

COMM 282-201 (1854)
Media Law
Loyola University Chicago
Spring 2023
Monday 4:15 PM - 6:45 PM
School of COMM - Room 010

Instructor: Katie Drews

Email: kdrews1@luc.edu

(Please allow up to 24 hours for a response & longer on weekends)

Office Hours: Email me to schedule a video conference or in-person meeting

Bio: <https://www.luc.edu/soc/adjunctfacultydirectory/katiedrews.shtml>

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the boundaries of press freedom, the significance of the First Amendment and the nature and limits of the laws and regulations that uniquely affect your profession in the media industry.

The goal is not to make you experts, nor to eliminate your need for legal advice in the future, but to prepare you to recognize the multitude of legal problems you may confront as working professionals and to help you avoid potential hazards.

You will also be challenged in this course to think deeply about the theoretical, moral and ethical problems that underlie the legal issues we address in class, and to begin formulating your own ideas about the proper scope of the freedoms of speech and press.

Course objectives

- To demonstrate a broad understanding of the history and scope of the First Amendment as well as a thorough knowledge of the laws and regulations that uniquely affect media industries and media professionals.
- To be able to identify legal problems in real and hypothetical situations and to resolve those problems by applying legal principles.

- To reflect on the meaning of freedom of speech in society and the rights and duties of media professionals. And to begin formulating your own theories about the limits of freedom of speech and press.

Required Materials

All readings for this course will either be linked on Sakai or come from the required textbook:

Mass Media Law, 22nd Edition

ISBN10: 1260837424 | ISBN13: 9781260837421

By Clay Calvert, Dan V. Kozlowski, Derigan Silver

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There are earlier editions of this textbook available, but you are responsible for the content in the 22nd edition.

Grading

Your grade in this class will take into account your regular participation in our discussions and in-class exercises as well as your performance in a class presentation; your work on outside assignments, including five reaction papers; and the knowledge you demonstrate in a mid-term exam and a final exam. The breakdown includes:

Exams

You will take one mid-term exam and one final exam to demonstrate your knowledge of the history of media law, the constitutional cases and statutes that have formed the basis of that law, and the theories of media law.

Class Presentation

Throughout the semester, small groups of students will work together to research and present a report on media law news that relates to the topic we are covering in class at the time. Your presentations can take on a creative format – a courtroom scene or a broadcast interview, for

example – and will include a handout for the rest of the class and a post-presentation discussion that your team will lead.

Reaction Papers

Five reaction papers will be assigned during the semester covering the textbook readings and the major topic of the past few weeks. They will include: the First Amendment; libel; invasion of privacy; newsgathering; and obscenity and copyright law. These papers are meant to be thoughtful reaction and analysis, not just an elementary summary of the readings.

Participation

You will be expected to display a proper level of professionalism by attending class regularly, arriving on time, staying until dismissal, being prepared for class, paying attention during lectures and participating in discussions and exercises. Please limit unrelated computer and cell phone use for urgent matters only. In addition, criteria for grading classroom participation includes:

- A: Frequent and meaningful contributions to class discussion that show insight and understanding of material
- B: Frequent and meaningful contribution to class discussion
- C: Occasional participation to class discussion
- D: Only participates when called upon
- F : No class participation

Attendance

Since this class only meets once a week, missed classes will affect your ability to perform well. Not only will you miss course content, you will also be unable to participate. Frequent absences/tardiness/leaving early will result in a lower participation grade. During class, we may also complete in-class assignments and exercises that you cannot make up if you are absent.

If you are absent, it will be your responsibility to check Sakai or seek out a classmate to see what you missed.

Only in cases of an illness, family emergency or other truly extenuating circumstances will an exception to this policy be made. Please notify me in advance or as soon as possible if such a situation arises. Please be advised that anything relating to obligations regarding a job you hold

will not count as an excused absence. If you foresee conflicts with other obligations you have, you may want to consider dropping this class.

Deadlines

It is your responsibility to be mindful of upcoming deadlines and manage your time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted for smaller assignments and in-class work. For larger projects, the following policy will apply:

Papers turned in within 24 hours of the due date will be deducted 15%. Papers turned in within 48 hours will be deducted 50%. After that, late papers will no longer be accepted.

If there are truly extenuating circumstances, you must discuss it with me before your deadline.

