Specific Course Information

Course Title: Legal Environment of Business – Spring 2012
Course Number and Section Number: BULE 302 001 and BULE 302 002
Class Location: Sec. RB 228 (both sections)
Class Meeting Time: Sec. 001 MW 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. & Sec. 002 MW 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Professor’s Contact Information

Name: Linda B. Samuels, Professor of Legal Studies

Office location: ENT 026 (ground floor to the right of elevators)

Telephone number: (703) 993-1768. Please leave a detailed message including when you are available to be called, if you do not have a way for me to leave a message. At the beginning of the message, please spell your name and repeat your phone number twice SLOWLY!

E-mail address: lsamuels@gmu.edu. Besides office hours, this is the best way to communicate! You receive a written response and we do not need to be available at the same time. Emails should be written in a professional manner and should include your full legal name and section. Please check the class website for announcements and instructions before sending me an email. Also, exchange email addresses with another student to keep up to date if you are absent. When a student misses a class, they will always miss what was covered, so please do not email me to ask whether you missed anything. Assignments will NOT be accepted by email.

Office hours: usually Monday and Wednesday 11:00–11:45am and 4:30-5:00pm and by appointment. If this changes, I will post an announcement to blackboard and send an email. Even without an appointment, if you come by and I am in my office, I will try to meet with you. I look forward to getting to know you during the semester.

Handing in assignments: written assignments are submitted both to Safe Assign and in hard copy by putting them on the desk in front of the class before or after (not during) class. Alternatively, put the hard copy under the door to my office (ENT 026).

Course website address:

This course utilizes Blackboard 9.1 at http://mymason.gmu.edu. You must be registered to access this website. If you added the course after it began, the registrar will update the website to give you access. Documents are usually prepared in the most recent version of Microsoft Word. If you do not have this
version, you can get a free “patch” from Microsoft. Contact University Computing if you have questions about using Blackboard. If you have any suggestions for improving the website, please let me know.

**Course prerequisites:** Sophomore standing (45 credit hours recommended for registration)

**Course materials:**

**Textbook(s):** The materials for this course include the textbook Miller & Cross, *The Legal and E-Commerce Environment Today: Business in Its Ethical, Regulatory, and International Setting* (Sixth edition. Cengage 2010). The text is now available in both paper and electronic formats with varying student support materials. The book is available at the GMU bookstore with and without the extra learning tools. It is also available directly from the publisher which set up a customized website for GMU students to more easily purchase the text in its various formats at [http://www.cengage.com/ichapters/gmu](http://www.cengage.com/ichapters/gmu). It may also be available from other sources at better prices and in other formats, such as rental.

**Purchase choices:**

**Most Expensive:** The hardcover textbook for $189.99. The learning tools also are packaged with the hardcover for about $10 extra. The hardcover is also available at the GMU bookstore and at other sources, perhaps at different prices. The text is coming out in a new edition, so this edition probably will not be able to be resold. The hardcover may also be available used.

The ebook at $94.99 for 6 months. The etextbook are flash paper documents that expire. This is more expensive than The Online Study Tool which includes the ebook.

Individual chapters (PDF files) can be purchased online from Cengage (expiring in 6 months at $7.99 per chapter) This is just as expensive as the etextbook. The chapters are flash paper documents that expire.

**Supplements:** To supplement the hardcover and etextbook, the publisher has a student companion website at [www.thomsonedu.com/westbuslaw/let](http://www.thomsonedu.com/westbuslaw/let) with interactive quizzes for every chapter, flashcards, glossary, internet activities, case updates and hot links to important legal resources on the Web. Some of these are available for free. Some students have found the interactive quizzes to be helpful study tools. The text also has a “paper based” Study Guide. However, check the free resources available on the class and publisher’s websites prior to purchase.

**Online materials/Readings:** Readings (mostly news articles) will be put on the website during the semester or may be available through e-reserves. Check the appropriate chapter number for postings of the articles or links to e-reserves under News Articles. These are part of the course and may be tested on the exams.

**Reference materials:** To be found on the internet to complete the Internet Research Project. See that section of the website for details.

