SYLLABUS
Business Law and Ethics
LEB 323
Spring 2012

T, Th 9:30-11:00am UTC 4.122 UNIQUE # 02885

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rules of law govern many aspects of business. An understanding of legal rules and ethical constraints provides a framework for making sound business decisions, facilitates commercial transactions, and promotes order in the marketplace.

This course focuses on the organization and operation of the American legal system, legal rules and ethical constraints that impact business, and the practical application of these rules and constraints to real-world situations. Emphasis is placed on analytical problem solving and ethical decision making.

Prerequisite for this course: Credit or registration for Business Administration 324 or 324H.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Our study of the legal and ethical environment of business is designed to help students accomplish the following objectives:

(1) Recognize legal and ethical issues when making business decisions.
(2) Gain an enhanced understanding of legal rules and ethical constraints.
(3) Improve analytical problem solving and ethical decision making skills.
(4) Apply knowledge and skills to address and manage potential problems before they become actual, expensive problems.
(5) Evaluate expert advice and determine the extent to which it should be incorporated into business decisions.

COURSE MATERIALS

Business Law
John R. Allison & Robert A. Prentice
12th Edition, 2010 *(selected chapters)*

Course Outline – LEB 323
Pedersen
Spring 2012

GRADES

I grade on a curve, using the following items and weights:

Class Participation	**10%**
Exam # 1 (February 21)	**15%**
Ethics Journal (Due March 20)	**20%**
Exam # 2 (April 3)	**25%**
Final Exam (May 10)	**30%**
Total	**100%**

Curved Score	**Grade**
93 and above	**A**
90-92	**A-**
87-89	**B+**
83-86	**B**
80-82	**B-**
77-79	**C+**
73-76	**C**
70-72	**C-**
67-69	**D+**
63-66	**D**
60-62	**D-**
Below 60	**F**

Class Participation

Class participation consists of cases, assigned in advance, that you brief and present in class.

> **Briefs**: A brief is a written summary of a case. It consists of: (1) the **essential facts** (what happened between the parties and, if the case has been appealed, the decision of the lower court), (2) the **issue(s)** to be resolved, (3) the court's **resolution** of the issue(s), and (4) the **rationale** for the court's decision.

Exams

Exams are **open-book and open-note**, testing your ability to analyze hypothetical situations and determine the extent to which various legal rules and ethical constraints apply. There are **no make-up exams**. If you miss **either** exam #1 **or** exam #2, the percentage assigned to the exam you have missed will be applied to the final exam. Therefore, if you miss exam #1, your final exam will be worth 45% of your overall grade. If you miss exam #2, your final exam will be worth 55% of your final grade. If you miss **both** exam #1 **and** exam #2, the percentage assigned to exam #1 will be applied to the final exam (your final exam will be worth 45% of your overall grade), and you will receive a zero on exam #2 (worth 25% of your overall grade). **Dropping an exam grade is not an option** in this course. **Once you have taken an exam, the score is factored into your overall grade**.

Ethics Journal

Prepare a journal containing three recent news articles related to ethics and business. Produce or reproduce the articles onto 8.5" x 11" paper. Include a typewritten summary to accompany each article (one page in length, single-spaced), which: (1) identifies the ethical issue presented in the article, (2) applies the ethical principles covered in class to the facts, and (3) provides your recommendation or critique of how the issue should be or was handled. The journals should be a professional work product but binders or folders are not necessary. One staple in the upper left hand corner of your journal is sufficient. Your journal is **due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, March 20**. **Points will be deducted for late submissions**.

CLASS RULES

To minimize distractions in the classroom, the following rules apply:

(1) Laptops must be closed and put away. Our class time is too valuable to spend it surfing the internet or checking e-mail. The Course Outline provides ample space for handwritten notes.

(2) Cell phones and wireless devices must be turned off. If you are expecting an emergency-related call, be considerate by turning your cell phone to vibrate.

