

Sam Houston State University  
College of Business Administration  
Department of General Business and Finance

Course Syllabus

Spring 2008

Course Number: GBA 281  
Course Title: Legal Environment of Business  
Prerequisites: None  
Instructor: Griffin Toronjo Pivateau, JD  
Office: BA 210G  
Email: [griffin@legaloutreach.com](mailto:griffin@legaloutreach.com)  
Office Hours: MW: 11:00 – 12:30  
Other times by appointment

Website:

Required Text: *West's Business Law*, Clarkson, Miller, Jentz and Cross  
West Publishing, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Supplemental Text: None

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to give students an insight into the environment in which businesses operate and to provide them with a basic understanding of solving problems using legal rules. Students who are not business majors may elect to take the course.

Course Objectives: Students will be expected to:

1. Develop the ability to recognize legal problems that arise in common business transactions.
2. Know selected legal rules and their impact on the decisions made in operations of businesses.
3. Develop the analytical thinking process by the application of legal concepts in the solving of problems.
4. Understand the environment in which business decisions are made and the effect of those environs on the decision process.

**Instructor guidelines and policies**

**Attendance:**

- Class attendance increases understanding, provides key information not available elsewhere, and fosters a sense of community. Therefore, class attendance is encouraged and expected.
- Daily attendance will be taken.
- Students should contact the instructor or another student after missing class to ensure they are aware of the material covered.
- Bonus points for class participation will be awarded periodically. Participation is defined as fostering or taking part in class discussions. These points are meant to reward those who attend class and participate once there.

## **Examinations:**

- The class is divided into four sections, each covering a segment of the textbook. At the end of each section, an exam will be given. The exam will cover the lectures, class discussions, videos, assigned readings, and textbook.
- The exams will consist of essay, multiple choice, and short answer questions.
- The first three exams will cover only the immediately preceding segment of history. Each of the first three exams will be worth 100 points.
- The final exam will be cumulative. It will be worth 200 points.
- Students must bring a pen and any other required testing materials to each exam.

## **Make-up Exams:**

- After missing an exam, you should notify me by email that you will need to take a make-up exam.
- Make-up exams will be given immediately after the final exam. You will take the make-up exam immediately after the final exam, during the scheduled final exam period.
- Make-up exams will differ from the questions assigned to the class.
- If more than one exam is missed, the make-up exam will count for each of the missed exams.

## **Cell phones and beepers:**

- Turn off all cell phones and pagers before class begins.
- If your cell phone rings during class, you will be expected to leave class for the remainder of the period.

## **Religious Holy Days Policy:**

- Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a)(2) defines religious holy days as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.
- University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will notify the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

## **Students with a disability:**

- It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.
- SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If the student has a disability that may affect adversely their work in this class, then he or she needs to



register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how they can best be helped. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential.

### Courtesy policy:

- Class attendance requires civility and courtesy towards other students and the professor.
- As such, the following behaviours are prohibited: talking, chewing gum, eating, surfing the internet, cell phones, pagers, reading, studying for other classes, chronic tardiness, or any other action deemed disruptive or inappropriate by the instructor.
- The professor reserves the right to remove anyone from class for violating the above policies.
  - A verbal warning will be issued at the first occurrence of problematic behavior, where the student is informed that the conduct will not be permitted.
  - A second occurrence will result in another verbal warning and written notification being sent to the dean of the college explaining the circumstances of the offense.
  - A third occurrence will result in the student being referred to the appropriate academic dean and potential removal from the class.

### Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use of someone else's material, which is then presented as being the result of the plagiarist's own primary research, creative impulse or insight. Plagiarism technically encompasses the borrowing of ideas of others, as well as their exact words..." (Laurie Henry, The Fiction Dictionary, p. 219.)
- Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, directly copying material from a book or textbook either with or without attribution, cutting and pasting material from online sources, and purchasing or downloading papers from internet sites.
- Students who plagiarize will suffer harsh penalties. Penalties will begin with a zero for the assignment.

### Grade Determination:

<b>Your grade will be determined by the following</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Percent of Final Average</b>
Three Section Exams	Each section exam is worth 100 points.	300	55 %
Final Exam	The final exam is worth 200 points.	200	36 %
Class attendance and participation	Class attendance and participation can be worth 50 points.	50	9 %
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>550</b>
			<b>100.00%</b>

### Letter Grade Assignment:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Number of points necessary</b>
A	495 - 550
B	444 - 494
C	385 - 443
D	330 - 384
F	Below 330

## Tentative Instructional Outline:

This schedule may change with or without prior notice.

Section	Topic	Date	Reading Assignment
- Section 1	- Introduction to Law and Legal Reasoning	1/16/08	Chapter 1
	- Holiday	1/21/08	
	- Courts and Alternate Dispute Resolution	1/23/08	Chapter 2
	- Courts and Procedure 1	1/28/08	Chapter 3
	- Courts and Procedure 2	1/30/08	Chapter 3
	- Constitutional Authority to Regulate Business	2/4/08	Chapter 4
	- Ethics and Business Decision Making	2/6/08	Chapter 5
	- Exam 1	2/11/08	
- Section 2	- Intentional Torts	2/13/08	Chapter 6
	- Negligence 1	2/18/08	Chapter 7
	- Negligence 2	2/20/08	Chapter 7
	- Intellectual Property	2/25/08	Chapter 8
	- Criminal Law 1	2/27/08	Chapter 9
	- Criminal Law 2	3/3/08	Chapter 9
	- Exam 2	3/5/08	
	- Holiday	3/10/08	
	- Holiday	3/13/08	
- Section 3	- Agency Formation and Duties	3/17/08	Chapter 31
	- Liability to Third Parties and Termination	3/19/08	Chapter 32
	- Employment and Labor Law	3/24/08	Chapter 33
	- Employment Discrimination	3/26/08	Chapter 34
	- Personal Property and Bailments	3/31/08	Chapter 47
	- Real Property and Landlord Tenant Relationships	4/2/08	Chapter 48
	- Exam 3	4/7/08	
- Section 4	- Sole Proprietorships and Franchises	4/9/08	Chapter 35
	- Partnerships	4/14/08	Chapter 36
	- Limited Liability Companies	4/16/08	Chapter 37
	- Corporations: Formation and Financing	4/21/08	Chapter 38
	- Corporations: Directors, Officers, and Shareholders	4/23/08	Chapter 39
	- Corporations: Merger, Consolidation, and Termination	4/28/08	Chapter 40

- Corporations: Securities Law and Corporate Governance
- Law for Small Businesses
- Review
- Final

4/30/08 Chapter 41

5/5/08 Chapter 42

5/7/08