School Of Liberal Arts

NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

LAW-304: Law, Media, and Society

To: Undergraduate Education Committee
From: Curriculum Committee of the School of Liberal Arts
By: Evan Edward Laine, MA, JD
Re: LAW-304: Law, Media, and Society
Date: April 4, 2010

2. Approval Statement

LAW-304: Law, Media, and Society has been approved by the curriculum committee of the School of Liberal Arts and passed by 100% of the school’s faculty.

________________________________________________________________________
Signature of the Chair of the School Curriculum Committee

____________________________________________
Date

3. Background

This course is developed as part of the Law and Society Major. It is one of four third-year Law and Society courses (the others are LAW-300 International Law, LAW-302 Ethical Problems and the Law, and LAW-306 Legal Research, Writing, and Moot Court).

4. Purpose
This course is intended to introduce students in the Law and Society program to an interdisciplinary examination of the intersection of law, technology, and media and its effect on society and politics. Upon completion of the course, students should have a good sense of the legal, political and sociological arguments concerning controversial topics pertaining to the Internet and other media and how they relate to legal issues such as politics (from elections to revolution), privacy, crime, intellectual property, free speech, and interpersonal relationships.

5. Catalog Description

LAW-3xx Law, Media and Society

This course examines the dynamic interactions between law, technology and media and how they affect a variety of global social and legal issues, including the democratic process, civil rights and how individuals relate to each other legally, socially, economically, and sexually.

6. Relation to Existing Curricula

a. Does this course replace an existing course?
   No

b. Who is required to take the course? Who can take the course? (Is the course open to students in other majors? Is the course restricted to students in a particular major?)
   This course is required for all Law and Society majors, and is also available to the university community at large.

c. Is the course an elective or a requirement for a particular curriculum or major?
   It is a requirement for Law and Society students.

d. What are the prerequisites or other restrictions?
   None.

How does the course contribute to the curriculum’s programmatic learning outcomes?

The course contributes to the fulfillment of following outcomes; I. (a rigorous education experience in the broad interdisciplinary major); II. (an integrated understanding of the historical, philosophical, political and social foundations of law and its role in society, and of its relationship to the economic, political, social and cultural structures and values in the contemporary world); V. (the ability to


apply their understanding and skills to the recognition and resolution of complex problems in contemporary society)

e. Does the course contribute to the learning outcomes set for Information Literacy? Yes. In the completion of their coursework, students will demonstrate the critical analysis, appropriate application of information and other higher-order thinking skills appropriate to students at this level. Students will be expected to add to their personal knowledge base. Students are provided the opportunity to extend collected information into knowledge and wisdom via the research and writing assignments required by this course. By understanding how societal values, whether economic, political or social are shaped by the interplay of law, media and technology, students will obtain a greater understanding of themselves as well. Successful completion of this course requires the student to independently and proficiently use resources appropriate to upper-level research within the disciplines related to this program.

Other skills and abilities include ethical use of information (consistent and proper use of citation and documentation), proficient use of services available via Gutman Library (for example, interlibrary loan and Refworks), a familiarity with the scholarly and trade publications relating to their major, and efficient use of the free, public web to locate and access information (for instance, governmental, association and organization websites, blogs and podcasts). Students in this capstone course will also be expected to consult and draw information from practitioners and experts in the field, as well as through library and web-based resources.

f. Does the course contribute to the school’s learning outcomes for writing and/or the University’s “Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses”? This course will require significant written work, but it is not designated as a writing intensive course.

g. If this course replaces an existing course how does it differ from that course’s objectives, material covered etc.? NA

h. If the course is an elective, how does it enhance the curriculum? NA

i. Is this course similar to another course offered by the university? If it is how does it differ and why could not the other course be a suitable substitute? NA
7. **Course Goals**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain how societal values, whether economic, political or social, are shaped by the interplay of law, media, and technology.

- Identify the applicable privacy issues at stake because of the widespread use of the Internet and its related technologies.

- Analyze how the Internet and other communication technologies have changed concepts of idea ownership and/or intellectual property in media ranging from music, to movies, to digital design and web construction.

- Describe how the Internet and its related technologies have created new categories of crime, such as harassment, fraud and identity theft.

- Evaluate the growing role of media advertising, the Internet, and social networking in elections and other political events worldwide.

