

JRLC 5040
Fall 2009

Dr. William E. Lee
101-F Journalism
542-4963, weyree@uga.edu (include JRLC 5040 in subject line).
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday, 1-2. Other times by appointment.

Graduate Assistant: To be announced.

Course Description: This course familiarizes students with key First Amendment principles and applies those principles to specific communication law problems.

Text: Middleton & Lee, **The Law of Public Communication** (2010 Update).

Tests: There will be three tests. The first will be given on September 25, the second on October 28, and the third on December 7. A student is permitted to take a test early only with *approval in advance*. If you miss an examination, there will be no make-up.

Final Exam: The final examination is on December 14 from 9-11 a.m. The final is *optional* for students with perfect attendance. *See the attendance policy discussed below.* (Students exempting the final exam will be graded on a 750-point scale, instead of a 1000-point scale.)

Grade: First, please note that grades reflect your performance, not your negotiating skills. Second, I recognize that some students do not like to be called on in a large class setting. Others, however, thrive on the challenge. Hence, students in JRLC 5040 have two options for the calculation of their final grade.

Option 1

Your grade will consist of the scores on the tests (75%) and final examination (25%). Select this option if you do not like to be called on in class.

Option 2

Your grade will consist of the scores on the tests (75%), final examination (25%) and up to 50 bonus points for participation. Students selecting this option will be seated in “The Hot Zone” and can expect to be called on regularly. This option is not for the faint of heart. Please note that bonus points are not earned by merely sitting in “The Hot Zone.” You must actively participate by asking thoughtful questions and by responding to my questions.

Indicate the option you are selecting on the attached form. Think about this carefully as this choice is *irrevocable*.

Attendance: You are expected to be on-time at **each** class session. Students with perfect attendance may choose to exempt the final exam. Perfect attendance is defined as no unexcused absences and no tardies. Absences are excused *only* for the following: participation in UGA-sponsored activities, a religious holiday, or a health or family emergency. Documentation will be required to support your request for an excused absence. Students with three unexcused absences will be withdrawn from the class with a WF grade. Students with three or more tardies will have

their final grade lowered.

Extra Credit: At various times during the semester I *may* assign optional extra credit assignments such as outlines of the unassigned chapters in the text, brief discussions of contemporary First Amendment developments, or other assignments I consider to be useful to your understanding of communication law. Please note that I will not accept late papers for these assignments.

Honors Credit: Students seeking Honors credit are required to prepare a research paper on a topic relevant to the course. The topic must be approved by me by August 28. Papers are due on November 13. Honors papers receive up to 50 bonus points.

Professionalism: The Grady College is a professional school. Consequently, you are expected to comply with the following standards:

- 1) Be in your seat at 9:05 a.m. Journalism is a field with intense deadline pressure. Please regard the start of class as a deadline. In the *very* rare event that you are late to class, enter quietly and sit in the seats at the front that are reserved for latecomers. Do not attempt to sit in your assigned seat.
- 2) Turn off your cell phone, pager, or similar device.
- 3) Be attentive. This is not the place for crossword puzzles, daydreaming, drooling, napping, or surfing the Web on your laptop.
- 4) Laptop computers are not allowed in this class.
- 5) No tape recording of class sessions is permitted without my permission.
- 6) Any written work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Multiple page submissions must have the pages fastened together. Computer or printer problems are never an excuse.
- 7) Food and drink are not allowed in my classroom.

If you engage in unprofessional behavior, I reserve the option of lowering your final grade or imposing other sanctions I deem appropriate.

Academic Honesty: All academic work must meet the standards described in “A Culture of Honesty,” UGA’s policy concerning academic honesty. Students should inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. In the interest of full disclosure, you should know that I have a “take no prisoners” approach to academic dishonesty.

Disclaimer: The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Lecture Topics, Reading Assignments, Test Dates

August 17-September 4

Introduction to First Amendment Theory

Chapters 1-3 & Appendix A

September 7

Labor Day

September 9-23

Political Communication

Chapter 7

September 25

Test #1

September 28-October 14

Defamation

Chapter 4

October 16-26

Privacy

Chapter 5

October 28

Test #2

October 30

Fall Break

November 2-13

Intellectual Property

Chapter 6

November 16-30

Obscenity and Sexually-Oriented Expression

Chapter 9

November 23-27

Thanksgiving Break

December 2-4

Journalist's Privilege

Chapter 11

December 7
Test #3

December 8 (UGA is operating a Friday class schedule on this date)
Concluding Thoughts

December 14
Final Examination, 9-11 a.m.

Return to Dr. Lee by August 21.

Name:

Student Number:

E-mail:

Major:

Grade Option: 1 _____ 2 _____

I understand the syllabus and agree to comply with it. _____
(Sign your name)