**Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Amit M. Schejter, Ph.D.  
**Office Hours:** TR 11:15-12:45  
**Office:** 106 Carnegie  
**Telephone:** 865-3717  
**Email:** through ANGEL only

**Course Objective:** A professional or academic involved in the telecommunications industry cannot overlook one of its central characteristics -- that it is a regulated industry. This course introduces you to the basic elements of telecommunications regulation, allowing you to become a better-informed professional with the ability to analyze phenomena in this industry and contextualize them in a broad framework. The course will establish for its students the context for regulation, its justifications, history, structure, principles, standards, technological challenges, economic pressures, and legal solutions. Students will study regulatory concepts in their broadest sense and at the same time will be exposed to specific contemporary and historical issues faced by the industry and debated among practitioners and regulators alike. Further context will be provided by a review of international developments in the field.

**Course structure, outline, schedule and reading list:**

A. The course readings include the following:

   2. Excerpts from Roger L. Sadler (2005) “Electronic Media Law.” Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications (ProCopy reading packet #110) (referred to in the reading list as “Sadler”) Note that page numbers in the reading list refer to the page numbers of the reading packet that are in bold font at the bottom of each page).

Both books are available at the Student Book Store, 330 E. College Ave. where you will receive a 10% discount on the price of the book by buying both sources.

   3. Additional readings as appearing in this syllabus (all electronically accessible).

B. Readings are assigned according to the following schedule.

C. Telecommunication regulation is a “living” entity that is in constant change and development. You are expected to come to class after you have read the assigned reading for the topic to be discussed that day.
Note: The schedule is subject to changes, and will be updated if needed during the course of the semester. Readings may be added, removed or declared “elective.” Such information will be announced in class and emailed to students through ANGEL.

D. The telecommunications industry in general, and the regulatory activity within it in particular, are dynamic. While the course deals with concepts, it is important students are able to see their “real life” connection. Understanding regulatory issues requires being informed regarding everyday occurrences in the field. This is also a very good practice to adopt if you intend to be a successful professional in the field. In addition to the course readings, students are required to subscribe and follow daily the “Benton Foundation” communications related headlines, which can be accessed at: http://owa.benton.org/listserv/wa.exe?SUBED1=bentonpcompolicy&A=1

Six quizzes will be held during the semester on the stories that appeared in this headline service and in other sources that will be discussed in class (the quizzes refer to ALL the stories that appear on the “Benton Headlines” and to stories discussed n class that may have appeared in other sources you were not required to read).

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Chapter 1: Concepts

Week 1: (9/5) and (9/7)
1. Introduction
2. Chaos or Order? – The U.S. legal system
   Reading: Sadler (pp. 1-8).

Week 2: (9/12) and (9/14)
3. Distributing or Regulating? – The role of the State
4. One strong team or many equal chances? – Why regulate?

Week 3: (9/19) and (9/21)
5. Competition law or Telecommunication Law I? – Antitrust regulation basics
   Reading: N & W (pp. 1-22)
6. Competition law or Telecommunication Law II? – Network regulation basics

Week 4: (9/26) and (no class on 9/28)
7. The State or an Independent Regulator? – Types of regulators
   Reading: Sadler (pp. 18-20)

Week 5: (10/3) and (10/5)
8. To speak or to be silenced? – The First Amendment I
9. To speak or to be silenced? – The First Amendment II
   Reading: Sadler (pp. 9-18)

Week 6: (10/10) and (10/12)
10. The State or the Public? – The public interest standard in telecom regulation (this class will also include a review session for the first exam)
Reading: Sadler (pp. 21 (from the heading “TV and Radio License Renewals”)–22 (to the heading “Political Broadcasting Rules”)

11. Test #1 – concepts

**Week 7:** (10/17) and (10/19)

**Chapter 2:** Speech Regulation
12. Get involved or sit on the sidelines? – guest lecture on interest group activism in Washington DC and its effect on telecom regulation, delivered by Ben Scott, policy director at Free Press.
13. Reactive or proactive? – Standards for regulating political, indecent, violent and educational speech

Reading: Sadler (pp. 22-35; 75-91)

**Week 8:** (10/24) and (10/26)

14. Public or private? – The idea of public broadcasting

Reading: John O’Hagan & Michael Jennings (2003) Public Broadcasting in Europe: Rationale, License Fee and Other Issues. *Journal of Cultural Economics* 27, 31-56. (this reading can be accessed through the Proquest ABI Inform Complete and through the Springer Standard Collection, both electronic resources available through the A-Z Electronic Resource list on the library web site)

15. Speech or transaction? – Regulation of commercial speech

Reading: Sadler (pp. 63-64; 93-106)

**Week 9:** (10/31) and (11/2)

16. Yours or mine? – Guest lecture on regulation of privacy and regulation under the USA PATRIOT Act, delivered by Nancy Kranich, former president of the American Library Association.

