



Course Number and Title: COM 240 Mass Media Law

Campus Location:

Georgetown

Effective Date:

2018-51

Prerequisite:

COM 140 and COM 150

Co-Requisites:

none

Course Credits and Hours:

3.00 credits

3.00 lecture hours/week

0.00 lab hours/week

Course Description:

This course covers the ethical responsibilities and libelous aspects of reporting, as illustrated in historic court cases, and legal and ethical principles to news activities. Special emphasis is placed on Delaware's Freedom of Information Act, privacy, copyright, libel, and the First Amendment.

Required Text(s):

Obtain current textbook information by viewing the [campus bookstore - https://www.dtcc.edu/bookstores](https://www.dtcc.edu/bookstores) online or visit a campus bookstore. Check your course schedule for the course number and section.

Additional Materials:

None

Schedule Type:

Classroom Course

Hybrid Course

Online Course

Disclaimer:

None

Core Course Performance Objectives (CCPOs):

1. Analyze the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and distinguish among different interpretations and theories, interpret and analyze the right of privacy doctrine, and differentiate between the federal and state Freedom of Information Acts (FOIA's) (CCC 2; PGC 1)
2. Analyze aspects of libel and regulation. (CCC 2; PGC 1)
3. Analyze and present a current media issue or case relevant to American media law, and present the findings to a group of peers. (CCC 1, 2, 5; PGC 1, 2, 4)

See Core Curriculum Competencies and Program Graduate Competencies at the end of the syllabus. CCPOs are linked to every competency they develop.

Measurable Performance Objectives (MPOs):

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Analyze the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and distinguish among different interpretations and theories, interpret and analyze the right of privacy doctrine, and differentiate between the federal and state Freedom of Information Acts (FOIA's).
 1. Discuss the theories concerning the First Amendment.
 2. Examine various court cases that have defined interpretations of the First Amendment.
 3. Discuss the First Amendment protections afforded various populations of society.
 4. Discuss the history of the privacy doctrine in the United States.
 5. Discuss the difference between public officials and public figures.
 6. Examine court cases defining public officials and public figures.
 7. Analyze the different defenses against an invasion of privacy claim.
 8. Compare and contrast the information available to the public under the federal and state FOIAs.
 9. Interpret the open meetings section of the state FOIA.
2. Analyze aspects of libel and regulation.
 1. Define *libel*, and discuss the different types of libel.
 2. Identify the criteria for winning a libel suit.
 3. Identify who can file a libel suit.
 4. Examine various court cases that have shaped libel laws.
 5. Analyze the different defenses against a libel suit.
 6. Analyze regulation of obscenity, copyright, advertising, and telecommunication.
3. Analyze and present a media issue or case relevant to American media law, and present the findings to a group of peers.
 1. Analyze a case pertinent to media law.
 2. Research a media law topic using multiple references, including legal databases, internet search engines, journals, newspapers, books, trade magazines, industry sources, and court cases.
 3. Use facts, figures, opinions, and quotations to describe the topic and attribute research correctly using American Psychological Association (APA) documentation style.
 4. Compose a legal brief that uses correct legal terms, theory, and principles and includes a full citation, facts of the case, legal principles involved, resulting decision, and rationale for the decision.
 5. Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation in the report.
 6. Deliver an oral presentation clearly and effectively to a group of peers.

Evaluation Criteria/Policies:

Students must demonstrate proficiency on all CCPOs at a minimal 75 percent level to successfully complete the course. The grade will be determined using the Delaware Tech grading system:

92	-	100	=	A
83	-	91	=	B
75	-	82	=	C
0	-	74	=	F

Students should refer to the [Student Handbook - https://www.dtcc.edu/handbook](https://www.dtcc.edu/handbook) for information on the Academic Standing Policy, the Academic Integrity Policy, Student Rights and Responsibilities, and other policies relevant to their academic progress.

Core Curriculum Competencies (CCCs are the competencies every graduate will develop):

1. Apply clear and effective communication skills.
2. Use critical thinking to solve problems.
3. Collaborate to achieve a common goal.
4. Demonstrate professional and ethical conduct.
5. Use information literacy for effective vocational and/or academic research.
6. Apply quantitative reasoning and/or scientific inquiry to solve practical problems.

Program Graduate Competencies (PGCs are the competencies every graduate will develop specific to his or her major):

1. Analyze the impact of media on society.
2. Produce media products that meet professional standards.
3. Apply principle of design to media products.
4. Demonstrate effective professional communication skills.
5. Apply professional, ethical, and legal standards of behavior.

Disabilities Support Statement:

The College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with the campus Disabilities Support Counselor to request an accommodation needed due to a disability. A listing of campus Disabilities Support Counselors and contact information can be found at the [disabilities services - https://www.dtcc.edu/disabilitysupport](https://www.dtcc.edu/disabilitysupport) web page or visit the campus Advising Center.

