

AIM 530 • Convergent Media Law and Ethics • Fall 2009

Dr. Ann Thorne • Eder 220 • Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 MW, 1:00-4:00 W

Course Syllabus • Master of Applied Integrated Media • Missouri Western State University • Convergent Media Option

Required Texts:

Major Principles of Media Law, by Wayne Overbeck, 2009 edition
Online Journalism Ethics: Traditions and Transitions, by
Cecilia Friend and Jane B. Singer
The Journalist and the Murderer, by Janet Malcolm

Course Objective:

This course examines the historical background and development of freedom of speech and freedom of the press in convergent media, and the limitations that have been imposed on those freedoms by statute, common law, and the courts' interpretation of constitutional law. The case study approach is used, with emphasis on the principles and philosophy that underlie the various aspects of what is known as communication law. We will also examine ethical questions that affect convergent journalists and the community they serve in which journalists must make decisions not by the legality of the issue, but by the ethics involved.

Grading Policy:

Because this is a graduate seminar, students will be presenting and discussing material in class each week. The assignments will be given at least one week in advance, depending on the length of the assignment. These assignments will all be graded material. In addition, there will be two papers. The first will be researching a legal issue, and the second an ethical issue. The total number of points you earn will determine your final grade based on a percentages basis: 90 – 100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C.

If you are seriously ill and will have to miss class, you must notify me in advance. Otherwise, I expect everyone to attend each class session. Your weekly attendance is essential.

Each of three daily papers/presentations 5 point each

Ethics paper 80 points

Law paper 80 points

Students with Disability:

Any student in this course who has a disability that precludes the fullest expression of abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss class requirements.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms.

Please see the 2009-10 Student Handbook and Calendar for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>