



MECO801

Social Media, Law and Ethics

S1 Day 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Rebecca Dunn

rebeccamarydunn@gmail.com

Contact via To Be Advised

N/A

Students should email me to make a time for face to face consultations.

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MFJ or MIntComm or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntComm or MCreIndMFJ

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit will give students an advanced understanding of key legal and ethical issues that are relevant to media practice and journalism in the contemporary media landscape. It will offer students without a law background a practical understanding of the legal principles that underpin key emergent areas of online and social media regulation with a focus on how the law is evolving to deal with new technologies and platforms. Students will also gain a sophisticated appreciation of the ethical framework that underpin regulation, co-regulation and self-regulation and their rationale. The unit will engage students in complex critical reflection about the contemporary media, law and ethics.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia

Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices

Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice

Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social

media technologies

Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Presentation	20%	No	Ongoing
Seminar paper	30%	No	Ongoing
Final essay	50%	No	16/6/2017

Presentation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

You will be asked to present a 15 minute paper on one of the readings at a seminar. The presentation will be a group presentation. Students will be put into groups in the first week of the course and will be asked to select one of the course topics for their presentation. Students will be expected to meet or communicate outside class time to organise their presentation. They will be asked to draw on a combination of real world examples, scholarly research and media commentary to analyse an issue relevant to the topic they have chosen. They can use audiovisual presentations where appropriate. There will be opportunities to discuss this assignment in class prior to the presentations which will begin in Week 3. The presentations will be assessed in class by the lecturer.

For assessment criteria see below.

Assessment Matrix

Clarity of Expression 25% Quality of Research 25% Quality of Argument 25% Originality 25%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social media technologies
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Seminar paper

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **30%**

Following your seminar presentation you will prepare a 1,500 word paper drawing on your presentation and using other scholarly and journalistic resources. Your seminar paper does not have to be identical to your presentation - as it is assessed individually you are encouraged to focus on an aspect of the issue your group presented on and elaborate. You are also encouraged to find real world examples involving social media, law and/or ethics. This assignment should be written in a conventional essay style using consistent referencing. For assessment criteria see below.

Assignment to be submitted on Turnitin

Assessment matrix

Clarity of Expression 25% Quality of Research 25% Quality of Argument 25% Originality 25%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social media technologies
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Final essay

Due: **16/6/2017**

Weighting: **50%**

This essay will allow you draw on and unpack key critical ideas you have encountered in this unit. There are no set essay questions because, in a Masters level course, you are encouraged to identify a topic which generates a sustained level of interest for you. Your essay should focus on an issue concerning social media which has legal and/or ethical dimensions. You are encouraged to discuss your topic well in advance of the submission date with your lecturer via email or face to face. Your essay should draw on real world examples, scholarly resources and media commentary to build a compelling argument and/or case study. It is important to bear in mind, as this course will unpack, that social media is a fluid and emergent media space and that many legal and ethical questions remain unanswered. As the assessment criteria states, you will be evaluated not only on clarity of expression, research and the quality of your argument but equally on originality. You are encouraged, using solid research and argument, to think critically and deeply about an issue relevant to the course and to demonstrate that thinking in your essay.

For assessment criteria see below.

Assignment to be submitted on Turnitin

Assessment matrix

Clarity of Expression 25% Quality of Research 25% Quality of Argument 25% Originality

25%

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social media technologies
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Delivery and Resources

There is a course reader which can be ordered via a Print Upon Demand system. Here is the link to order the reader: <https://printerydigital.mq.edu.au/shop/a/292-Student-Material-on-demand/294-Faculty-of-Arts/404-2016>

Unit Schedule

Week One (Wednesday March 1st)

Introduction to unit, assessment and approach to learning

Week Two (Wednesday March 8th)

Introduction to Legal and Ethical Frameworks

Week Three (Wednesday March 15th)

Contempt of court laws and social media

Week Four (Wednesday March 22nd)

Copyright laws and social media

Week Five (Wednesday March 29th)

Privacy laws, principles and social media

Week Six (Wednesday April 5th)

Defamation, freedom of speech and social media

Week Seven (Wednesday April 12th)

Media content regulation and social media

Week Eight (Wednesday May 3rd)

Online vitriol, hate speech and cyberbullying in social media

Week Nine (Wednesday May 10th)

Celebrities, self and product promotion and social media

Week Ten (Wednesday May 17th)

Pornography, offensive content and social media

Week Eleven (Wednesday May 24th)

Wikileaks, national security and social media

Week Twelve (Wednesday May 31st)

Review of course and discussion

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of

Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Information about Remarks

https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/ MMCCS Session Re-mark Application

<http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914> Information is correct at the time of publication

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and

Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social media technologies
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Discriminate between the different and evolving regulations and laws around new social media technologies

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience,

of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice
- Summarise and evaluate how these laws affect contemporary media content production

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Analyse the key laws that regulate social and online media practice in Australia
- Apply an ethical and critical reflection to social media practices
- Apply advanced knowledge of legal and ethical principles to social media practice

Assessment tasks

- Presentation
- Seminar paper
- Final essay