- Assess the impact of the Internet and other new media technologies on interpersonal relations in societies around the world.

8. **Proposed Implementation Date:**

   *Spring semester 2011*

9. **Impact Statements**

   a. **Impact on Staff**

   LAW-3xx: Law, Media, and Society will require the services of one full-time or adjunct faculty member each year.

   ________________________________________________________________

   **Signed by the Dean of the School:**

   ________________________________________________________________

   **Date**
b. Impact on Facilities

LAW-3xx: Law, Media, and Society will require one standard classroom each year.

Signed by the Dean of the School:

Date

c. Impact on Library and the Philadelphia University Information Literacy Plan

1. The Director of Gutman Library has been made aware of the possible library and information service needs for LAW-3xx: Law, Media, and Society and confirms that the Library can support the resource demands of this course.

2. The Director of the Library (or his or her designee) has been consulted to determine how, if at all, the proposed course will integrate Information Literacy skills as listed in the University Information Literacy Plan and how such skills, if any, will be assigned, supported, and taught.

Signed by the Director of Gutman Library

Date
d. **Impact on Computer Facilities:** I have been made aware of the possible direct or indirect computer usage by LAW-3xx: Law, Media, and Society.

Signed by the Vice-President for Information Resources

Date

e. **Impact on Writing Across the Curriculum Program:** Before submitting course proposal to the school curriculum committee, the proposer has consulted with the Director of Writing Across the Curriculum and a) established targeted writing skills, if any; b) identified how writing skills will be assigned and taught; and c) indicated whether or not this course meets the criteria to be designated a writing intensive (WI) course. (See the Public Folders—Academic Affairs—for Guidelines for Writing Intensive Courses, or consult the Writing website: www.philau.edu/writing.)

Signed by Director of Writing Across the Curriculum

Date
LAW-3xx: Law, Media, and Society

Philadelphia University

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Course Description

This course examines the dynamic interactions between law, technology and media and how they affect a variety of global social issues, including the democratic process, civil rights, and how people around the world relate to each other legally, socially, economically, and sexually.

Course Goals

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Explain how societal values, whether economic, political or social, are shaped by the interplay of law, media, and technology.
- Identify the applicable privacy issues at stake because of the widespread use of the Internet and its related technologies.
- Analyze how the Internet and other communication technologies have changed concepts of idea ownership and/or intellectual property in media ranging from music, to movies, to digital design and web construction.
- Describe how the Internet and its related technologies have created new categories of crime, such as harassment, fraud and identity theft.
- Evaluate the growing role of media advertising, the Internet, and social networking in elections and other political events worldwide.
- Assess the impact of the Internet and other new media technologies on interpersonal relations in societies around the world.

Texts

Slevin, James. The Internet and Society (Polity, 2000).


Additional readings to be posted on the course Blackboard site.

**Grading**

Grades will be based on the number system of zero to 100. The following equals the distribution of scores:

- Three (3) page writing exercises (10 points each) 30 points
- Class Participation 10 points
- Midterm 30 points
- Final 30 points

**Total available points** 100

In line with the school of Liberal Arts policy, the following grading scale will be used: is

- A 93-100 points
- A- 90-92 points
- B+ 87-89 points
- B 83-86 points
- B- 80-82 points
- C+ 77-79 points
- C 73-76 points
- C- 70-72 points
- D+ 67-69 points
- D 63-66 points
- D- 60-62 points
- F 0-59 points

**Attendance**

This class is based on class participation; therefore, students who do not come to class on a regular basis are in serious danger of failing. If you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure I have marked you present. However, students who repeatedly come late to class will be marked as absent. If the student has more than 3 absences as defined aforesaid, the student must provide a reasonable excuse for those absences to avoid a grade related penalty. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the professor by e-mail of any problem that might, or does, interfere with their ability to attend class.
Participation

To do well and keep pace, it is essential you meet deadlines and carefully consider what you read and write. Preparation for meaningful participation is required for all course activities. Please be aware that this course is a working seminar. This means that everyone must come to class having read the assigned readings, prepared to discuss them fully, raise questions and perhaps to rethink the issues involved. The class is interactive and not lecture-based; most of your learning will come from ideas you exchange with your fellow students. By joining this class, you are making a commitment to participate fully.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity and honesty is expected in all forms of course work. Any dishonesty or cheating may result in the student failing the assignment, the course, and/or being brought before the Student Conduct Committee, which could lead to dismissal from the College. The primary forms of academic dishonesty to be avoided are (a) plagiarism: taking the ideas or words of another without giving due credit to the source, and (b) cheating: giving or taking information during an examination.

