Media Law

MCOM 3306 (formerly MCM 306)

Course Description: Media Law. Study of communication law affecting the rights and duties of the press, including electronic media. Attention given to the First Amendment, libel, privacy, Freedom of Information Act, copyright, and obscenity. Prerequisite: Advanced standing.

Justification for Credit Hours Awarded: MCOM 3306, Media Law (3 credits), typically meets either twice a week, three times a week, or online (meeting times align with university policy) for either 15 weeks or 8 weeks depending on the semester. Students have significant textbook reading assignments and are expected to exams over all reading assignments, lectures, videos, etc. In addition, one paper -- either a legal brief based on a media law case or a movie related to the media -- is assigned. These activities average at minimum 6 hours of work each week to prepare outside of classroom hours.

Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate the ability to write effectively across a variety of platforms appropriate the discipline.

2. Gather, organize and analyze discipline-appropriate research and communicate information about it.

3. Understand the role of media in society.

4. Comprehend legal and ethical principles relating to media.

5. Demonstrate the application of media technology, terminology and techniques.

Student Learning Outcome:

1. Students will be introduced to the major areas of media law. Landmark court cases will be emphasized.

2. Students will learn the importance of the First Amendment in media law.

3. Students will obtain an understanding of the U.S. Legal system.
4. Students will learn why it is important to consider ethical issues related to communication law.

**Course Topics Disclaimer:** Controversial and provocative material relating to the First Amendment will be studied and discussed in this class. If at any time you feel uncomfortable with the content of the discussion, please step out of the classroom and wait in the hall until the class discussion moves to another topic. The professor will notify you when the discussion has concluded. As you discuss the class material, please remember that we are in a classroom setting and that you need to use language that is appropriate in a classroom setting. You should express your opinions and thoughts in a professional and educated manner.

**General Education Core Curriculum Objectives/Outcomes:** n/a


**Course Requirements:**

1. Requirements include chapter reading quizzes (modifications pertaining to the number of exams will be made, if necessary, due to insufficient time during the semester). Quizzes will cover the chapters assigned per unit.

2. Unit Discussion Essays. Essay formats will vary from video essays to written essays depending upon the unit.

**Additional Considerations Pertaining to Course Requirements:**

1. Quizzes will cover material discussed in class, along with handouts, assigned chapters in text, etc. You should expect all types of questions, including short answer and essay.

2. Quizzes will also cover material that is reading material such as articles that the professor provides during the semester.

3. Prior to each reading quiz, you are encouraged to go to the textbook's companion website and take the practice quizzes for a review of the material.

4. There will be no opportunities allowed for extra credit in this course.

**Grading Scale:**

A = 100--90

B = 89--80

C = 79--70

D = 69--60
F = 59 and below

Grading Policy:

Exams = 60%

Discussion Essays = 35%

Post-test = 5%

TOTAL = 100%

NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER DUE DATE unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond your control such as a medical emergency, death in the family, documented illness, etc. Extra credit assignments may be given at the instructor’s discretion. Extra credit opportunities cannot be made-up, if missed. But, you may submit assignments earlier than the deadlines. Once you have submitted an assignment (even if you submitted it earlier than the deadline), you cannot redo the assignment. Assignments submitted earlier than the deadline will not be graded earlier than the deadline. Even if you mistakenly submit the wrong assignment initially, you will not be permitted to submit a different assignment. Thus, please ensure you upload the correct document the first time. You are also expected to provide correct links that work when providing assignments that are cloud based and/or on a video platform. If the link to your assignment does not work, you will not be able to correct that mistake after the assignment deadline passes.

Attendance Policy (see also SFA Policy 6.7): This is an online course and, to be successful, it is expected that you log into the class regularly and explore and read all material that has been provided for you to learn about media law.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty (see SFA Policy 4.1): Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to: (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on a an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own.

Examples of plagiarism are: (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. You may read the complete policy at
Acceptable Student Behavior Policy (see also SFA Policy 10.4) Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Withheld Grades Policy (see also SFA Policy 5.5): Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic department chair, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. The instructor has full discretion whether to assign a WH.

Students with Disabilities Policy (see also SFA Policy 6.1): To obtain disability accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aides, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to Disability Services.

Mental Health: SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:

SFASU Counseling Services

www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices

3rd Floor Rusk Building

936-468-2401
SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic

www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp

Human Services Room 202

936-468-1041

Crisis Resources:

Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343

Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
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<th>Weeks</th>
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| Weeks 1-2  | 8/23 — 9/3 | Getting Started Unit 1       | • Read Syllabus, SFA Steen Library, Meet Your Professor, How to Make a YouTube channel, and Discussion Netiquette.  
• Purchase textbook.  
• Go to the discussion board topic titled Introduce Yourself and learn about your fellow classmates this semester. Upload your introduction video as soon as possible. But, it should be uploaded no later than 11:59 PM (CST) on Friday, August 27.  
• Complete the PRE-TEST no later than Sunday, August 29 at 11:59 PM (CST). This will not calculate into your grade.  
• Read Unit 1 course content.  
• Read chapters 1, 2, and 3 in the textbook.  
• Submit the video essay for Unit 1 Discussion by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, September 3.  
• Complete Reading quizzes for chapter 1, chapter 2, and chapter 3 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Saturday, September 4. |
| Weeks 3-4  | 9/6 — 9/17 | Unit 2                       | • Read Unit 2 course content.  
• Read chapters 4, 5, and 6 in the textbook.  
• Submit the video essay for Unit 2 Discussion by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, September 17.  
• Complete Reading quizzes for chapter 4, chapter 5, and chapter 6 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Saturday, September 18. |
| Weeks 5-6  | 9/20 — 10/1| Unit 3                       | • Read Unit 3 course content.  
• Read chapters 7, 8, and 9 in the textbook.  
• Submit the video essay for Unit 3 Discussion by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, October 1.  
• Complete Reading quizzes for chapter 7, chapter 8, and chapter 9 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Saturday, October 2. |
| Weeks 7-8  | 10/4 — 10/8| Unit 4                       | • Read Unit 4 course content.  
• Read chapters 10, 11, and 12 in the textbook.  
• Submit the video essay for Unit 4 Discussion by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Friday, October 8.  
• Complete Reading quizzes for chapter 10, chapter 11, and chapter 12 by 11:59 p.m. (CST), Saturday, October 9.  
• Complete the POST-TEST no later than 11:59 p.m. (CST), Saturday, October 9. |