



## SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR, ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE  
PROCOM.RYERSON.CA

### CMN 447 COMMUNICATION AND LAW

#### 1.0 Course Description

Communication practitioners must understand how law matters in every day communication and be cognizant of the principles, institutions, and practices that regulate communication in a range of media and contexts. In this case and theory-based course, students explore the intersections of communication and law through the study of semiotics and legal discourse; the social and technological contexts of communication that provoke and challenge legal regulation; freedom of expression; and the legal frameworks for the protection of consumers, individual privacy, and intellectual property in the digital age. **Lab: 3 hours.**

**Prerequisite:** LAW 122 and (CMN 100 or CMN 114 or CMN 124 or CMN 200 or CMN 201 or CMN 207 or CMN 279 or CMN 300 or CMN 373)

#### 2.0 Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

- To critically evaluate the intersections of law and communication in democratic societies
- To apply communication theory to communicating law
- To describe and analyze the legal regulation of communication

#### 3.0 Topics Covered

- 3.1 Introduction to communication law in Canada
- 3.2 Legal discourse and semiotics, including plain language legal writing
- 3.3 Justifications for and restrictions on freedom of expression, including libel
- 3.4 Privacy and the protection of personal data
- 3.5 Intellectual property
- 3.6 Issues in e-Commerce, including authentication, consumer protection and online fraud
- 3.7 Truth in advertising and public relations
- 3.8 Law and social media

#### 4.0 Course Management

#### **4.1 Teaching Methods**

Teaching will be conducted by lecture, discussion and workshops. Students will be expected to contribute to the in-class dialogue.

#### **4.2 Graded Assignments**

Evaluation will be based on a combination of take-home and in-class assignments and class participation. Students will prepare a minimum of four written assignments, including a major report, and deliver a collaborative oral presentation. The weighting of each assignment will be announced by the instructor.

### **5.0 Course Materials**

#### **5.1 Textbook**

1. Communication and Law Custom Reader, Ryerson University, 2014 (available at the Ryerson University Bookstore).
2. Kratz, Martin P.J. (2013). Canada's Internet Law in a Nutshell. Toronto: Carswell (available at the Ryerson Bookstore). ISBN: 978-0-7798-5481-3

#### **5.2 Additional Reference**

Additional readings in D2L Brightspace-Area e-Reserve (See the Course Readings tab in the left menu in your CMN 447 D2L Brightspace course)

### **6.0 Course Policies**

**6.1** Students must adhere to university policies; see

<http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies>. The most relevant policies are the following:

- Policy #46 Policy on Grading, Promotion, and Academic Standing ("GPA Policy")
- Policy #60 Academic Integrity
- Policy #61 Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct
- Policy #134 Undergraduate Academic Consideration and Appeals
- Policy #135 Examination Policy
- Policy #150 Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance
- Policy #157 Establishment and Use of Ryerson Student E-Mail Accounts For Official University Communication
- Policy #159 Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities
- Policy #166 Course Management Policy

#### **6.2 Print and Digital Copying Guidelines**

Ryerson University complies with Canada's [Copyright Act](#) which protects both creators/owners and users of copyrighted materials.

Students should familiarize themselves with [Ryerson's Copyright policies and procedures](#), and contact the Copyright and Scholarly Engagement Librarian at [copyrt@ryerson.ca](mailto:copyrt@ryerson.ca) for questions, concerns and clarification of the copyright rules.

### **6.3 Turnitin.com**

Turnitin is a plagiarism prevention and detection service. This tool assists instructors in determining the similarity between a student's work and the work of other students who have submitted papers to the site, internet sources, and a wide range of journals and other publications. While it does not contain all possible sources, it gives instructors some assurance that students' work is their own. No decisions are made by the service; it generates an originality report which instructors use to judge whether something is plagiarized.

All assignments in this course may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database used solely to detect plagiarism in assignments. **Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with the instructor to make alternative arrangements.** Even if an instructor has not indicated that Turnitin will be used or a student has opted out of using Turnitin, if an instructor suspects that an assignment has been plagiarized, the instructor may submit that work in a non-identifying way to a plagiarism detection service.

### **6.4 Electronic Communication**

Ryerson requires that any official or formal electronic communication from students be sent from their official Ryerson email accounts.

### **6.5 Video and Audio Recording**

No video or audio recording is permitted in class without the express permission of the instructor.

## **7.0 Ryerson's Learning Management System**

Ryerson University supports Brightspace by D2L as its official Learning Management System. University Policies governing Brightspace have been

documented at the [Courses @ Ryerson Privacy and Security website](#).