

COMM 410 - 101 Media Law for Inclusive Digital Storytelling

Instructor

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Feel free to stop by my office any time you want, I am usually in on Monday and Wednesday. However, the easiest way to meet may be to make an appointment for a zoom meeting. I also will try to answer emails promptly. I also will organize Q&A sessions.

Course description

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the boundaries of press freedom, the significance of the First Amendment and the nature and limits of the laws and regulations that uniquely affect your profession. The goal is not to make you experts, nor to eliminate your need for legal advice in the future, but to prepare you to recognize the multitude of legal problems you may confront as working professionals and to help you avoid potential hazards. You will also be challenged in this course to think deeply about the theoretical, moral and ethical problems that underlie the legal issues we address in class, and to begin formulating your own ideas about the proper scope of the freedoms of speech and press. In addition to providing a general overview of the laws affecting communication, this course will also explore the main issues relating to the law of digital media. How have courts and lawmakers dealt with the proliferation of digital media and the Internet and how does this legal landscape affect communicators?

Course outcomes

- Students will be able to list and summarize the major theories of free speech guiding first Amendment jurisprudence and implement them in their own legal reasoning.
- Students will be able to identify legal problems in real and hypothetical situations and to resolve those problems by referencing relevant legal principles, jurisprudence and legal theories.

- Students will be able to formulate their own theories about the limits of freedom of speech and press.
- Students will extrapolate the skills described above to legal problems occurring in the context of digital media.
- Students will be able to compose answers to complex legal questions dealing with hate speech, privacy, defamation, newsgathering, intellectual property and advertising.
- Students will be able to critique legal arguments.
- Students will gather an understanding how developments in digital technology have rendered application of legal concepts to these technologies problematic
- Students will be able to reflect on how legal concepts can be successfully applied to digital technologies
- Students will be able to articulate how they think digital media should be regulated
- Students will understand how free speech law interacts with DEIL issues

Readings

All readings for this course will either be linked on the course website or come from the required textbook: *The Law of Journalism and Mass Communication* (7th Ed.) by Robert Trager et al. There are earlier editions of this textbook available, but you are responsible for the content in the 7th edition.

Organization of the Course

This class is asynchronous and online. This is not so much pandemic-related as it is a choice to provide some flexibility in your schedule. Previously, I met students for a synchronous sessions every week, but since we all need fewer zoom sessions in our lives, we opted to make the course a-synchronous.

The biggest change is that this course does not run on a weekly schedule. I prepared five modules for you to work through during the semester:

Unit 1: Laying the foundation DUE SEPTEMBER 13

Unit 2: The First Amendment and Its Limits: DUE OCTOBER 11

Unit 3-Libel: Due OCTOBER 25

Unit 4 Privacy and Newsgathering: Due NOVEMBER 15

Unit 5: Intellectual property and Advertising: Due DECEMBER 11

Final exam: Due December 17.

Each unit will be made available at the due date of the previous unit. This should allow you some flexibility as it will allow you to work on your law class in a week that is less busy. But please be warned, these units cover quite a bit of material, weeks worth of material, and you will not be

able to do well if you wait until the last minute to complete. Each unit will ask you to do readings, watch lectures, answer forum questions and do quizzes.

In addition, you will also complete four "digging deeper" assignments, reflection papers that ask you to think deeper about a topic related to the readings. These reflection papers will be about two pages each and will have slightly different due dates than the units (they will be due one week after that unit concluded). These assignments will pop up in the lessons as links to an assignment. There will be six "digging deeper" assignments, but you only need to complete four. If you complete more, your top four scores will count. At the end of the semester there will be a timed open book final, to be taken during finals' week.

Graded Activities

Forum contributions: 25%

Quizzes: 25%

Final: 25%

Digging deeper assignments: 25%

Loyola's Policy on Academic Dishonesty

The basic commitment of a university is to search for and to communicate the truth as it is honestly perceived. The university could not accomplish its purpose in the absence of this demanding standard. To the extent that this standard is respected, a genuine learning community can exist. Students of this university are called upon to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Plagiarism is a serious form of violation of this standard. Plagiarism is the appropriation for gain of ideas, language, or work of another without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the deliberate taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources.

The faculty and administration of Loyola University Chicago wish to make it clear that the following acts are regarded as serious violations of personal honesty and the academic ideal that binds the university into a learning community:

Submitting as one's own:

1. Material copied from a published source: print, internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
2. Another person's unpublished work or examination material.
3. Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit.
4. Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The critical issue is to give proper recognition to other sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty.

Plagiarism on the part of a student in academic work or dishonest examination behavior will result minimally in the instructor assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. In addition, all instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the chairperson of the department involved. The chairperson may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct.

Academic cheating is another serious act that violates academic integrity. Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher; providing information to or obtaining information from another student during the examination; attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted; and falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences all are violations of the integrity and honesty standards of the examination process.

In the case of multiple instances of academic dishonesty across departments, the academic dean of the student's college may convene a hearing board. Students retain the right to appeal the decision of the hearing board to the academic dean of the college in which they are registered. The decision of the dean is final in all cases except expulsion. The sanction of expulsion for academic dishonesty may be imposed only by the Provost upon recommendation of the dean.

Grades for all course work are based on the following standards:

Grading Scale

A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F, WF are assigned the following credit points for purposes of grade point average (GPA) calculations: A = 4.0; A- = 3.67; B+ = 3.33; B = 3.00; B- = 2.67; C+ = 2.33; C = 2.00; C- = 1.67; D+ = 1.33; D = 1.00; F = 0; WF = 0.

100 - 93%	A
93 - 90%	A-
90 - 88%	B+
88 - 83%	B
83 - 80%	B-
80 - 78%	C+
78 - 73%	C
73 - 70%	C-
70 - 68%	D+
68 - 63%	D
63 - 60%	D-
below 60%	F

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY CENTER (SAC)

If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the SAC as soon as possible. Formal arrangements must be made through the office before course adjustments can be made. Additional information about the services available at

Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SAC website: <https://luc.edu/sac/sacstudents/>.

MANDATED REPORTER

As a faculty member at Loyola University Chicago I am committed to supporting students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Therefore, if a

student chooses to confide in me regarding an issue of gender-based misconduct, I am obligated to inform Loyola's Title IX Deputy Coordinator. The Title IX Deputy Coordinator will assist you in connecting with all possible resources for support and reporting both on and off campus.

Managing Life Crises and Finding Support

Should you encounter an unexpected crisis during the semester (e.g., securing food or housing, addressing mental health concerns, managing a financial crisis, and/or dealing with a family emergency, etc.), I strongly encourage you to contact the Office of the Dean of Students by submitting a CARE referral (LUC.edu/csaa) for yourself or a peer in need of support. If you are uncomfortable doing so on your own, please know that I can submit a referral on your behalf – just email me or schedule a meeting with me during office hours. To learn more about the Office of the Dean of Students, please find their websites here: LUC.edu/dos or LUC.edu/csaa.