**Contemplative/reflective resources:** Materials are posted on the website to foster contemplative and reflective activities in our learning space.
**Course Description**  This course surveys the legal environment of business, emphasizing legal concepts and legal reasoning to prepare students to recognize legal problems and formulate appropriate responses. Topics include business ethics, torts, crimes, contracts and other topics. Lecture, discussion, cases.

**SOM Program Learning Goals**

(1) Our graduates will be knowledgeable about the legal environment of business.

(2) Our graduates will understand the importance of ethical behavior in business.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

(1) Identify and explain fundamental legal concepts from a variety of subject areas of the legal environment of business.

(2) Demonstrate the ability to apply fundamental legal concepts through legal reasoning to resolve business related legal disputes.

(3) Identify ethical issues and understand the importance of ethical behavior in business.

(4) Demonstrate the ability to apply ethical analysis and reasoning to resolve business related ethical dilemmas.

(5) Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of law on business and the role of business in shaping the legal and regulatory environment.

**Course Schedule:**

**Planned Dates of Topic Coverage; Dates of Exams; Assignment Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment – Custom Chapter #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
<td>Review Course Materials including contemplative/reflective learning space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>Legal Foundation</td>
<td>Read Chapter 1 pp. 2 – 18 and Appendix 21-35.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/6 &amp; 2/8</td>
<td>Case Law Courts and Alternative Dispute Resolution</td>
<td>Read Chapter 3 pp. 61 - 95. Reflective focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Finish and review for exam #1;</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Exam Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>Exam #1 (100 points)</td>
<td>All coverage so far, bring scantron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>Constitutional Law and Business</td>
<td>Read chapter 4 pp. 102-127.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Finish and review for Exam #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>Exam #2 (100 points)</td>
<td>All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Finish and review for Exam #3</td>
<td>Optional Internet Research Project due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Exam #3 (100 points)</td>
<td>All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Read Chapter 16 pp. 533-559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Finish and review for Exam #4; and contemplative activities</td>
<td>Review practice test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2 (Wednesday during class)</td>
<td>Exam #4 (100 points)</td>
<td>All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tips for Test Taking:**

- **Exam #1 (100 points)**: All coverage so far, bring scantron.
- **Exam #2 (100 points)**: All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.
- **Exam #3 (100 points)**: All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.
- **Exam #4 (100 points)**: All coverage since last exam, bring scantron.
**Student responsibilities:**

(1) regular class attendance; (2) preparation of assignments prior to class; (3) participation in discussions/critical analysis of assignments and lectures; (4) completion of assessments and (5) professional in-class behavior which respects the rights and opinions of classmates and the professor.

Students should read every assignment, including all cases, ethical issues, landmarks and other text “features,” regardless of whether the material is discussed in class. See below for more specific requirements pertaining to exams, the optional internet research project and class participation. Changes in requirements, including omissions of material, will be announced in class and posted on the class website. If you miss class or an in-class announcement, check the website. *Keeping informed is your responsibility.*

**Courtesy/electronic usage:**

**Act professionally at all times!** We are trying to provide a space for learning in the classroom. Allow enough time to arrive before class begins. If your schedule does not allow timely arrival, you should not register for this section. All the following types of behavior are distracting to me and to other students in the class and impede learning: arriving late, leaving early, leaving temporarily, sleeping, chatting with friends, cell phone ringing or any cell phone usage, including text messaging, emails, ringing and vibrating. Students may not use computers while in the classroom, unless they have an approval from the Office of Disability Services. Students may record the class, but may not do it on a cell phone and may not send the recording to anyone else or post it on any electronic medium. Students who will be using recorders and/or electronic dictionaries must let me know. No electronic dictionaries will be permitted during exams.

Students who do any of the above behaviors will not receive participation points during that class session. Students who use cell phones or computers may be asked to leave that class.

If you have a problem with an exam date or other due date, let me know as soon as you know so that we can try to resolve it. **Afterwards it is too late.** If you have any unavoidable problems during the semester affecting your performance in this course, let me know. I am willing to work with students so that they can be successful.

**Class Participation:**

To develop analytical and oral skills, each student will have one chance to volunteer in class during the semester to brief a case orally. After the oral brief and class discussion, that student must hand in a written brief of that case. If more than one student volunteers, I will pick who gets to brief that particular case. A brief (written and oral) is worth up to 10 points. If a student leaves early on the day they participate, their grade will become a zero. Other meritorious class participation may merit further points. The maximum number of class participation points is 20 and are extra credit.

