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RTV4700: TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAW & REGULATION & CGS3065: LEGAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES IN COMPUTING

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MEETING TIMES &
LOCATION:
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REQUIRED TEXT:
ON CANVAS

Fall 2018

Course Description

Welcome! This course provides an introduction to the laws and policies affecting the past, present, and future of various forms of communication technology. Innovations in media tech pose pressing questions for courts and legislators. This course will introduce you to these legal and ethical issues and asks you to think critically about the answers and solutions for conflicts that arise. Our emphasis is on US law and the U.S. Constitution, including freedom of speech and expression. But we also explore topics like privacy, intellectual property, and defamation, and will touch on global legal phenomena.

Course Objectives

This course covers a blend of technological, social, economic and legal issues in the creation of media technology law & policy. The goals of this class are as follows:

- That students demonstrate an understanding of relevant laws and regulations affecting media technology.
- That students demonstrate an understanding of U.S. constitutional principles relevant to media.
- That students demonstrate an understanding of the power of regulatory agencies and judicial bodies.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Grading Scale

The grade scale is as follows:

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

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D = degree!

Grading Parameters

Squad goals:	5%
Discussions:	30%
Syntheses (3):	55%
Quizzes:	10%

- That students recognize current issues in media technology law & policy and the effects on the use, access, and creation of new media technology.
- That students be able to practically apply all of the above in the professional context.
- That students be able to work effectively in groups to complete course assignments.

Learning Outcomes:

Students completing the course will be able to:

- Define and describe relevant aspects of US media and technology law and policy
- Understand how systems of shared values influence the creation of laws, policies, and regulations.
- Recognize, evaluate and determine emerging policy issues and how it impacts the media and technology landscape.
- Critically consider constitutional amendments, acts, laws, and court decisions governing media technology in the United States and abroad.

Course Methodology

Each week, students will be expected to:

1. Review the week's learning objectives.
2. Complete all assigned readings.
3. Participate in class discussion.
4. Complete and submit all quizzes and assignments by the due dates.

Required Reading

All class readings will be made available online or through UF Libraries Course Reserve.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Squad goals: Students will tackle class assignments and exams in their squads. These student groups are meant to both assist in learning the material and acquiring the valuable ability to work in teams. Students are required to create squad goals, or what would be considered a contract between all group members and each other. This contract should specify the expectations for group members with regard to all assignments, syntheses, and other group work. It should also detail the consequences for members failing to meet the terms of the contract. **Squad goals are worth 5% of your grade.**

Quizzes: Each week you are expected to complete, by yourself, a module quiz based on the lecture, videos, readings and other class materials for that week. Quizzes will be made of 5 multiple choice and true-false question. You will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz and may retake it once. Quizzes are always **due Monday at Noon**. Barring emergencies, students may not make up missed quizzes.

Discussions: Each week I will post some provocation – a video, article, podcast, etc. – related to our topic for the week. Your task will be to discuss the question posed related to the provocation. To do this you will need to consider the lectures and readings for the week. Discussion will take place in Super Squads – sections made of 2-3 squads. At **minimum you should post 3 discussion responses:** one (1) main response to the question, and two (2) responses to your super squad colleagues. Your responses should be substantive, critically considering what you’ve watched, read, and your colleagues’ responses. Discussions are **worth 30% of your grade** and are graded as complete or incomplete. Discussions are **due by Wednesday at Noon** of the following week.

Syntheses: Students are responsible for all information contained in the readings, lectures and other presentations. Syntheses generally will consist of essay question(s) in which it will be necessary for students to spot the issue in the facts provided and, using what we have discussed in class, analyze and answer the question. **Syntheses are completed in squads worth 55% of your grade.** Squads are expected to complete the syntheses by the deadline. Syntheses will be **due at Noon the following Wednesday**.

Squads will earn one synthesis grade. Individual student grades are based on their contribution to each synthesis based on personal assessment and that of their squad members.

Students are able to drop their lowest synthesis grade but should use this option judiciously. Therefore, squads may choose to not take the last synthesis. To use this option, squads must all agree and must inform the professor **at least one (1) week before** the scheduled synthesis. **Failure to do so means loss of this option.**

The **general synthesis discussions** are as follows:

- **Synthesis 1:** The First Amendment and net neutrality
- **Synthesis 2:** What’s the harm in machine learning?
- **Synthesis 3:** Owning your own information

Extra Credit: possibilities for extra credit will be available in the form of select activities on Canvas and participation in the SONA research study pools. Students may earn up **to two (2) points** of extra credit for participation in SONA. Points earned for participation in SONA are added to your **final grade** for the class. **Points earned for activities are added to your score for the next scheduled synthesis discussion.**

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Classroom Behavior and Course Policies

This course is conducted completely online. You should check the syllabus, at a minimum, at the beginning of each week as a reminder of upcoming assignments. The best way to reach me is using the Canvas email system. **When you email me using Canvas, please put “RTV 4700” or “CGS 3065” followed by the subject of your email IN THE SUBJECT LINE. In addition, please include your full name and UFID number at the end of the email.**

All grades are final after one week. No exceptions. If a student wishes to challenge a grade, they must contact me 48 hours after receiving their grade. In an email, the student should provide a detailed description of the substantive issue with their grade.

Academic Honesty

Students are required to be honest in all of their university class work. Faculty members have a duty to promote ethical behavior and avoid practices and environments that foster cheating. I encourage you to bring incidents of dishonesty to my attention.

The Honor Code: 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."

Cheating and other academic dishonesty issues will result in an automatic E for the course.

Absences in General

Students should make every effort to complete the assignments for the course as scheduled each class as scheduled. You may complete assignments ahead of schedule, but you will not receive credit for work completed after the deadline without prior clearance. **Because this class is based on group work, students should not miss more than both the guidelines provided here and adhere to their squad goals as agreed upon at the beginning of the semester.**

No alternative assignments will be provided for a student who misses an exam without properly notifying the instructor.

Religious Holidays

The university calendar does not include observance of any religious holidays. The Florida Board of Governors and state law govern university policy regarding observance of religious holidays. Students shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith with prior notification to the instructor. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

Student Illness

Students who are affected by illness should contact the instructor. The [Student Health Care Center \(SHCC\)](#) or home physician can provide a medical excuse note only if their providers are involved in the medical care of a student who must miss assignments for medical reasons. In any case please inform me if your health is making it difficult for you to complete class assignments.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Tech Support and Netiquette

This course is delivered completely on Canvas. For tech support please contact UFIT at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>. I suggest using either Chrome or Firefox as browsers for accessing the e-learning system. You can also get more information at <http://elearning.ufl.edu>.

Online discussions can be fruitful and interesting. It is my expectation for this course that you give your classmates the utmost respect when interacting with them in this course. Remember that it is much different to communicate thoughts and opinions over discussion boards than in person. Be respectful to your classmates' ideas, ask insightful questions for clarity, read with consideration, and give criticism with professionalism.

Both students and faculty each have a responsibility to maintain an appropriate learning environment online. I expect that we will all show professional courtesy and good netiquette in our discussions. Per university policy, we will all give due respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression, age, disability, political affiliation, and nationalities. If there is a pronoun your classmates and I should use when talking with you, please let us know.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last 2 or 3 weeks of the semester. Summary results of these assessments are available at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Looking forward to a fun and interesting semester!