

University of Pittsburgh
Katz Graduate School of Business
MBA Program
Business Law Syllabus

Carolyn Mendelson
3 credits
Summer 2010

Mervis Hall, Room 209
Tues: 6:15 – 9:15 pm

Office Hours: By appointment. Please contact instructor at cwmendelson@aol.com. I am happy to set up an appointment with you at any time during the semester. My office is 2506 Sennott Square.

Objective: To provide MBA candidates with legal information that is necessary for effectuating management and senior management level responsibilities in today's business environment. This course is designed to enable you to proactively interface with attorneys and to strategically implement your business agenda in relation to law and regulation. The course also will provide you with information about the American legal system, and ways to limit costs and liability within its framework. Some international law and comparisons will be drawn to the American legal experience during the course.

Textbook Resources: *Business Law, 11th Edition* is our text as written by Clarkson. Supplemental readings, problem sets to solve and articles will be distributed during the course.

Grading: I encourage you to actively participate and attend each class session. Almost every class session will have some form of "interactive" learning component as a part of the lecture and the evening.

Two non-cumulative objective exams will be given during the course of the semester. The first is worth 20% of your grade and the second is worth 25% of your grade for the course. All exams are closed notes and closed book. Study guides will be provided to you to help you prepare for the exams.

Approximately seven or eight quizzes will be given during the semester, and, in total, will be worth 25% of your grade. Only the top five quiz scores will be counted towards your grade. Quizzes are open book and open notes and will coincide with the lecture for the evening.

A group project assignment will consist of 20% of your grade. This has an oral presentation component to it as well as a written paper component.

Information regarding the group project assignment will be distributed to you on the first night of class. The paper is due at the same time of your oral presentation.

Two short written homework assignments will be given during the semester. Each one is worth 5% of your grade.

Readings assigned will provide you with background material to answer exam and quiz questions. Questions will reflect a topic that is covered during the class lectures and presentations and/or through the reading. Some questions on the exams may be textbook material based.

Students should be prepared to discuss the assigned materials during class sessions. Students are expected to master the principles and general concepts of the law. Students may be randomly called upon in class to answer from the assigned readings during class lectures.

Disability information: If you have a disability for which you may require an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability and me as early in the semester as possible. The Office of Disability is located in 216 William Pitt Student Union and its phone number is 648-7890.

April 27: Introduction of course and syllabus

Foundations of American Law

Chapter 1

Origination of the American Legal System and the Law

Appropriate selection of attorneys

American Court Procedures

Overview of criminal law and criminal procedure

International Law (Overview)

Selection of group for project assignment and selection of date for presentation

Quiz

May 4: Continuation of lecture from April 27

Chapters 2 and 3

Litigation, specialized topics

Attorney client privilege

Attorney work product privilege

Document retention programs

Depositions and deposition training

Distribution of deposition training exercise

Quiz

- May 11** Plaintiff side firms – the contingency fee system at work
Legal Ethics
Conflicts of interest
Legal Advertising
Legal ethics regarding case settlements
Quiz
Conduct deposition training exercise
- Negotiation Slides and tips
Distribution of homework assignment #1 – case settlement negotiation exercise
- Distribution of study guide for Exam #1 on June 1st
- May 18:** **Conduct case settlement negotiation exercise**
- Contract law, Chapters 10, 12, and 17**
Introduction to Contract Law
Consideration
Contract performance law
- Distribution of product loan agreement for next in class assignment
- May 25:** **Contract law, Chapters 18 and 20**
Damages
Uniform Commercial Code Contracts
Conduct in class negotiation of product loan agreement exercise
Written homework assignment #1 due – one per group
- Class from 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm**
- June 1:** **Business Forms**
Chapters 35 (first two pages) and 36
Sole Proprietorships
Partnerships
Limited Partnerships
- Exam #1 – Chapters 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 17, 18, and 20
All prior lecture notes and prior class materials
- June 8:** **Chapter 37 and 38**

Limited Liability Partnerships
Limited Liability Companies
S Corporations
C Corporations

Corporate Governance, Chapter 39

Directors and Officers Responsibilities
Duty of Care
Duty of Loyalty
Conflicts of interest
Director and Officer Liability Insurance
US Steel problem discussion
Distribution of Homework #2 due
Quiz

June 15: **American Employment Law**
Employment Discrimination Law
Employment at Will
Employment Contracts
Chapters 33 and 34 (portions of)
Chapter 13, pages 266-268
Pages 376-378
Title VII
Employment at Will
Affirmative Action
Lilly Ledbetter Act
Employee Free Choice Act
Non compete agreements and restrictive covenants
Quiz
Homework #2 is due

June 22: **Securities Law**
Chapter 41
Securities Act of 1933
Securities Exchange Act of 1934
Insider Trading
State securities laws
Sarbanes Oxley
Quiz

June 29: **The Changing Face of American Law**

Reform in the Financial Services Sector
Watching the motion of changing law

Legal Potpourri

Fifteen minute mini lectures on the basics of the following American legal topics:

Torts and tort reform
Healthcare Reform
Immigration Reform

- July 6:** Student presentations (5)
- July 13:** **Trusts and Estates**
Chapter 50
Testamentary Intent
Validity of a Will
Powers of Attorney
Will contests
Elder law and planning
A/B Estate Plans
Per capita v per stirpes distributions
Medicare and Medicaid funding
Quiz
Student presentation (1)
- July 20:** **Intellectual Property Law**
Chapter 8
Patents
Copyrights
Licenses
Trademarks
Trade secrets
International enforceability of patents and other forms of intellectual property
Quiz
Student Presentations (2)
- July 27:** Group projects (1)
Second exam - Chapters 8, 13, 33 (portions), 34 (portions) 37, 38, 39, 41, and 50