

The University of Texas at El Paso
University Connect
Department of Communication
COMM 4371: Communication Law and Society CRN:16584

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Samantha Dena, MA

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REQUIRED MATERIALS

Media Law and Ethics (6th Edition)
Authors: Roy L. Moore, Michael D. Murray, and Kyu Ho Youm
Year: 2022
Publisher: Routledge

COURSE CONTENT

Course Description:

A study of the rights and responsibilities imposed upon and exercised by the mass media under the American system of law; including laws of libel, copyright, and regulatory provisions that pertain to the press. In addition, ethical considerations in exercising responsibilities vested in the media are introduced.

Course Learning Objectives:

- Become familiar with the study of communication law and develop a working vocabulary of terms and concepts that relate to media law as it pertains to the U.S. Constitution, and federal and state statutes.
- Become familiar with a citizen's rights and responsibilities under the First Amendment.
- Become familiar with court systems and legal procedures.
- Discover the constraints, legal and ethical, on all major forms of mass communication.

Technology Requirements:

This course is presented in the Blackboard learning management system.

To ensure your success in accessing your course materials and completing your assignments, it is recommended that you ensure your computer setup for this class meets the following minimum requirements:

1. Broadband Internet connection, such as cable or DSL
2. A modern computer (PC or Mac), no more than four years old, with the following minimum configuration:
 - Processor: Dual-core or better, at least 2 GHZ
 - RAM: 2 GB or better
 - Operating System: Windows 7 or 8, or Mac OS X 10.6.8 or better
 - A computer headset is recommended (microphone and earphone set).
 - The hands-free option for your telephone will work in most cases.

Tech Support:

The University of Texas at El Paso offers complete technical information and online help desk support at <https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport>

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Assessment Items	Value	Points
Quizzes	40%	4 quizzes @ 100 points each = 400 points total
Discussion Questions	20%	6 @ 30 points each and 1 @ 20 points = 200 total
Case Studies	40%	4 @ 100 points each = 400 points total
Total		1000 points

GRADING SCALE

This course is ambitious and requires your active participation. Students can earn up to 1000 points. Grades will be based on the following scale:

- A= 1000-900 points
- B= 899-800 points
- C= 799-700 points
- D= 600-699 points
- F= 599 points and below

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE INSTRUCTOR:

The best way to communicate with your instructor is via email. Always include in the subject of your email "Online COMM 4371," when sending an email and your name. All emails will be answered within 48 hrs. Graded assignments will be posted a week after the submission date.

Participation:

Your active participation extremely important! There will be an opportunity to discuss and interact with classmates through *discussion questions* and *assignments*, which will be graded.

Academic Dishonesty Statement:

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion.

- *Cheating* may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports.
- *Plagiarism* occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents another person's words or ideas as his or her own.
- *Collusion* involves unauthorized collaboration with another person or group to commit any academically dishonest act.

Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. You can find more information in the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures by visiting, <https://www.utep.edu/vpba/hoop/>

Late Policy:

Deadlines for all quizzes, discussion questions and written assignments will be strictly enforced. No quizzes, discussion questions or written assignments will be accepted after deadline. Missing a deadline is equivalent of not doing the assignment.

Library Information:

Access the UTEP Library by visiting <https://www.utep.edu/library/>

Disability Statement:

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email at cass@utep.edu, or visit the office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass>

Responsible, Ethical and Effective Electronic Communication:

It is important to share a word of caution so we can become wiser about interpersonal distance learning communications. In an online environment, many of the feelings or impressions that are transmitted via body language in face-to-face communications are lost. Consequently, interpreting emotions and innuendos can be difficult. Only what is written, or drawn, carries the message. Often, excitement can be misinterpreted as anger or insult. We all need to keep this in mind as we communicate.

Words in print may seem harmless, but they can injure us emotionally when working at a distance. Hence, we must be conscious of how we communicate while working at a distance and use good *netiquette*, that is, online communication etiquette. For example, your classmates may not know who is posting a comment, so clearly identify yourself when posting to a discussion board. Furthermore, avoid using all capital letters in electronic communication, as all caps come across as shouting.

The standard netiquette for participation in networked discussion requires that all comments focus on the topic at hand, without becoming personalized, and be substantive in nature. **In other words, you certainly may disagree with others, but you must do so respectfully.** You may express strong beliefs or emotions, but you may not get so carried away that you lose all perspective on the course itself.

You can find more information on netiquette, the etiquette of Internet communication, at www.albion.com/netiquette.

**Welcome to COMM 4371: Communication Law and Society!
Have a great learning experience!**