

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT
BSAD 3500 Business Law I

FIVE WEEK COURSE SYLLABUS
Summer 2019

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Business Law I

I. Course Description

This is an introductory course in business law. The goal of the course is to provide a foundation of knowledge about how our legal system operates as it relates to the world of business. In addition, this course will help you learn how to spot legal issues you may face as a manager and to better understand what factors weigh on legal decision-making. When possible, we will look at what ethical issues may be raised by business actions and examine where ethics and law meet and where they diverge.

A. *After successfully completing Business Law I you should be able to:*

1. Summarize the origins of law and how American law is made, as well as identify why law is important to society;
2. Identify the basic components of contract law, including contract formation and recognize elements that may impact the validity and enforceability of a contract;
3. Recognize and discern the common remedies available at law and equity;
4. Understand and paraphrase the concepts of tort, negligence, strict liability, personal and property liabilities and damages;
5. Describe the concept of agency and summarize generally how business organizations allocate and manage liabilities;
6. Discern and describe the legal forms of business organizations; and
7. Distinguish the similarities in, and differences between, ethics and law.

B. *You will also be exposed to elements of the following relevant subjects in the study of Business Law:*

Topics

- 1. Legal Systems and Courts***
- 2. Contract Formation and the Role of Contracts in Modern Business***
- 3. The Uniform Commercial Code***
- 4. Agency, Partnership Relationships and Responsibilities***

5. **Corporation Law and Practice**
6. **Torts and Strict Liability**
7. **Intellectual Property**
8. **Ethical Issues in Modern Corporations**

II. Textbook Requirement

Business Law, 4th ed, James F. Morgan, BVT Publishing, Softcover

III. Course Requirements

A. Mandatory Attendance

Any unexcused absences will result in significant grade reductions. Five unexcused absences may result in your automatically failing the course.

B. Preparation of the course assignments and class participation.

Unexcused, late assignments will result in a ten percent (10%) assignment grade.

C. Two case papers/briefs, Mid-term and Final Exams

The Mid-term and Final Examinations will be comprehensive. We will discuss the case briefing required format later in the course.

IV. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

The textbook contains discussions of Modern Business Law issues and supporting cases. Students may be asked to write and speak in each class. In addition, full cases, and other required reading material may be supplied as handouts for certain classes throughout the semester.

Any additional material provided to you beyond that found in the textbook may be included on any graded assignment.

V. GRADING:

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

Written papers or case studies:	40%
Mid-term Examination:	20%
Final Examination:	20%
Class Preparation and Participation:	20%.

VI. FITCHBURG STATE BLACKBOARD:

Assignments may be posted on blackboard and students may submit assignments on Blackboard or in hard copy in class.

Blackboard will be used to keep the students informed of course happenings, summaries and grades. Please check Blackboard routinely to stay current in this course.

VII. CLASS FORMAT

A variety of teaching and learning approaches, or methods, will be utilized in this class. Methodologies will include: reading assignments, class discussions, case reading and discussion, internet research assignments, experiential exercises, self-assessment exercises, and possible even video. Case reading and discussion will be the primary vehicle used to link theory and practice. Case analysis, also called “discussion learning”, requires you to draw on the theory and models discussed in your textbook and in class to analyze an organizational situation or problem and to recommend solutions or actions to deal with the situation or problem at hand.

VIII. HONOR CODE AND STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:

Unethical behavior by corporations has been linked with negative performance outcomes; the same is true of unethical student behavior. It is expected that students will neither participate in nor condone activities such as cheating or plagiarism.

You are expected to do your own work on all individual assignments, assessments, and exams. I encourage you to speak to other students about the issues, but do not share work or answers.

Failure to follow this policy may result in zero points for both the receiver and provider (if involved). Also, the instructor may take any other action described in any current academic integrity or dishonesty policy.

Reasonable Accommodation:

Please make an appointment with me during office hours if any accommodations are needed due to a disability. This is your right under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, Pub. L. No. 101-336, 104 Stat. 328 (1990).

Students seeking reasonable accommodation due to a religious belief or practice are encouraged to contact me to discuss the reasonable accommodation. .

Business Law Topics and Assignments

Note: Each Friday will be devoted to catch-up, discussion and group work.

Week 1, Class Sessions 1-4

UNIT 1. Introduction to the Law and Purpose in Business

- Law Purpose and Solution
- Court Systems
- Litigation

UNIT 2. Foundational Legal Concepts

- Criminal Law and Business
- Torts Introduction and International Torts
- Tort Negligence and Strict Liability

Reading Assigned: 3-60, 145-200

Assignment: Paper #1 - Case Analysis, Parties and Issue of Law

– Due Week 2, Class Session 1

Week 2, Class Sessions 1-4

Week 3, Class Sessions 1-2

Unit 3. Contractual Relationships

- Introduction to Contracts and Remedies
- Agreement – Offer and Acceptance
- Bargained for Consideration
- Contract Capacity and Genuine Assent
- Illegality and Public Policy
- Contract Performance, Nonperformance and Discharge
- Damages (Money – Injunctive Relief – Specific Performance)
- Uniform Commercial Code
- Warranties – Business meaning and purpose
- The reasons for consumer protection

Reading Assigned: 249-388, 429-455

Week 3, Class Session 3: Mid-Term Exam

The first half of this class session will be a review and discussion session.
The second half of this class session will be the Mid-Term Exam.

Week 3, Class Session 4

Unit 3. Torts, Negligence and Strict Liability

- Theories of Tort Liability
- Overview, Damages, Persons Liable
- Negligence – Duty, Due Care, Reasonable Persons, Degrees of Negligence
- Proximate Cause, Actual Cause, Special Doctrines
- Defenses to claims of Negligence
- Strict Liability
- Product Liabilities

Reading Assigned: 167-170, 184-197

Week 4, Class Sessions 1-4

Unit 4. Real and Personal Property

- Forms of Business Organizations
- Partnerships
- Nature and Purpose of Corporations

Reading Assigned: 549-618, 879-904

Assignment: Paper #2 - Case Analysis, Contract Parties and Formation or Agency Concepts- Week 5, Class Session 1.

Week 5, Class Sessions 1-3

Unit 5. Agency, Partnerships and Corporations Law (Pages 465 – 503, 549 - 617)

- General Discussion - Sole Proprietorships – Partnerships – Corporations
- Basic Principals of Agency
- Agency Liability Concepts
- Agency relationships, Principal and Agent, Master and Servant
- Relations with, and liability to, third parties
- Partnership formation
- Partnership agreements
- Operations and dissolution
- Limited Partnerships
- Corporations – Nature, formation and power

Reading Assigned: 465-503, 549-617

Week 5, Class Session 4:

Final Exam: Comprehensive

The first half of Week 5 Class Session 4, will be a review session.

The second half of Week 5, Class Session 4 will be the final exam.