

**FACULTY OF INFORMATION AND MEDIA STUDIES**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO**  
**Legal Issues for Information Professionals**  
**LIS 9158: Winter Term 2020**

**Instructor:** Dr. Samuel E. Trosow, Associate Professor  
Faculty of Information & Media Studies and Faculty of Law  
**Class Meets:** Wednesday 1:30- 4:20pm. in FNB  
**Office Hours:** Monday 11am- noon and by appointment  
**Email:** [strosow@uwo.ca](mailto:strosow@uwo.ca)  
**Phone:** 519 661-2111 x88498

**Course Description;**

Law impacting the information professional will be explored (legal underpinnings of various information organizations, intellectual freedom, access, privacy, personal data protection, copyright). Consideration of such themes as professionalism and the information professional's role in law reform, the Canadian Charter, technological innovation and the concept of information underlying current legal constructs.

**Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes:**

- 1) To introduce students to various areas of policy-making in the legal context affecting the information field;
- 2) To provide students with the opportunity for sufficient grounding in the relevant areas of the law to permit the students to be confident to effectively express opinions, in the relevant forums, reflecting the information professional's expertise;
- 3) To allow students to gain familiarity with the legal context of various work environments for information professionals in order to allow the students to become efficient and effective in any of those contexts.

**Methods of Evaluation**

- **Case Analysis:** 10% You will be assigned a judicial decision from a Canadian Court and asked to write a review of the case (of approximately 4-6 pages). This assignment will be completed early in the term; further details and specifications will be provided in class.
- **Analytical essay:** 20% You will be asked to write a formal essay (of approximately 10 pages) on questions/topics to be circulated. The essay will be due approximately midway through the term, Further details and specifications

will be provided in class.

- Quizzes (3 @10%) You will take 4 quizzes (closed book, and approximately 30 minutes). The lowest grade will be dropped; there will be no make-ups. A quiz may include multiple choice, true/false questions and short answers.
- Class Participation 15% As this course will be conducted in a small seminar format, attendance is mandatory and the active participation of every student is critical. Students are asked to limit their use of electronic devices to purposes related to the class discussion.
- Final Written Assignment (due last day of class): 25% More details about the format and content will be provided in class.

### **Course Materials:**

- Canadian statutory material and case law will be available on canlii.org
- Selections from *Canadian Copyright: A Citizen's Guide*, 2nd ed by Laura Murray and Samuel Trosow (Between the Lines Press, 2013) (on reserve at GRC)
- other materials assigned through the term will include class handouts, GRC reserves, resources available online and through the UWO Library catalog.
- Current materials (from news accounts, websites, etc)

### **Topics to include:**

- Overview of the Canadian Legal System and Governance Structures
- Finding and Reading Cases & Statutes
- Canadian Charter of Rights, Freedom of Expression & Censorship
- Selected Library Issues (Filtering, Exclusion Policies, Patron Records)
- Access to Information Requests
- Privacy, Surveillance and Security
- Overview of Contracts and Torts
- Information Torts (Defamation, Breach of Privacy)
- Overview of Canadian Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law
- Overview of Canadian Copyright Law  
Licenses and Institutional Copyright policies
- Other merging issue

### **Other Course Policies Include:**

**Grading of Assignments:** Assignments will be graded based on the quality and originality of analysis and argument (i.e. how well it defines an issue or problem; how clearly it articulates a position or thesis regarding the topic; and how well it provides argument, reasons, or evidence in support of its position or thesis). The mere

summary/description of material is generally inadequate. Evaluation criteria also include professional preparation of assignments.

**Late Assignments** will be subject to a penalty of 5% per day. Late assignments must be left in the FIMS office to get a time stamp.

**Additional Guidelines for Evaluating Class Participation and Grade Ranges:** see [http://intra.fims.uwo.ca/students/handbooks/mlis/mlis-handbook-04.htm#P251\\_25303](http://intra.fims.uwo.ca/students/handbooks/mlis/mlis-handbook-04.htm#P251_25303).

**MLIS Grade Range Guidelines and Guidelines for Evaluating Classroom Participation** are contained in MLIS Student Handbook [http://intra.fims.uwo.ca/students/handbooks/mlis/mlis-handbook-04.htm#P251\\_25303](http://intra.fims.uwo.ca/students/handbooks/mlis/mlis-handbook-04.htm#P251_25303)

**Attendance** and timely arrival to all classes is required. Students needing to negotiate legitimate absences need to inform the instructor in advance. In case of emergency, absences, students must contact the instructor as soon as possible afterwards. Deductions will be made from the participation grade for unexcused/unreported absences.

**Statement on Academic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_grad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

**Support Services:** Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.