



Law of Mass Communication
MMC 4200, Class No. 27032, Section CCCC

Prof. Clay Calvert

Fall Semester 2021
Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:55 p.m.
Thursdays 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.
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About the Course and Course Expectations

This seminar-size section of MMC 4200 is designed for undergraduate majors in the College of Journalism and Communications who want to attend law school. Students will read textbook content as well as more than a half-dozen judicial opinions, including key rulings issued by the U.S. Supreme Court affecting the First Amendment rights of speech and/or press. This section also includes graduate students who are taking MMC 5206 (“Advanced Law of Mass Communication”).

Being prepared for class – having done the reading in advance and being able to discuss it in class in an informed manner – is essential for success (not only for your personal success as a student, but also for the success of the seminar itself as one that is enriched by active, knowledgeable participation). I expect for you to have done the assigned readings in advance and to be able to discuss them.

I also expect you to know the cases, rules, concepts, terms, doctrines and theories about which you will be reading this semester. You will need to know those to do well on the quizzes this semester.

Book

There is one required textbook:

Mass Media Law, 21st Ed. (McGraw-Hill 2020).
Clay Calvert, Dan V. Kozlowski & Derigan Silver.

You may use either a print (loose-leaf) OR an electronic version of the 21st edition (available through UF All Access at the bookstore on campus). In brief, it does not matter to me what format of the book you use, as long as it is the 21st edition. It also does not matter to me if you rent or use a previously owned version of the 21st edition.

In addition to the textbook, I will post judicial opinions, case-response paper assignments, articles and other handouts in Canvas. **They will appear in the “Files” folder.** I will hand out hard copies of the judicial opinions in class as well, along with the case-response papers. Material contained in judicial opinions, case-response papers, articles and other handouts (as well as readings in the textbook) posted on Canvas is subject to testing on the quizzes that are required for this class.

Quiz Formats and Dates

There are four in-class quizzes, each of which counts for 10% of your overall grade. All quizzes are in-class, closed-notes, closed-books format. You must work alone on all quizzes. No assistance from anyone or any outside sources is allowed. Quizzes last for either 50 minutes (Thursday quiz) or 65 minutes (Tuesday quizzes), with that amount of time starting when class begins. If you arrive late, you will not be given extra time. The dates for the quizzes are:

- September 9 (Thursday), 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.
- October 5 (Tuesday), 3:00 – 4:05 p.m.
- November 2 (Tuesday), 3:00 – 4:05 p.m.
- December 7 (Tuesday), 3:00 – 4:05 p.m.

Case-Response Papers

There are six case-response paper assignments, each of which counts for 10% of your overall grade.

All case-response papers must be **stapled, double-spaced and typed in 12-point size in a font variation of Times Roman, Century Schoolbook or Palatino**. Failure to follow these basic instructions will negatively affect your grade. In addition, grading of case-response paper writing assignments is based on: 1) clarity of writing; 2) organization of writing (including paragraph structure); 3) spelling; 4) grammar; 5) the accuracy/correctness of your answer and the substance, depth and strength of your analysis, logic and reasoning; and 6) your ability to follow all of the instructions (including but not limited to length limits on answers). These instructions are hereby incorporated into and made applicable to each of the seven case-response paper writing assignments.

Be ready to discuss parts of your papers in class. **Thus, please bring two copies of your paper to class – one to give to me at the start of class and one for you to have during class.** Papers are due at the start of class; papers received after the start of class but within 24 hours of the start of class will be docked 25 points for lateness. Papers received more than 24 hours after the start of a class that you miss will receive a zero grade.

Grading for the Course

Your overall course grade is based on:

- 1) performance on four in-class, closed-notes, closed-books format quizzes, each of which counts for 10% of a student's overall grade in the class;
- 2) performance on six sets of written take-home questions (referred to here as case-response papers) that will accompany each assigned judicial opinion, with each case-response paper counting for 10% of a student's overall grade in the class;
- 3) quality of in-class participation and discussion, with an inability to answer questions in an informed and knowledgeable way, in the professor's viewpoint and judgment, negatively affecting a student's overall average by up to a full letter grade; and
- 4) attendance (attendance is required and more than two unexcused absences may lower one's overall grade in the class by up to a full letter grade).

In brief, a student's overall grade based upon performance on quizzes and case-response papers may be negatively impacted and lowered at the end of the course, at the professor's discretion and in the professor's viewpoint and judgment, by either or both poor quality of in-class participation and more than two unexcused absences.

Grading Scale

Numerical grades in this course 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		

There is no curve. The grades fall where they may within these cut-off points. Information on the assigning of grade points (for grade-point averages) as they affect your GPA is found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Dates When Class Does Not Meet

There is no class on the following dates:

- Thursday, Nov. 11 (Veterans Day)
- Thursday, Nov. 25 (Thanksgiving)
- Thursday, Dec. 2 (Study Day in Preparation for Last Quiz).

Diversity and Inclusion of Viewpoints

The First Amendment protects all viewpoints – majoritarian and dissenting, happy and sad – from government censorship. It is a viewpoint-neutral document – it does not allow the government to discriminate against a person or entity because of their views. Thus, all viewpoints and questions directly related to an issue or judicial opinion under discussion in class are welcome from all students in the class.

We will be covering topics such as hate speech that are clearly relevant in today's cultural and political environment. You will learn what the law actually is today as it relates to the First Amendment in areas such as hate speech. This is not an endorsement, however, of what the law should be or how it might be changed.

Academic Integrity

As noted above, all quizzes are in-class, closed-notes, closed-books format and you must work alone on them. Additionally, you must work individually all on case-response papers. The Student Honor Code and The Honor Pledge are applicable to this class and are hereby incorporated by implication into all four quizzes by this reference. They can be found online at:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-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 Student 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:

<https://disability.ufl.edu>

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>

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 such as lecture notes. Procedures for obtaining accommodations are set forth at:

<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/accommodations/>

Please notify me by email on the first day of class if you require special accommodations. I will need to complete a testing contract and you, in turn, will need to complete an Accommodated Testing Request (ATR) for each quiz.

Evaluations

Your voluntary feedback on the quality of instruction in this course is very important. Evaluations are typically open during the last two to three weeks of the semester. Your feedback is very important to me, as it not only goes to my department head for year-end evaluations, but also allows me to improve the course.

Advice about providing constructive feedback can be found at:

<https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>

Thank you very much in advance for taking the time to do this!

No Extra Credit

There are no extra credit projects, papers or quizzes. Please do not ask for any extra credit work. All students are treated equally based on their performance on the four quizzes, six case-response papers, attendance and quality of in-class participation.

Addenda

The professor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the lecture format, reading schedule, quiz schedule, quiz formats, case-response papers and other policies at any time during the semester.