

RTV4700, Section 6117

Telecommunication Law & Regulations

Spring 2014
M 9th pd., W 9th & 10th pds.
220 Florida Gym

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Overview

This course reviews the legal structure of telecommunications industries; First Amendment and regulatory constructs of broadcast, cable, satellite, and the Internet; intellectual property and copyright law; free press and fair trial conflicts; privacy; and defamation.

Course Objectives

Students will gain knowledge of the legal and regulatory structures of telecommunications industries and will learn the following in this course:

- The basic structure and function of the American legal system
- The text of the First Amendment
- The interpretations of the First Amendment
- The applications of the First Amendment to electronic media content
- The rationale of broadcast, satellite, and cable regulation
- The broadcast licensing process
- The cable franchising process
- Indecency and obscenity regulation
- Intellectual property and copyright law in electronic media
- The privacy concerns surrounding electronic media
- Libel and electronic media
- The conflict between free press and fair trial rights

Course Policies

1. Please arrive on time, turn off cell phones, silence other electronic devices, and avoid leaving early.
2. Laptops are permitted for content related to class only. **I reserve the right to ban laptops and electronic devices from the classroom if their use is disruptive.**
3. No make-up exams will be given without appropriate documentation and 72 hours prior approval.
4. **ALL grades are final after one week.** This includes extra credit. If you wish to challenge a grade or are missing extra credit points, you must let me know within one week of the posting of grades. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

5. **CHEATING AND OTHER FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL RESULT IN AN AUTOMATIC E FOR THE COURSE!** Not just for the exam or assignment but for the entire course. You will additionally be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for academic dishonesty.

Attendance

You are adults, and you are enrolled in a 4000-level course, so I will not mandate that you come to class. I assume you know when and where we're meeting and how to get here and have the free will to make that choice. However, be aware that students who attend lectures perform better and learn more. In this course, a large portion of the two-hour lecture period (Wednesdays) will be devoted to discussion of ideas and clarification of concepts. Your input will help others and yourself to grasp course content. You will also be responsible not only for assigned readings but also for details presented in class that are not in the text, including video materials and guest speakers. Lectures will also reflect recent developments in telecommunication law and regulation not necessarily covered in the text. Additionally, while I will not take attendance, on days that we do group discussion in class, you will be expected to turn in a short write-up with your group. Therefore, you are **strongly** encouraged to attend class.

Email Etiquette

I have more than 250 students in any given semester. This makes for a very full inbox, and so, I require that you clearly label any emails addressed to me so that I can quickly and easily identify the course and the issue at hand. **When you email me, please put "RTV 4700" 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.**

For example, if you have a question about the study guide for Exam 1, the subject line should read: "RTV 4700 Exam 1 study guide." Then, in the email, ask me the question and close with "Joe Schmo" and "UFID 1234 5678" under the name.

I will not reply to emails that do not follow this protocol. I do not have enough hours in my day to track down who is in what class and what they want, so please make it easier on both of us and just label your emails accordingly.

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course will be comprised of your scores on three scheduled exams, three in-class activities, and class participation/ group discussion.

In-Class Activities (25 pts. each)

You will receive instructions for in-class activities on the day of the activity. They will be short, simple assignments to engage your thinking about the concepts at hand.

Class Participation/ Group Discussion (25 pts.)

On group-discussion days, you will be asked to collaborate with your teammates to form an opinion- based on lecture and discussion- about a scenario given to

you, a news article you find, or a case you look up in a database and share your conclusions with the class. The class will discuss whether or not we agree with your conclusion. You will do a brief write-up to turn in to me at the end of class on these days for your participation credit.

Exams (100 pts. each)

Exams will consist of two parts: A 45-question multiple choice section (90 pts.) and a two-question short essay section (10 points).

TOTAL POINTS: 400

Grading Scale

A	372 points and above	C	292 to 303 points
A-	360 to 371 points	C-	280 to 291 points
B+	344 to 359 points	D+	264 to 279 points
B	332 to 343 points	D	252 to 263 points
B-	320 to 331 points	D-	240 to 251 points
C+	304 to 319 points	E	250 points and below

Academic Honesty

Students who have enrolled at the University of Florida must have read and signed an honor code. By doing so, you have pledged that you will maintain the highest level of academic integrity. Plagiarizing others' work is a serious infraction that will result in a student being subject to sanctions set forth in the Student Conduct Code. To view the UF Honor Code, go to <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/STG/default.html>.

Students with Disabilities

Students requiring 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 me. Please contact Disability Services if you have any documented special needs **regardless if you believe you will need them for this class**. Email: accessuf@dso.ufl.edu; Voice: 352-392-8568 x200.

Instructor and Student Agreement

By accepting this syllabus, you agree that only through cooperation, class attendance, and commitment to semester objectives can we meet the goals of this class. However, I reserve the right to alter the calendar, assignment, and exam schedules as needed.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
Jan. 6, 8	Introduction; Introduction to the Legal System	Chapter 1
Jan. 13, 15	Legal System/ First Amendment	Chapter 2
Jan. 20, 22	JAN. 20 NO CLASS – MLK DAY	
	First Amendment	Chapter 2
Jan. 27, 29	The Rationale of Broadcast Regulation The Rationale of Cable and Satellite Regulation	Chapter 3, 4
Feb. 3, 5	Exam 1 Feb. 3 – Review Feb. 5 – EXAM 1	Study Guide
Feb. 10, 12	Feb. 10 – Activity #1 Regulation of Electronic Media Content (Indecency)	Chapter 5
Feb. 17, 19, 21	Regulation of Commercial Practices (Advertising)	Chapter 6
Feb. 24, 26	Intellectual Property/ Privacy Law	Chapter 8, 9
Mar. 3, 5	SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 10, 12	New Technologies and the Internet	Chapter 14
Mar. 17, 19	Exam 2 Mar. 17 – Review Mar. 19 – EXAM 2	Study Guide
Mar. 24, 26	Mar. 24 – Activity #2 Defamation	Chapter 11
Mar. 31, Apr. 2	Free Press-Fair Trial Conflicts	Chapter 12
Apr. 7, 9	Issues in Information Gathering	Chapter 13
Apr. 14, 16	Wrap-up Apr. 16 – Activity #3	
Apr. 21, 23	Exam 3 Apr. 21 – Review Apr. 23 – EXAM 3	

