LAW AND ETHICS – Spring 2020

M&W, 10:30-11:45
Puryear Hall, Room G13
Robert Hodierne, instructor
Office: 424 Weinstein Hall
Office hours: 10:30-11:45 am, Monday and Wednesday. Other times by appointment
Telephone: 804-484-4759
rhodiern@richmond.edu

Text
ninth or tenth edition.

The Course
What a great time to be studying journalism law and ethics. It seems that barely a day goes
by that there’s not some new problem or issue in the news. What follows is a rough schedule
for this course but I reserve the right to jettison this schedule if current events dictate.
Chapter in the list below refers to chapters in Middleton. In addition, I will provide other
source material.

Weeks 1-5: Free speech and libel. Chapters 2, 4 and 11.
Week 6: Privacy. Chapter 5
Week 7: Copyright and intellectual property. Chapter 6

Wednesday, Feb. 26: Midterm exam
Weeks 8-10: Ethics
Week 11 and 12: Covering courts. Chapter 1
Week 13: Accessing public information
Week 14: Review

Quizzes
There will be quizzes at the end of each section, seven in all. The midterm exam will cover
all of the material in the first half of the semester. The final exam will cover material from
the entire semester.

Papers
There will be two major papers. The papers will done as normal academic papers, that is,
there will be footnotes and a bibliography. I don’t care which standard format for citations
you use. Your papers will be emailed to me as Word documents. If you submit your paper in
any other format you will lose one letter grade and be made to re-submit. So, no Google
docs, no Apple docs. They will be double spaced, at least 12 point, and no goofy fonts.

In the first paper you pick a high-profile libel case and analyze the arguments on both sides
and then tell whether you agree or disagree with the final court decision. You will need to
justify your conclusion. 1,500 words. Due Feb. 26. Email subject line: Libel. Word doc
named: Yourlastname_libel.
In the second paper you will pick a high-profile ethical dilemma faced by a journalist or news organization. You will explain how the dilemma was resolved and whether or not you agree with the resolution. Again, you will need to defend your conclusion. 1,500 words. Due Wednesday, April 22. Email subject line: Ethics. Word doc named: Yourlastname_ethics.

**Debates**

We will stage four debates with teams of four on each side of propositions. For those of you who did not do formal debate training, here’s how this is going to work. There will be a proposition. One team, called the Affirmative team, will defend the proposition. The other team, the Negative team, will argue against the proposition. There will be three types of arguments or speeches: Constructive, in which both sides build their cases. Rebuttal, in which both sides directly attack the other side’s arguments. And finally, the best part, cross exam, in which each team gets to ask direct questions to the other. Team members will be assigned, by the team, to their specific roles, that is, someone will give the first constructive speech, someone else, the second constructive, someone give the first rebuttal, someone will ask questions in cross-exam and someone will respond in cross exam. Here’s the order and time limits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Argument Type</th>
<th>Time Limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Affirmative constructive</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Negative constructive</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Affirmative constructive</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Negative constructive</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Affirmative rebuttal</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Negative rebuttal</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative cross exam</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative cross exam</td>
<td>5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative closing</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative closing</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The closing or summary arguments can be made by any member of the team at the team’s choosing.

Teams will be assigned by random drawings the first day of class.

Here are the three topics and dates for the debates:

Resolved: John Peter Zenger should have been sent to prison. Wednesday, Feb. 12
Resolved: There should be an independent panel to resolve ethical dilemmas. Wednesday, March 11
Resolved: Mark Zuckerberg is a threat to democracy. Wednesday, April 15

**Attendance**

You are expected to attend each class. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. If you miss more than one class without an adequate excuse your grade will be lowered half a grade for each class missed. If you miss a class with a quiz you will get an F on that quiz unless you produce a doctor’s note.

To be successful in this course, you should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week.
Plagiarism
The university takes plagiarism seriously. It is enshrined in the University’s honor code. Because of several high-profile cases in American journalism of reporters plagiarizing work, the reputation of journalists in general has been diminished. For that reason the journalism department is especially serious about plagiarism. Whatever punishment the honor council may hand out know this: If you plagiarize on a paper in this class you will fail that paper. If you do it twice you will fail the course.

Cell phones and laptops
No cell phone use, either voice or text, is allowed during class. If your cell phone goes off, you will be asked to leave the class and not allowed to return during that period. That will count as an unexcused absence. Unless told specifically otherwise, no computers will be turned on during class. There is a great deal of research that says people remember things better if they write notes rather than type into computers.

Reaching me
I will be in my office from 10:30-11:45 am, Monday and Wednesday. Feel free to call me at home at 804-484-4759 from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. If you need me in person at other times that can be arranged by appointment. You may e-mail me at rhodiern@richmond.edu.

A special note about e-mails to me: Treat them like the business communication they are. Begin with a conventional salutation (Dear. Prof. Hodierne) and end with a polite closing (Sincerely, Jane Doe). Write in complete sentences with proper capitalization and punctuation. I don’t think emoticons are cute. I don’t respond to text messages, Facebook postings or Tweets. Finally, you must use your UR email so I don’t have to figure out who beerpong101@yahoo.com is.