information](http://www.uta.edu/provost/administrative-forms/course-syllabus/index.php) page (<http://www.uta.edu/provost/administrative-forms/course-syllabus/index.php>) which includes the following policies among others:

- Drop Policy
- Disability Accommodations
- Title IX Policy
- Academic Integrity
- Student Feedback Survey
- Final Exam Schedule

Attendance: At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator of student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this section, I do not take regular attendance, but I encourage you to come regularly as experience shows those who attend regularly tend to do better in class than those who do not. However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report must the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Canvas. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

Student Support Services:

UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#) by appointment, [drop-in tutoring](#), [mentoring](#) (time management, study skills, etc.), [major-based learning centers](#), [counseling](#), and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at [Resource Hotline](#) (<http://www.uta.edu/studentsuccess/success-programs/programs/resource-hotline.php>).

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study: A general rule of thumb is this: for every credit hour earned, a student should spend 3 hours per week working outside of class. So, beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Library & Research Assistance: University-level research requires university-level sources. Appropriate sources include scholarly and peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, and credible news magazines and newspapers. The UTA Library <http://library.uta.edu/> offers a plethora of resources and subject specialists to help you select and locate appropriate sources. Find library staff at the Service Zone on the first floor of the UTA Central Library, by phone at (817) 272-3395, by text at (817) 727-8395, email at AskUs@uta.edu, or the chat widget on the library's homepage, <http://library.uta.edu/>. For a list of useful guides to help you start your research, visit: <http://libguides.uta.edu/>.

Your librarian is **Diane Shepelwich**, dianec@uta.edu. Diane is available through email, individual or group meetings, or phone appointments. If you need help getting started with your research or course assignment or have questions along the way, please contact Diane for personalized research assistance

Please note that the modules will not be available all at once. They will be made available on the date set in the syllabus.

Module One

August 12	Watch welcome video Start exploring course materials on Canvas	
August 12 – 16	Read Chapters 1 & 2 – Caristi and Davie View Power Point lectures for Chapters 1 and 2 View Annenberg videos and Supreme Court videos found in Module One. Read articles in the Chapters 1 – 2 folders.	
August 14	Introduction assignment due on discussion board.	
August 16 – 18	Take Quiz 1	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by August 18 at 11:59 pm.
August 19 – 23	Read Chapters 3 & 4 – Caristi and Davie View Power Point lectures for Chapters 3 and 4 Review cases discussed in book and the lecture. Read articles in Chapters 3 – 4 folders. Read the quotes in Module One and follow the instructions.	
August 23 – 25	Take Quiz 2	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by August 25 at 11:59 p.m.

Module Two		
August 26 – 30	<p>Read Chapter 5 – Caristi and Davie</p> <p>View Power Point lectures for Chapter 5.</p> <p>Read articles in Course Materials and search on-line for recent libel cases.</p>	
August 30 – September 1	Take Quiz 3	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by September 1 at 11:59 pm.
September 2 – 6	<p>Read Chapter 6 – Caristi and Davie</p> <p>View Power Point lectures for Chapter 6.</p> <p>Read privacy articles in Course Materials and watch the videos. Search on-line for more privacy articles.</p>	
September 6 – 8	Take Quiz 4	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by September 8 at 11:59 pm.

Module Three		
September 9 – 13	<p>Read Chapter 8 – Caristi and Davie</p> <p>Read the articles dealing with the issues discussed in Chapter 8.</p> <p>View Power Point lectures for Chapter 8.</p>	
September 13 – 15	Take Quiz 5	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by September 15 at 11:59 p.m.
September 16 – 20	<p>Read Chapters 9 & 14</p> <p>View Power Point lectures for Chapters 9 and 14</p> <p>Read the various articles dealing with trademark and copyright, and look at the websites of the music licensing companies.</p> <p>Watch the videos that deal with musical copyright.</p>	
September 20 – 22	Take Quiz 6	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by September 22 at 11:59 p.m.

Module Four		
September 23 – 27	Read Chapters 12 & 13 View Power Point lectures for Chapters 12 and 13 Watch the 20/20 and FTC videos. Read the related articles.	
September 27 - 29	Take Quiz 7	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due September 29 at 11:59 pm
September 30 – October 4	Read Chapters 7, 10, 11 View Power Point lectures for Chapters 7, 10, and 11	
October 3	Legal Brief due by 11:59 pm.	
October 4 – 5	Take Quiz 8	Discussion board response to week's readings and material due by October 5 at 11:59 p.m.