Grading Scale

Grades will be weighted according to the following scale:

Assignments: 35%

Presentation: 15%

Mid-term exam: 20%

Final exam: 20%

Participation: 10%

Assignments will be graded on a point system. At the end of the semester, the accumulated points will be converted into a letter grade based on the following scale: A 94-100%; A- 90-93%; B+ 87-89%; B 84-86%; B- 80-83%; C+ 77-79%; C 74-76%; C- 70-73%; D+ 67-69%; D 64-66%; D- 60-63%; F 0-59%

Additional Ground Rules

You should be reading local and national publications to stay current with the news. This includes your own campus paper, the [Loyola Phoenix](#). The Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Tribune and NY Times [are all available for free](#) through the university library.

You need to come to class with an open mind and a willingness to challenge your own assumptions and beliefs. Our classroom will be a place of completely open inquiry. You should feel free to ask any question, advance any argument or challenge any idea, even if that means simply playing devil's advocate. In doing so, however, you must be respectful of others in the class.

Also, a note of caution: This class will deal at times with the limits of speech and we will discuss how to regulate "extreme speech" – speech that is racist, sexist, graphic, threatening or otherwise offensive. We will have to study some of these examples.

School of Communication Statement on Academic Integrity

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. These examples of academic dishonesty apply to both individual and group assignments. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Taking an examination by proxy. Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy.
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;

- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.
- Submitting the same work for credit in two or more classes, even if the classes are taken in different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at https://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml .

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication. Instructors must provide the appropriate information and documentation

when they suspect an instance of academic misconduct has occurred. The instructor must also notify the student of their findings and sanction. The Associate and Assistant Deans of the School of Communication may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct. In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty, the Dean's office may convene a separate hearing board to review these instances.

The student has the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the Dean of SOC. If the student is not a member of the SOC, the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled shall be part of the process. Students have the right to appeal the decision of any hearing board and the deans of the two schools will review the appeal together. Their decision is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean or deans.

Students have a right to appeal any finding of academic dishonesty against them. The procedure for such an appeal can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicgrievance.shtml .

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

Accommodations

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to me. I will accommodate your needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is your responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet your own needs and assignment due dates.

Online Recordings

In this class software may be used as needed to record live class discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions will be recorded. These recordings will be made available only to students enrolled in the class, to assist those who cannot attend the live session or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. All recordings will become unavailable to students in the class when the Sakai course is unpublished (i.e. shortly after the course ends, per the [Sakai administrative schedule](#)). Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with your instructor.

The use of all video recordings will be in keeping with the University Privacy Statement shown below.

Privacy

Assuring privacy among faculty and students engaged in online and face-to-face instructional activities helps promote open and robust conversations and mitigates concerns that comments made within the context of the class will be shared beyond the classroom. As such, recordings of instructional activities occurring in online or face-to-face classes may be used solely for internal class purposes by the faculty member and students registered for the course, and only during the period in which the course is offered. Instructors who wish to make subsequent use of recordings that include student activity may do so only with informed written consent of the students involved or if all student activity is removed from the recording.

Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

As Loyola's mission statement holds, "We are Chicago's Jesuit, Catholic University-a diverse community seeking God in all things." Together, as a community rich in diversity, we are called to "expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith."

Recognizing and appreciating the diverse collection of identities, experiences, perspectives, and abilities of the students, faculty, staff, and community partners with whom we collaborate, the School of Communication commits itself to enriching academic experiences through the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive practices.

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral ([LUC.edu/csaa](https://luc.edu/csaa)) for yourself or a peer in need of support. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: [LUC.edu/dos](https://luc.edu/dos) or [LUC.edu/csaa](https://luc.edu/csaa); phone number 773-508-8840, email deanofstudents@luc.edu

Schedule *(Subject to change)*

Exam dates are outlined below; additional homework will be assigned. For details about your upcoming assignments and projects, please refer to Sakai.

Week One - *Jan. 16*
NO CLASS (MLK Day)

Week Two - *Jan. 23*
Introduction: The American Legal System

Week Three - *Jan. 30*
The First Amendment

Week Four - *Feb. 6*
The First Amendment

Week Five - *Feb. 13*
Libel

Week Six - *Feb. 20*
Libel

Week Seven - *Feb. 27*
Mid-term exam

SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS MARCH 6-11

Week Eight - *March 13*

Invasion of privacy

Week Nine - *March 20*

Invasion of privacy

Week Ten - *March 27*

Newsgathering

Week Eleven - *April 3*

Newsgathering

Week Twelve - *April 10*

Obscenity

Week Thirteen - *April 17*

Copyright

Week Fourteen - *April 24*

Course review

Final Examination - *May 1*