SYLLABUS
Foundations of the Legal Environment of Business
LEB 320F
Spring 2010

M W F 11:00am-Noon GSB 2.124 UNIQUE # 03390

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rules of law govern many aspects of business. An understanding of legal rules and ethical responsibilities 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/constraints to real-life situations. Emphasis is placed on analytical problem solving and ethical decision making.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

(1) Gain an enhanced understanding of legal rules and ethical constraints.
(2) Recognize legal and ethical issues when making business decisions.
(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

<u>Business Law</u>
John R. Allison & Robert A. Prentice
11th Edition, 2009 *(selected chapters)*

<u>Course Outline – LEB 320F</u>
Pedersen
Spring 2010

GRADING

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

Class Participation	**10%**
Exam # 1 (February 19)	**25%**
Exam # 2 (March 29)	**30%**
Final Exam (May 14)	**35%**
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 is important, accounting for 10% of your overall grade. Participation consists of: (1) cases, assigned in advance, that you brief and present in class; (2) your answers to questions posed in class; and (3) your involvement in class discussions.

> **Briefs**: A brief is a summary of a case. It consists of: (1) the **name** of the case, (2) the **essential facts** (what happened between the parties and, if the case has been appealed, the decision of the lower court), (3) the **issue(s)** presented for resolution, (4) the court's **resolution** of the issue(s), and (5) 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 for any reason, 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 60% of your overall grade. If you miss exam #2, your final exam will be worth 65% 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 60% of your overall grade), and you will receive a zero on exam #2 (worth 30% of your overall grade).

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.
(3) Food and drinks are not allowed in the classroom.

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 as well as further elaboration 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 information on restricting directory information, see:
http://www.utexas.edu/student/registrar/catalogs/gi02-03/app/appc09.html.

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 Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

(1) **Introduction**: Nature and Sources of Law (Chapter 1)
(2) **Court Systems**: Functions, Jurisdiction (Chapter 2)
(3) **Dispute Resolution**: ADR, Litigation (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)
(8) **Sales**: Warranties, Product Liability (Chapter 20)
(9) **Partnerships**: Nature, Liability (Chapter 24)
(10) **Corporations**: Nature, Structure, Governance (Chapters 25-26)
(11) **Employment Law**: Discrimination (Chapter 30)

SCHEDULE

Date	**Topic**
Week 1	
W 1/20	**Introduction** (Chapter 1)
F 1/22	**Introduction** (Chapter 1)
Week 2	
M 1/25	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
W 1/27	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
F 1/29	**Court Systems** (Chapter 2)
Week 3	
M 2/1	**Dispute Resolution** (Chapter 3)
W 2/3	**Dispute Resolution** (Chapter 3)
F 2/5	**Dispute Resolution** (Chapter 3)
Week 4	
M 2/8	**Business Ethics** (Chapters 36-38)
W 2/10	**Business Ethics** (Chapters 36-38)
F 2/12	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
Week 5	
M 2/15	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
W 2/17	**Torts: Negligence** (Chapter 8)
F 2/19	***EXAM # 1***
Week 6	
M 2/22	***Review EXAM #1***; **Torts: Intentional Wrongdoing** (Chapter 8)
W 2/24	**Torts: Intentional Wrongdoing** (Chapter 8)
F 2/26	**Intellectual Property: Trademarks** (Chapter 9)

Week 7	
M 3/1	**Intellectual Property: Trademarks, Trade Secrets** (Chapter 9)
W 3/3	**Intellectual Property: Trade Secrets** (Chapter 9)
F 3/5	**Intellectual Property: Patents** (Chapter 9)
Week 8	
M 3/8	**Intellectual Property: Patents, Copyrights** (Chapter 9)
W 3/10	**Intellectual Property: Copyrights** (Chapter 9)
F 3/12	**Contracts: Nature** (Chapter 10)
Week 9	
M 3/15	***No Class: Spring Break***
W 3/17	***No Class: Spring Break***
F 3/19	***No Class: Spring Break***
Week 10	
M 3/22	**Contracts: The Agreement** (Chapter 11)
W 3/24	**Contracts: The Agreement** (Chapter 11)
F 3/26	**Contracts: The Agreement** (Chapter 11)
Week 11	
M 3/29	***EXAM # 2***
W 3/31	***Review EXAM # 2***; **Contracts: Consideration** (Chapter 12)
F 4/2	**Contracts: Consideration, Illegality** (Chapters 12-13)
Week 12	
M 4/5	**Contracts: Illegality** (Chapter 13)
W 4/7	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)
F 4/9	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)
Week 13	
M 4/12	**Voidable Contracts** (Chapter 14)
W 4/14	**Sales: Warranties** (Chapter 20)
F 4/16	**Sales: Warranties** (Chapter 20)
Week 14	
M 4/19	**Sales: Product Liability** (Chapter 20)
W 4/21	**Sales: Product Liability** (Chapter 20)
F 4/23	**Partnerships** (Chapter 24)
Week 15	
M 4/26	**Corporations** (Chapters 25- 26)
W 4/28	**Corporations** (Chapters 25-26)
F 4/30	**Corporations** (Chapters 25-26)

Week 16

M 5/3	**Employment Law: Discrimination** (Chapter 30)
W 5/5	**Employment Law: Discrimination** (Chapter 30)
F 5/7	**Employment Law: Discrimination** (Chapter 30)

F 5/14	
9:00am-Noon	***FINAL EXAM***