

# RESEARCH IN MASS COMMUNICATION LAW

MMC 6666  
FALL 2013

WEDNESDAYS, 4:05 – 8:10 P.M.  
1098 WEIMER HALL

PROF. CLAY CALVERT

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**Office Hrs:** Weds, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
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**Course Description, Objectives and Goals:** As the official course description on the College of Journalism and Communications' website states, "This intensive, writing-based seminar focuses on the research and writing skills that are essential to scholarship in the area of mass communications law. Using online legal databases, students must gather information, including law journal articles, judicial opinions and federal/state statutes, and write a research paper during the seminar that must be an original piece of scholarship on a mass communications law topic. The seminar includes in-class discussions and critiques of students' writing." It is a four-credit course, so expect to be busy and plan ahead accordingly. To slightly ease the workload, you'll be working in teams on your paper.

In light of this description, and with the strong belief that your research paper should carry much more value and weight than just a regular class project, **the two primary goals of this course are:**

- 1) *to have your research paper accepted for presentation to the Law Division of the AEJMC at the 39th Annual Southeast Colloquium to be held at the University of Florida from March 20 – 22, 2014; and*
- 2) *to convert the research paper into a law journal article suitable for publication by a relevant law review.*

In other words, you should be able to get two bites from the same research paper – first have it accepted as a refereed conference paper, and then have it published as a law journal article.

When the papers are submitted to the Southeast Colloquium, my name will ***not*** appear on them as an author **UNLESS** your group has failed to meet one or more due dates and deadlines or I deem your group to have not made consistent, substantial and significant progress during the months of September, October and November.

When the papers are converted into law journal articles, my name ***will*** appear as the first (“lead”) author. This will greatly increase the chances of acceptance of the article by a law journal. That’s because, in part, many law journals do not accept articles authored by current students from other schools. In addition, many law journals like to review the vita of the lead author when considering whether to make an offer of publication.

You can read more about the Southeast Colloquium at:

<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/colloquium14>

The benefits of this course structure should be obvious: you’ll be able to build your professional resume by being able to list both a conference paper and a law journal article.

**Funding:** The Marion B. Brechner First Amendment Project, which I direct, will cover the cost of your registration for the Southeast Colloquium if your paper is accepted.

***I already have drafted the Introduction section for each paper.*** This will provide you with the structure that will guide the remaining four (4) parts of your paper. The Introduction will include a “roadmap paragraph” that will describe to you what the four parts entail (the fourth part for each paper will be a conclusion).

### **Advice on Conference Research Paper:**

• **Team Meetings:** You will be working as a member of a team, so you will need to plan times when all of the members of your team can meet together. I strongly advise setting aside blocks of time now on your calendars for September, October and November when you and your teammates can meet.

If you wait until later to schedule blocks of time, I have no doubt that you will not be able find sufficient time when you all can meet. Like UPS, you need to be a master logistics to pull all of this off.

When you do meet, you might: 1) conduct research together; 2) work on drafting new content; 3) edit existing content; and 4) perhaps most

importantly, divvy up specific aspects of the workload among yourselves so that you all are on the same page and playing together.

- **Team Leaders:** Each team must appoint a team leader by the start of our second meeting on August 28. The team leader will be the point person who will need to respond to any emails that I send within 24 hours, and who will be the person in charge of emailing to me the written portions of the team projects by noon on the dates listed later in this syllabus on which they are due.

- **Read Examples of Conference Papers:** I will distribute to you on the first day of class copies of the two AEJMC conference papers I presented in August 2013 at the AEJMC annual conference. When you read them, try to get a sense of the style and flavor of how to write a conference paper. Some of you already have been involved in working on papers and articles with me, so you will have an idea of how they look. Others will not have had this experience – for them it will be key to see what the finished product looks like and to see the big picture. It's all about modeling the format and style.

