



***Law of Mass Communication***  
**MMC 4200, Class No. 24827, Section CCCC**

**Prof. Clay Calvert**

**Fall Semester 2022**

Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:55 p.m. — Rinker Hall, Room 215  
Thursdays 3:00 – 3:50 p.m. — Rinker Hall, Room 210

**Office:** 2060 Weimer Hall

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (and by appointment)

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## **About the Course and Course Expectations**

This seminar-size section of MMC 4200 is designed for undergraduates in the College of Journalism and Communications and other UF colleges who want to attend law school. Students will read textbook content, as well as a very recent law journal article and six 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 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 in an informed manner.

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 items to do well on the quizzes.

## Book

There is one required textbook:

***Mass Media Law, 22nd Ed.*** (McGraw-Hill 2023).  
Clay Calvert, Dan V. Kozlowski & Derigan Silver.

This edition is new. It was published in June 2022. You may use either a print (loose-leaf if purchased or hardback if rented) or an electronic version of the 22nd 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 22nd edition. It also does not matter to me if you rent or use a previously owned version of the 22nd edition.

**In addition to the textbook**, I will post judicial opinions, Case-Response Assignments, articles and other handouts on Canvas. **They will be in the “Files” folder.** I will hand out hard copies of the judicial opinions in class as well, along with the Case-Response Assignments. Content contained in judicial opinions, Case-Response Assignments, articles and other handouts posted on Canvas and/or distributed in class, as well as in assigned textbook readings, is subject to testing on the quizzes.

## 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. They may include any combination of short-answer, fill-in-the-blank, multiple-choice and/or true-false questions. Quizzes are not cumulative, unless material from a prior unit or from earlier in the semester has been discussed again leading up to a quiz. You must work alone on all quizzes. No assistance from anyone or any outside sources is allowed. Quizzes last for either 50 minutes (Thursday quizzes) 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 and times for the four quizzes are:

- September 8 (Thursday) 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.
- September 29 (Thursday) 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.
- October 25 (Tuesday) 3:00 – 4:05 p.m.
- December 6 (Tuesday) 3:00 – 4:05 p.m.

## Reading Schedule & Study Suggestions Document

This is a very important document. It is distributed on the first day of class. It also is found in the “Files” folder on Canvas. It not only provides the pages and dates for all reading assignments, as well as the dates for quizzes, but also identifies for you the cases, concepts, rules, legal tests and terms on which you should focus when doing the assigned readings. All readings should be completed *prior* to the day on which they are assigned. If you do the reading *before* class, it should prove very helpful. In brief, the “Reading Schedule & Study Suggestions” document is a study guide. As you do the readings, you might check off the cases, concepts, rules, legal tests and terms on your copy of the “Reading Schedule & Study Suggestions” document to make sure you understand them.

## Case-Response Assignments

There are six Case-Response Assignments, each of which counts for 10% of your overall grade.

Answers for all Case-Response Assignments 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 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 six Case-Response Assignments.

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

## Grading for the Course and Attendance Policy

Overall course grades are based on:

- 1) Performance on four in-class, closed-notes, closed-books quizzes, each of which counts for 10% of a student's overall grade in the class;
- 2) Performance on six Case-Response Assignments, each of which counts 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 one 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 one full letter grade.

In brief, a student's overall grade based upon performance on quizzes and answers to Case-Response Assignments 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, Sept. 22
- Thursday, Nov. 10
- Thursday, Nov. 17
- Thursday, Nov. 24 (Thanksgiving)

## 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 clearly are 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 Assignments. 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.”*

## **Recording and Use of Class Lectures & Discussions**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. The purposes for which these recordings may be used, however, are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are: 1) for personal educational use, 2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or 3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Among other things, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

## **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 – it not only goes to my department head for annual 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, assignments or quizzes. Please do not ask for any extra credit work. All students are treated equally based on their performance on the four quizzes, answers to the six Case-Response Assignments, 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 Assignments and other policies at any time during the semester.