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY

The McCombs School of Business has no tolerance for acts of scholastic dishonesty. The responsibilities of both students and faculty with regard to scholastic dishonesty are described in detail in the Policy Statement on Scholastic Dishonesty for the McCombs School of Business. By teaching this course, I have agreed to observe all of the faculty responsibilities described in that document. By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to observe all the student responsibilities described in that document. If the application of the Policy Statement to this class and its assignments is unclear in any way, it is your responsibility to ask me for clarification.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty: Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. You should refer to the Student Judicial Services website at **http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs** or the General Information Catalog to access the official University policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty and to obtain additional information on what constitutes scholastic dishonesty.

CLASS WEB SITES AND STUDENT PRIVACY

Password-protected class sites will be available for all accredited courses taught at the University. Syllabi, handouts, assignments and other resources are types of information that may be available within these sites. Site activities could include exchanging e-mail, engaging in class discussions and chats, and exchanging files. In addition, class e-mail rosters will be a component of the sites. Students who do not want their names included in these electronic class rosters must restrict their

directory information in the Office of the Registrar, Main Building, Room 1. For more information, see: **http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs**.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, **http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd**.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

(1) **Introduction**: Nature and Sources of Law (Chapter 1)
(2) **Court Systems**: Functions, Jurisdiction (Chapter 2)
(3) **Dispute Resolution**: Litigation, ADR (Chapter 3)
(4) **Business Ethics**: Morality, Decision Making, Corporate Culture (Chapters 36-38)
(5) **Torts**: Negligence, Intentional Wrongdoing (Chapter 8)*****
(6) **Intellectual Property**: Trademarks, Trade Secrets, Patents, Copyrights (Chapter 9)*****
(7) **Contracts**: Nature, Formation, Enforcement (Chapters 10-14)*****

***** Includes analysis of legal and ethical issues

SCHEDULE

Date	Topic
Week 1	
T, 1/17	**Introduction** (Chapter 1)
Th, 1/19	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
Week 2	
T, 1/24	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
Th, 1/26	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
Week 3	
T, 1/31	**Dispute Resolution** (Chapter 3)
Th, 2/2	**Dispute Resolution** (Chapter 3) **Business Ethics** (Chapters 36-38)
Week 4	
T, 2/7	**Business Ethics** (Chapters 36-38)
Th, 2/9	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
Week 5	
T, 2/14	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
Th, 2/16	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
Week 6	
T, 2/21	***EXAM # 1***
Th, 2/23	**Torts: Intentional Wrongdoing** (Chapter 8)

Week 7

T, 2/28	**Torts: Intentional Wrongdoing** (Chapter 8)
Th, 3/1	**Intellectual Property: Trademarks** (Chapter 9)

Week 8

T, 3/6	**Intellectual Property: Trademarks** (Chapter 9)
Th, 3/8	**Intellectual Property: Trade Secrets** (Chapter 9)

Week 9

T, 3/13	***No Class: SPRING BREAK***
Th, 3/15	***No Class: SPRING BREAK***

Week 10

T, 3/20	***ETHICS JOURNAL DUE***
	Intellectual Property: Patents (Chapter 9)
Th, 3/22	**Intellectual Property: Patents** (Chapter 9)

Week 11

T, 3/27	**Intellectual Property: Copyrights** (Chapter 9)
Th, 3/29	**Intellectual Property: Copyrights** (Chapter 9)

Week 12

T, 4/3	***EXAM # 2***
Th, 4/5	**Contracts: Nature** (Chapter 10)

Week 13

T, 4/10	**Contracts: Nature** (Chapter 10)
	Contracts: The Agreement (Chapter 11)
Th, 4/12	**Contracts: The Agreement** (Chapter 11)

Week 14

T, 4/17	**Contracts: The Agreement** (Chapter 11)
Th, 4/19	**Contracts: Consideration** (Chapter 12)

Week 15

T, 4/24	**Contracts: Illegality** (Chapter 13)
Th, 4/26	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)

Week 16

T, 5/1	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)
Th, 5/3	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)

Th, 5/10	
2:00-5:00pm	***FINAL EXAM***