Journalism Law & Ethics
Jour 303 (1 unit)
Fall 2015
TTH 1:30-2:45 PM in WSTN 205

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Course Objective: To impart a useful understanding of what’s generally accepted as lawful and right conduct by journalists, and a basic sense of how to act accordingly.

Coursework: Alone and in teams, including research and reporting, analytical and reflective writings, as well as an occasional test, with or without notice in advance.

Modus Operandi:

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory for all 27 sessions. Arrangements for make-up work will be made only for conflicts with university-approved activities, illnesses severe or contagious, or exceptional extenuating circumstances. Absence for religious observance is governed by a university policy set forth at: http://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/religiousobsrv.html.

Participation: Everyone’s full attention is expected while in session. The use of personal computers and smartphones for immediate research in aid of discussion is encouraged, but communication with those outside our classroom is allowed only with the instructor’s express permission. Active engagement in the discussions is encouraged and will be a factor in grading.

Respect: A class like this works best in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Some of the topics we will discuss are controversial. Discussions should be open and free; disagreements should be fearless and fully explored in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Anyone should feel empowered to present a view, not because she or he believes it but because she or he considers it worth testing and exploring. The Chatham House Rule is in force.

Grades: Coursework grades will count for 80 per cent of the final grade; participation grades will count for the remainder. Grades are due to the Registrar by 3 pm on Friday, December 18.

**Course Materials:** The only textbook required for this course is *The New Ethics of Journalism: Principles for the 21st Century*, edited by Kelly McBride and Tom Rosenthal and published in 2014 by CQ Press, Inc. Other readings, including those in and about the law, can be found on the course Blackboard.

**Representative Selections from the Readings:**


Branzburg v. Hayes, 408 U.S. 665 (1972)


Sir William Searle Holdsworth, *Press Control and Copyright in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Yale Law Journal 1926)


**Session Agendas:**

Class 01 (T 08/25): Introduction to the American Legal System

Class 02 (TH 08/27): Introduction to Ethics in the Profession

Class 03 (T 09/01): Prior Restraints: Licensing and Gag Orders

Class 04 (TH 09/03): Plagiarism and Munchausen Reporting

Class 05 (T 09/08): Criminal Liability: Blasphemy, Seditious Libel, and Lese Majeste

Class 06 (TH 09/10): CHARLIE HEBDO and Parody

Class 07 (T 09/15): State Secrets, Whistle Blowers, and the Journalist’s Privilege

No Class (TH 09/17) (Constitution Day)

Class 08 (T 09/22): Tort Law: The Law of Defamation

Class 09 (TH 09/24): False Flag Investigating
Class 10 (T 09/29): More Tort Law: Invasion of Privacy and Emotional Distress

Class 11 (TH 10/01): Outing the Spooks

Class 12 (T 10/06): The Right to be Forgotten

Class 13 (TH 10/08): Conflicts of Interest

No Class (T 10/13) (Fall Break)

Class 14 (TH 10/15): Documentary Ethics

Class 15 (T 10/20): SLAPP

Class 16 (TH 10/22): Diversity in Journalism

Class 17 (T 10/27): Access: FOIAs

Class 18 (TH 10/29): Community

Class 19 (T 11/03): Access: Open Trials

Class 20 (TH 11/05): Accuracy

Class 21 (T 11/10): Access: Other Proceedings

Class 22 (TH 11/12): Paying for a Story

Class 23 (T 11/17): Photojournalism and the Law

Class 24 (TH 11/19): Visual Authenticity

Class 25 (T 11/24): Copyright Law

No Class (TH 11/26) (Thanksgiving)

Class 26 (T 12/01): Broadcast and Wire Media Regulation

Class 27 (TH 12/03): Journalism and Leadership

08/14/2015