Title: Media Journalism Law and Ethics
Abbreviation and Number: JRNT450
School: Communication and Creative Arts
Department: Journalism and Communication
Credits: 3
Pre-requisite(s): JRNT340 or permission of Chair/Instructor
Co-requisite(s): None

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Students develop a critical understanding of media law and ethics. Within the context of journalism in The Bahamas, they examine self-regulation, ethical responsibilities, crime and court reporting, the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of the media; and analyse the concepts of defamation and contempt of court.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to
1) Demonstrate a critical understanding of media and journalism ethics;
2) Examine the concept of self-regulation as practised regionally and internationally;
3) Analyse the essential features of the Law of Defamation and its various defences;
4) Assess the issues surrounding invasion of privacy;
5) Evaluate the constitutional basis for media coverage of court and public proceedings; and
6) Differentiate between the rights of the accused and the rights of the media.

COURSE CONTENT
I. Laws and Regulations
   A. Libel and slander
   B. Defences and privileges
   C. Public officials, public figures, public issues
   D. The right to privacy
   E. Contempt of court
   F. Rules of court reporting
   G. Freedom of the press versus fair trial
   H. Self-regulation versus government regulation
   I. Press privileges and public proceedings
   J. Control boards and censorship

II. Media Ethical Issues
   A. Deceit, fair comment and justification
   B. Social issues and media coverage
   C. Conflict of interest
   D. Fairness versus balance
   E. Decision to editorialize
   F. Codes of ethics
   G. Media images
   H. Press bias

Pre-requisite(s): JRNT340 or permission of Chair/Instructor
Co-requisite(s): None
I. Decency and fair play

III. Legal Issues and Corporate Policies
   A. Legal issues and e-commerce
   B. Copyright and advancing technology
   C. Television and film ratings/codes
   D. The business of human rights
   E. Reply/retraction obligations

ASSESSMENT
Assignments………………………..……. 30%
Mid-semester examination…………….……. 30%
Research paper………………………….……. 40%
Total………………………………………100%

REQUIRED TEXT

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS/MATERIALS

Bahamas Broadcast Act
Bahamas (Constitution) Statutory Instruments
Bahamas Copyright Act
Bahamas Films & Plays Booklet
Code of Practice for Jamaican Journalists and Media Organisations
NUJ Code of Conduct (UK)
PCC Code of Practice (UK)

WEBSITES
fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/general/mcnaes/index.html
journalismbahamas.wordpress.com
www.overlawyered.com
www.legalnews
www.newstips
rcmlp.socleg.ox.uk
www.mediacentral.com