CLASS OUTLINE

Purpose: To develop an understanding of free press/fair trial issues as well as an appreciation of award-winning coverage of the judicial system, based on readings, videos, and visits from representative judge, prosecutor, defense lawyer, journalist(s).

Objectives and Values: Understand and apply principles and laws of freedom of speech and press; think critically, creatively, and independently; conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications profession; knowledge and understanding of the legal and ethical principles in journalistic work.

Prerequisite: sophomore standing

Texts: Alexander, Media and American Courts: A Reference Handbook (e-book/hard copy in bookstore/online); three books in full and selections from books by award-winning journalists, and other readings (per below):

- type of book which may be required (in bookstore and hard copy on reserve in Monroe):

- type of selections which may be required (on reserve in Blackboard) from the following:

Grade:  Book Reviews (10% each); Responses to Book Selections (5% each); Mid-Term Exam (20%);
Class Participation (10%); Final Project (20%); 4.0 system (1.0-1.5=D, 1.6-2.5=C, 2.6-3.5=B, 3.6-4.0=A)

Attendance: Although attendance is not mandatory, no late work accepted. No!

Online Resources: Syllabus is posted on LORA. Blackboard access will be explained in class.

Integrity of Scholarship: Note pp 46-48 LU Undergraduate Bulletin for policy regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Note: Students with disabilities should contact Disability Services at 865.2990 by the end of drop-add.

Instructor: S.L. Alexander has worked as a reporter, editor and producer in print, radio and TV been active in organizations such as SPJ, RTNDA and the Press Club. She is a faculty member of the Judicial College in Reno. In addition to the text, she is author of Covering the Courts: A Handbook for Journalists (2nd ed 2003), and she is working on a book of tales of high-profile litigants in New Orleans courtrooms

*Tentative Schedule

Introduction; Readings (e-reserve); Text: Chapter 1: "Sob Sisters, Political Radicals, Trial of the Century #1"
VCR excerpts documentaries: The Trial of the Century; Legacy of a Kidnapping; Scottsboro

Book Review #1 Berendt: Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil (and VCR excerpts eponymous feature film)

Book Response #1 Neff: The Wrong Man
Text: Chapter 1: "Cold War, Trial of the Century #2, Turbulent Times"
VCR excerpts "He Must Have Something": Jim Garrison's Investigation of the Assassination of JFK"
Text: Chapter 1: "Court TV, Trial of the Century #3, The New Millennium"; VCR The Media & OJ Simpson Case
Text: Chapter 3 Chronology

Book Review #2 Harr: A Civil Action (and VCR excerpts eponymous film)
Text Chapter 2 Controversies, Problems, and Solutions; Chapter 4 Biographical Sketches, Mid-Term EXAM

Book Review #2 Horne: Desire Street (and visit, e.g., of Jed Horne, author and former Times-Picayune editor)
Text Chapter 5 Facts and Data; Project Research due

Book Review #3 Humes: Mississippi Mud
Readings Visit, e.g., of Hon Ginger Berrigan, Chief Judge, US Dist Ct, ED La

Book Review #3 Bridges, Bad Bet on the Bayou
Readings visit, e.g., Orleans Parish District Attorney

Book Response #4 Possley: Everybody Pays
Readings re visit, e.g., Buddy Lemann, Esq, defense attorney (Hail to the Dragon Slayer)

Presentation of Projects