**Seminar in Media Law**

**JOMC 840**

# Fall 2014

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School of Journalism and Mass Communication

358 Carroll Hall

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**Course Objectives:**

This seminar is designed to teach the scholarly field of First Amendment theory and to help students advance their skills in media law research and writing. The main goals of the course are to 1) familiarize students with First Amendment theories and interpretations; 2) teach students to critically read and evaluate media law research; and 3) provide students with experience in generating and investigating legal research questions, writing research proposals, and writing, presenting and defending their research findings. Each student will be required to identify a legal research question he or she will investigate, write a paper proposal and produce a research paper. It is expected that all papers will be of a high enough quality to be presented at a scholarly convention.

This seminar is not designed to teach the content of media law. All seminar participants are expected to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the substance and principles of media law. If you have not taken JOMC 740 at UNC-CH or a law school course on media law, you must have the instructor’s permission to take JOMC 840.

**Course Structure:**

* Throughout the semester, students will read and discuss in class major works on First Amendment theory. The class cannot succeed unless students do all the readings assigned for each class meeting and participate in class discussions. Read, prepare to discuss and enjoy!
* Students will be required to prepare brief written critiques of two research papers selected by the professor and to discuss their critiques in class.
* Class time also will be devoted to the presentation and discussion of seminar participants’ research proposals and papers. The following format will be used for proposal and paper presentations: Each student will be assigned dates on which he or she will present his or her proposal and paper. Another student will be designated the principal discussant for each proposal and paper. By 5 p.m. of the Friday preceding the presentation date, the presenter must provide the discussant, the professor and every other member of the seminar with copies of the proposal or paper. Papers and/or proposals can be sent electronically.

During the seminar session, the presenter will summarize his or her proposal or paper. The discussant then will offer comments and suggestions and serve as a moderator for a discussion of the paper or proposals. Both the principal discussant and the instructor will return their copies of the proposal or paper to the author with comments and suggestions. Each student will then have the opportunity to rewrite his or her work.

* Students should plan to attend several special media law events during the semester, including the First Amendment Day keynote lecture at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 23, in 111 Carroll Hall. The speaker will be Greg Lukianoff, president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). He will speak about free expression – or the lack of it – on college campuses. Also, the *First Amendment Law Review* symposium on Friday, Oct. 24, will focus on net neutrality. There may be other events, too.

**Sakai:**

Course materials will be posted on the Sakai site for this course. The UNC Sakai service is located at <http://sakai.unc.edu>.

**Grades:**

Grades will be based on the final research paper, the proposal, the written paper critiques, contributions to the evaluation of fellow students’ papers and proposals and participation in class discussions. It is important to understand that although the quality of the research paper is the key component of a student’s final grade, it is not the sole component. Thus, a student might produce an H paper but still earn a P in the course if he or she does not contribute to the seminar by participating in class discussion and evaluation of other students’ work. A seminar is a collaborative learning experience, the success of which depends on the participation and contributions of all members.

No late assignments will be accepted. If you are unable to attend a session of the seminar, please notify the professor prior to the seminar meeting. Also, please be on time.

**Honor Code:**

The Honor Code and the Campus Code, embodying the ideals of academic honesty, integrity and responsible citizenship, have for over 100 years governed the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University. Acceptance by a student of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in these codes and a respect for this most significant University tradition.

Your participation in this course comes with the expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code. Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work.

The [Instrument of Student Judicial Governance](http://instrument.unc.edu/), which contains the provisions of the Honor Code, states that students have four general responsibilities under the Code:

1. Obey and support the enforcement of the Honor Code;
2. Refrain from lying, cheating, or stealing;
3. Conduct themselves so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community; and
4. Refrain from conduct that impairs or may impair the capacity of University and associated personnel to perform their duties, manage resources, protect the safety and welfare of members of the University community, and maintain the integrity of the University.

The [Instrument](http://instrument.unc.edu/) defines plagiarism as "deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded or otherwise."

Please submit all written work with the following pledge: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.”

**Students with Disabilities:**

Students with diagnosed or suspected disabilities that might impact their performance in the course should please contact the Department of Disability Services (DDS) to determine whether and to what to extent services or accommodations are available for this course. It is the goal of DDS to “ensure that all programs and facilities of the University are accessible to all members of the University community,” and I am equally committed to that goal. If you think this might apply to you, please contact DDS by telephone at 962-8300 or visit the DDS website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/> for additional information. Please feel free to discuss confidentially with the professor any questions that you might have about this policy and how it may apply to you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: The deadline for submission of papers to the Law and Policy Division for the AEJMC Southeast Colloquium is Dec. 8, 2014. I expect each JOMC student in the class to submit his or her paper. Law School students are encouraged to submit their papers, too. The conference will be at the University of Tennessee on March 26-28. That is not during spring break.**