Whenever you use a resource to gain information or ideas which are not general knowledge, you must provide documentation in order to give credit to the authors of the information and to allow anyone reading your paper to either check your research or read more of the work from which you are drawing. Citations are required when items of information or ideas are drawn from a source, when material is paraphrased, and when material is quoted directly. Incomplete documentation is called plagiarism. Plagiarism is theft, and partially or totally stolen papers will not be accepted.

For additional information about Philadelphia University policies relating to academic integrity, go to http://www.philau.edu/learning/pdf/AcademicIntegrityPolicy.pdf

Course Technology Statement

This course will use a Blackboard e-Learning course-specific website. The information and activities you will encounter through and within this site are designed to help you connect what
you are learning inside the physical space of our classroom with what you are learning outside of it. This site will be an important component of the course. You are expected to check for announcements on the site on a regular basis, use available resources, and participate as assigned. If you have problems using the site, let me know so that we can talk about how to solve them. Please observe general rules of netiquette whenever communicating with your class colleagues online. Please be considerate and make sure that for each class you have turned off your cell phone, pagers, all types of “berries” and other potential distracting gadgetry. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TEXT MESSAGING OR PHONE CALLS ALLOWED DURING CLASS**

**Gutman Library (www.philau.edu/library)**

The home page of the Gutman Library provides you with a variety of information resources, including databases and research guides. Librarians are available online and in person at the information desk to help you with research.

**The Learning and Advising Center (www.philau.edu/learning)**

The Learning and Advising Center provides one-to-one tutoring assistance for writing, study strategies, test taking, and specific Philadelphia University courses. To make a tutoring appointment, you should stop by the Learning and Advising Center in Haggar Hall or call (215) 951-2799. Academic resources, including information on citation and documentation, note taking, and study strategies are available on the Center’s website.

**Technology assistance (http://www.philau.edu/OIT/)**

For assistance with technology issues, you should contact the Technology Help Desk at (215) 951-4648 or send an email to helpdesk@philau.edu. General purpose computing facilities are available in Search Hall and Gutman Library.

**Electronic Communication**

You are required to use the university e-mail account to communicate with me. You will receive assignments via Blackboard; therefore, you are responsible for checking the Blackboard site and your e-mail on a regular basis. Make sure your university e-mail account is in working order.
**Course Format and Description**

**UNIT ONE: POLITICS**

**Week One**

**The selling of the President.**

Here we will discuss and trace the development of political television advertising from the primitive Eisenhower Disney commercial to the sophisticated Hillary Clinton 3 a.m. White House ringing phone advertisement. Some of the advertisements we will study include the seminal Lyndon Johnson flower girl atomic bomb advertisement, the Michael Dukakis tank ad and the George W. Bush Swift boat campaign. We will study how television advertising is employed to secure the election of the President of the United States. Analysis of these ads will show the growing impact of political advertising on the American electorate’s choice of president.

Readings:

Evan Laine, *The President and Toothpaste*, on Blackboard

PowerPoint: *The Selling of The President*

**Week Two**

**Obama is my face book friend - the makings of students for Barack Obama.**

The class will study the Students for Obama organization which started as a Facebook group and networked into a powerful political organization. This organization, founded as *Obama for President in 2008* by 20-year-old Meredith Sunshine Siegel, became one of the most powerful political groups in America. We will study its beginnings, its effect and how it provides a real world example of the power of social networking Internet sites such as Facebook within the political arena

Readings:

Arnie Seipel, *Obama’s Facebook Campaign*, on Blackboard

**Week Three**

**Iran protests: Twitter--the medium of the movement and perhaps a revolution.**
After the 2009 contested presidential election in Iran, despite strong arm tactics on behalf of the reigning Iranian government, protesters have been able to organize through the use of twitter and other related gadgery not subject to governmental censorship. We will study how this new technology led to a change in the relationship between the rulers and those that they rule even in oppressed societies. *At the end of the section the student will be responsible for the first of three position papers. This paper is to analyze a particular ad or ad campaign in the political arena, and to check for its accuracy and its impact on the success of the proponent’s ultimate goal.*

Readings:

Lev Grossman, *Iran Protests, Twitter, the Medium of Movement*, on Blackboard

James Poniesozik, *Iranians Protest Election, Tweeps Protest CNN*, on Blackboard

Slevin, chapter 3

**UNIT TWO: CIVIL RIGHTS**

**Week Four**

**The Internet and the loss of the right of privacy.**

Here we will examine privacy busting technology from data mining to GPS and database creation.