**Seating Chart:** So that I can learn student names and credit participation, a seating chart will be prepared early in the semester. Pick the seat you want the day the seating chart is prepared and sit in the seat assigned for the rest of the semester.

**Exam Policies:**
Number and type of exams: Four non-cumulative exams are scheduled during the semester. Students who complete the internet research project may take two out of the first three exams, but taking all exams is recommended because the lowest grade of the first three exams (but not exam #4) will be dropped if the internet research project is completed and substituting the internet research project for the lowest exam grade helps the student's overall course score, which is almost always the case. All students must take the exam #4. Exams will have objective questions (multiple choice and true/false) and short essay questions. Each student must answer all objective questions and may answer essays, thereby weighting their score 10% for each essay completed. Each exam will count 100 points toward course grade. Bring a scantron Form No. 882-E and a pencil to each exam. Essay paper will be supplied. There will not be a cumulative final exam during final exam period.

Missed exam policy: There are usually no make-ups for missed exams. There are few places to take make-up exams and, it is unfair to allow a make-up exam once it is returned to the other students, which usually happens the very next class. See exams section above for more information about missing/dropping the grade on one of first three exams if the internet research project is completed.

Grading Standards:

Course grades will be based on a summation of exam scores, the optional Internet research project and extra credit class participation. The lowest grade of exams #1-3 including a missed exam will automatically be dropped. If the internet research project is completed, it will substitute for the next lowest of exams #1-3 (if it helps). Grades will be entered on Blackboard. See below for specific grading weights. To participate effectively, students must be in attendance and prepared.

Weights of deliverables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1, #2, #3</td>
<td>Up to 100 each exam, the lowest score dropped</td>
<td>See course schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #4</td>
<td>Up to 100</td>
<td>See course schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional Internet Project</td>
<td>Up to 100 - will substitute for second lowest of exams #1, #2, #3</td>
<td>See course schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation Points</td>
<td>Up to 20 points</td>
<td>When called on to volunteer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cut off points (grading scale):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300 course points + extra credit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Professor discretion | A+ 
---|---
279 | A 
270 | A- 
261 | B+ 
249 | B 
240 | B- 
231 | C+ 
210 | C 
195 | D 
Below 195 | F 

**Academic Integrity/ Honor Code:**

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else’s work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification. Therefore, students are required to familiarize themselves with the George Mason Honor Code and follow it at all times. According to the University Honor Code “Student members of the George Mason University Community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” The Honor Code is in effect for all the graded assignments for this course. Plagiarism is an honor code violation and the Internet Research Project will be subjected to a plagiarism review. **This means that sources for ideas must be cited and any language that is copied must be both “quoted” and cited.** Honor Code violations may result in a grade of HC.

**Course repeat policy:**

This course requires a minimum grade of C to satisfy SOM degree requirements, and students will not be permitted to make more than three attempts to achieve a C or higher in this course. Effective fall 2010, registration in this course will be prohibited beyond three attempts that resulted in a grade lower than C. If
you have questions about this policy, please see an academic advisor in ENT 008. If you are repeating BULE 302, I invite you to meet with me to help you plan for a better performance.

**Advance notification about cancelled class sections:**

I expect the class to meet each and every session per the syllabus. However, if I find it necessary to miss a session, without providing a substitute teacher, I will try my best to post notice to Blackboard and to send out a class email message. If a class is missed, the material to be covered in that class will be covered the next meeting (including exams). In the event that the GMU closes for snow on an exam day, the exam will be given the next class meeting.

**Mason Email Accounts:**

Students must use their Mason email accounts—either the existing “MEMO” system or a new “MASONLIVE” account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See [http://masonlive.gmu.edu](http://masonlive.gmu.edu) for more information.

**Office of Disability Services:**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. [http://ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu)

**Other Useful Campus Resources:**

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu)

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES “Ask a Librarian” [http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html](http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html)

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380; [http://caps.gmu.edu](http://caps.gmu.edu)

**University Policies:**

The University Catalog, [http://catalog.gmu.edu](http://catalog.gmu.edu), is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other policies are available at [http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu) All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

Revised, January 18, 2012