- **Work in .doc Format with Separate Files for Each Part:** Do each part separately in its own .doc-formatted file. ***Do NOT use .docx***. The master file I will send to you will be in .doc format. After I have edited any part and email it back to you, you then can incorporate it into your master file. You won't send me the master file until the end.

- **Proof It Before You Send It:** Before sending me, for example, Part I of your conference research paper, I recommend that each team member proof reads it separately. In other words, two or three pairs of eyes should review and edit anything before it is sent to me.

- **Footnotes:** For almost every factual assertion, you will need a supporting footnote. Proper style is *The Bluebook*. You can mimic the *Bluebook* style of footnotes in my own conference papers to get a flavor for the style works.

**Due Dates and Deadlines:** The following are the due dates and deadlines for all of the assignments in the course, each of which counts as 10% toward your overall class grade.

• <b>Research I:</b>	August 28	(law journal articles)
• <b>Research II:</b>	September 4	(relevant cases & np articles)
• <b>Research III:</b>	September 11	(comm/journ/psych articles)
• <b>Writing Part I:</b>	September 25	(emailed to Clay by noon)
• <b>Writing Part II:</b>	October 9	(emailed to Clay by noon)
• <b>Writing Part III:</b>	October 23	(emailed to Clay by noon)
• <b>Writing Part IV:</b>	November 6	(emailed to Clay by noon)
• <b>Final Edits/Proofing:</b>	November 20	(hard copy mark-ups)
• <b>Op-Ed Column:</b>	December 4	(bring to class, copies for all)
• <b>Peer Evaluations:</b>	December 4	(emailed privately to me)

**Required Book:** There is one required book, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (19th ed.). I expect you to use it carefully and accurately. The index at the back of the book is excellent, you can find out how to cite anything. In addition, you can use the two conference papers that I will distribute on the first day of class to see how things are cited.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required and taken, as this course meets only once each week and there are three days, as described below, when we will not meet. Thus, missing more than one (1) class without an excused medical illness or immediate-family emergency will result in your overall course grade being lowered by half a mark. For instance, an A Minus (A-) would be lowered to a B Plus (B+), and B would be lowered to a B Minus (B-). I must receive notice via email at least 24 hours in advance of any class that you foresee missing. You must email me at [cocalvert@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:cocalvert@jou.ufl.edu).

***If you are more than ten (10) minutes late to the start of class, it will count as an unexcused absence. Please do not be late.***

We will **not** meet on the following dates: Oct. 9, Nov. 13 and Nov. 27. Even though we will not meet on October 9, Part II is still due to me by noon that day via email.

**Grading:** Numerical grades translate to the following letter grades:

A	93 – 100	C+	77 – 79	D-	60 – 62
A-	90 – 92	C	73 – 76	E	50 – 59
B+	87 – 89	C-	70 – 72		
B	83 – 86	D+	67 – 69		
B-	80 – 82	D	63 – 66		

## **Academic Integrity:**

The Student Honor Code and The Honor Pledge are fully applicable to this course and are hereby incorporated by this reference into any and all assignments in this course.

The Student Honor Code and The Honor Pledge are found online at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

Among others, key provisions are The Honor Pledge:

***“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.”***

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

***“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”***

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities requiring accommodations should immediately contact the Disability Resource Center Office for complete information at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/current.php>

All support services provided to and for University of Florida students are individualized to meet the needs of students with disabilities. To obtain individual support services, each student must meet with one of the support service coordinators at the Disability Resource Center and collaboratively develop appropriate support strategies. Appropriate documentation regarding the student's disability is necessary to obtain any reasonable accommodation or support service. Procedures for obtaining accommodations are set forth at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/getstarted.php>

Please notify me on the first day of class if you require special accommodations.

**Online Course Evaluation:**

You are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**No Extra Credit:**

There are no extra credit projects, papers or exams.

**Addenda:**

The professor reserves the right to make reasonable changes regarding the readings, assignments, grading structure and/or conference research paper at any time during the semester.