Readings:

Holtzman chapters 2, 3

**Week Five**

**Stalking?**

We will continue with privacy issues here by focusing on the technology of personal surveillance, such as data mining and GPS, which have led to electronic stalking and voyeurism.

Readings: Holtzman chapters 8, 9

**Week Six**

**The Damage Done.**
This section will be concluded by analyzing the harm caused to society and individual human rights by the Internet and its related technologies. Part of our discussion will include social networking sites such as Facebook and My Space and how they have led to a voluntary loss of the American citizen’s right to privacy.

Readings: Holtzman, chapter 1

UNIT THREE: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Week Seven

The digital dilemma: who owns what and for what purpose.

In this unit we will explore how the Internet and related technologies have radically changed pre-existing intellectual property notions of ownership, copyright and trademark. During this particular week we will look at private use copying and the concept of fair use.

Readings: The Digital Dilemma, chapter 4

Week Eight

Protecting digital intellectual property means and measurements.

Here we will study the efficacy of encryption, access control, copy detention and preventive technologies.

Readings: The Digital Dilemma, chapter 5

Week Nine

A different view. In this section we'll examine the argument against idea ownership and explore the concept of open source. At the end of this section, the student will be responsible for the second of three papers. This paper is to take a position on whether or not open sourcing is appropriate, and/or ethical and its effect on creativity.

Readings:

Richard Stallman, Why Software Should Not Have Owners, on Blackboard

The Open Source Initiative, The Open Source Definition, on Blackboard
UNIT 4: THE NEW AGE OF CRIME

Week Ten

Internet stalking: the Megan Meier case.

In this unusual case, a mother of a teenage girl allegedly established a phony social network site identity and used it to harass an acquaintance of her daughter’s. It was the claim that the nature and degree of that harassment was a contributing factor in Megan Meier’s eventual suicide. That mother was charged with harassment and new laws have entered into the books in many states across the union regarding Internet harassment. Here, not only will we study the case, but also analyze how the Internet and social networking have led to a new class of crime and the accompanying difficulties in the enforcement of that crime from a practical and civil rights perspective.

Readings:

Slevin, Chapter 9

Scott Michaels, *Town Rules Internet Harassment or Crime*, on Blackboard

Ian Monroe, *How Laurie Drew Became America's Most Reviled Mother*, on Blackboard


Week Eleven

The Nigerian Prince and other Internet Frauds.

Here we will examine the most popular Internet frauds scams and con games. We'll examine the damage they have caused and the attempts by the Federal Trade Commission to regulate and prevent them. *At the end of this section the student is responsible for the third of three papers. This paper will explore an Internet fraud or con game, explaining its nature and content, who is behind it and what if anything is being done by regulatory officials to prevent it.*

Readings:

Prepared Statements of the Federal Trade Commission on Internet Fraud Before the Subcommittee on Investigations Of The Governmental Affairs Committee, on Blackboard.

Week Twelve
Internet predators.

Social networking sites have led to the new crime of Internet predating. In this section, we will explore this new crime and how it is being attacked by law enforcement officials.

Readings:

US House of Representatives Bill 3845 and Senate Bill 519, Protect Our Children Act of 2008, on Blackboard.

UNIT FIVE: SOCIALIZATION AND THE INTERNET

Week Thirteen

The new community.

In this section we will explore the concept of “virtual community,” its actual application and why it has gained such popularity.

Readings: Slevin, Chapter 4

Week Fourteen

Electronic narcissism.

In this section, we will explore the effect of the Internet and its related technologies on self formation and its effect on social interaction patterns. We will specifically analyze how impersonal electronic communication has lead to the development of a narcissistic society.

Readings:

Christine Rosen, Virtual Friendship And The New Narcissism, on Blackboard

Week Fifteen

Reflections.

In our final week, we will review what we've learned over the semester.

Please note: the syllabus and assignments are subject to change at the notification of the instructor.