17. Enough or too many? – Media concentration and diversity in ownership (this class will also include a review session for the second exam)

Reading: Sadler (pp. 51-62; 21) N&W (pp. 378-382)

**Week 10:** (11/7) and (11/9)

18. Test #2 – Speech regulation

**Chapter 3:** Technology Regulation

19. Telecommunications or Information? The boundaries of telecom regulation

Reading: (N&W pp. 31-68)

**Week 11:** (11/14) and (no class on 11/16)


Reading: N&W (pp. 69-113)

**Week 12:** (11/28) and (11/30)

21. Monopoly or competition? – The telecommunications provisions of 1996 II

Reading: N&W (pp. 333-355)
22. Sell, Lend or Lease? - Spectrum management issues
Reading: N&W (pp. 225-260)

**Week 13:** (12/5) and (12/7)
23. Circuit switched or Packet Switched? – Regulation of the Internet
Reading: N&W (pp. 115-223)
24. Review Must or must not carry? – Regulation of cable television and Direct
Broadcast Satellite (this class will include a review session for the third exam)
Reading: Sadler (pp. 36-51) N&W (pp. 357-374)

**Week 14:** (12/12) and (12/14)
25. Test #3
26. “Reg-Fest 2006”: The Bi-Annual Telecom Regulation Festival – Poster session of
regulatory issues.

**Grading:** There will be 3 exams, 6 current affair quizzes, and a presentation in a “poster
session.” They will be graded as following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>15% (for a score of 100*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #3</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes 1-6</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Poster”</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Bonuses:**

- 5% for “creativity” in poster
- 5% for taking part in the “Race Relations Project” as outlined
below (these bonuses allow you to compensate for less than
satisfactory performance in other assignments, however they do
not compensate for missed quizzes or exams).

*In each exam you will be able to score up to 120 points. The extra 20 points can be
used to compensate for a less than a 100% performance in a quiz, but it cannot
compensate for a no-show for the quiz. A quiz or exam you miss cannot be made up
and will be awarded 0 points toward you final grade. This is a non-debatable issue.
If you miss three quizzes or two exams you will receive a failing grade for the
course. This issue as well is non-debatable.

**Race Relations Project:** The Race Relations Project (RRP) is a peer-facilitated diversity
program that employs trained undergraduate students from Penn State to lead small group
discussions on topics of race relations relevant to you and the other students participating.
Two facilitators from the RRP encourage participants in your group to express their
views and experiences on these issues. Because our mission is to expand the
multicultural dialogue, our facilitators do not teach or tell you what you should think.
Instead, they encourage you to uncover for yourself what you actually think.

RRP programs occur outside of the regular meeting times of your class. Most programs
are held in the evenings, although we do have some daytime programs throughout the
week to accommodate your schedule. For more information on the RRP, visit our website: www.racerelationsproject.psu.edu

**PARTICIPATION IN THE RRP PROGRAM IS WORTH 5 POINTS TOWARD YOUR GRADE.**

Be aware, the programs for this class will only be offered during specific weeks of the semester (November 27 through December 6). One week before the start date you will receive an email explaining how to register for the RRP program. All questions regarding the RRP should be directed to the RRP staff at: racerelationsproject.psu.edu.

**Attendance and assignment policy:** I do not make distinctions between excused and unexcused absences – I assume that if you are not in class, you have a good reason and it’s none of my business. Therefore, I don’t want to see doctors’ notes, letters from coaches or excuses from parents, for example. Still, it is not possible to make up missed work done in class, no matter the reason.

**Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly and creative activity in an open, honest and responsible manner, free from fraud and deception, and is an educational objective of the College of Communications and the university. Cheating, including plagiarism, falsification of research data, using the same assignment for more than one class, turning in someone else's work, or passively allowing others to copy your work, will result in academic penalties at the discretion of the instructor, and may result in the grade of "XF" (failed for academic dishonesty) being put on your permanent transcript. In serious cases it could also result in suspension or dismissal from the university. As students studying communication, you should understand and avoid plagiarism (presenting the work of others as your own). A discussion of plagiarism, with examples, can be found at: http://tlt.its.psu.edu/suggestions/cyberplag/cyberplagstudent.html. The rules and policies regarding academic integrity should be reviewed by every student, and can be found online at: [www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20](http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/47-00.html#49-20), and in the College of Communications document, "Academic Integrity Policy and Procedures." Any student with a question about academic integrity or plagiarism is strongly encouraged to discuss it with his or her instructor.

**Note to Students With Disabilities:** Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, contact the Office for Disability Services, ODS located in room 116 Boucke Building at 814-863-1807(V/TTY). For further information regarding ODS, please visit their web site at [www.equity.psu.edu/ods/](http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/). Instructors should be notified as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for reasonable academic adjustments.