UMSL- BUS AD 1900-001
PERSONAL LAW
* COURSE SYLLABUS *
Fall, 2015

Class meets: Tuesday/Thursday, 205 SSB
11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Instructor: Margaret Zonia Morrison, J.D.
Email address: mzmesq@aol.com
Campus e-mail: morrisonmar@umsl.edu
Office Hours: By appointment
(To schedule an appointment, see me before/after class or leave a message for me via e-mail.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Personal Law provides an overview of common legal issues/question with which everyone living in our society has to deal. Students will learn about the legal system itself, criminal law, torts, contracts, along with the legal implications in everyday transactions such as getting a job, buying or leasing a car, buying a house, renting an apartment, obtaining a loan, buying insurance, getting married and divorced, having children, and end of life issues like wills and trusts. In addition, we will spend time on ethical issues, and on developing some critical thinking skills.

COURSE MATERIALS
Students are strongly encouraged to keep current in events taking place throughout the semester through the reading of newspapers, periodicals, and listening to news stories via other media. Examples taken from these sources will help expand on class text materials.

GRADES
Students will be evaluated based on the following four criteria:

Exams (3) (300 Points)
Quizzes (3 @ 10 Points) (30 Points)
Assignments (50 Points)
TOTAL POINTS 380 Points

GRADES, continued…
I use a standard grading scale of $90-100\% = A$, $80-89\% = B$, $70-79\% = C$; $60-69\% = D$; $59$ and lower = F.

EXAMS
There will be three exams during the semester, including the final. All material presented or discussed in class, including material which may not be in your textbook, may be covered on the exams. Therefore, it is very important that you attend and participate in each class session.

EXAM POLICIES

| Make-up examinations | - If you know ahead of time that you must miss a scheduled exam, please let me know AT LEAST ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE so that we may arrange a time and place for you to take the exam early. In the interest of fairness, students are expected to make arrangements with me in advance if they cannot attend class on a scheduled exam date.

If you miss an exam due to illness or dire emergency and could not contact me in advance, I will ask you to provide documentation regarding your inability to attend. **No make-up examinations will be given after the scheduled date of the in-class exam.**
If your absence was justified, the Instructor may allow you to take a make-up exam. All such determinations are within the sole discretion of the Instructor. However, if you miss a second exam without making arrangements to take it early, you will receive a grade of “F” for that exam. |

Homework and Extra Credit Assignments –

Any such assignments will have specific instructions given with them. **Note**: we all occasionally use or refer to the work of others in our writing. **However, use of another’s work or ideas without giving credit to the original author is plagiarism.** **Instances of intentional plagiarism will result in an automatic grade of “F” for any written assignment.**

Attendance and homework –
If you are unable to attend a class, it is your responsibility to find out whether any written homework or extra credit was assigned and to make sure it is turned in on time (all homework is due at the next regularly-scheduled class session). If you will miss class on a date homework is due, homework assignments can be turned in one of the following ways:
- via email as an attachment
- left for me with the Faculty Office prior to the scheduled class time.
**Late homework is eligible for partial credit (50%) only.**
**Class participation** –
I expect students to read the assigned material associated with each class session. I encourage voluntary participation in class discussions, but I also reserve the right to call on students during class, whether or not they have volunteered to participate. My goal is not to humiliate or embarrass anyone, and there are no “points” earned or subtracted for right or wrong answers. Rather, I want to encourage each student to come prepared to take an active part in discussions and to express his/her thoughts on the subjects covered in this course.

**Courtesy** –
*Please* turn off all pagers and cell phones during class. You have expended time, effort and money to be here, as have your fellow students. We owe each other the courtesy of preventing disruptions of class time. Electronic devices and computers should only be used for classroom purposes, such as note-taking, and not for chatting or otherwise disrupting class. Carefully observe this policy.

**Cheating and Plagiarism** –
Any time a student uses another’s work without properly attributing it to the real author, that action constitutes academic dishonesty. Such actions violate the policies of the University and this course. Please see the University’s policies on academic honesty.

**Goals of this course** –
My goals are to outline general legal principles affecting your world and to help you to recognize certain legal issues arising in both personal and business-related situations. However, no material in this course is intended to constitute legal advice, and the course is not designed to prepare you to handle legal situations yourself in lieu of obtaining legal representation nor to substitute for the assistance of an attorney. *As an adjunct faculty member, I am prohibited by University policy from representing any students as clients. Therefore I cannot give anyone specific legal advice.* Please do not rely on the information presented in this course in lieu of obtaining a professional legal opinion from an attorney familiar with all the facts of your specific situation.

**STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**
We all have various channels through which we learn best. The University has an office that guides, counsels, and assists students with disabilities. If you have special needs, you should register with that office so that you can receive their services. It is the responsibility of you, the student, to meet with your instructor as soon as possible in order to request anything needed to help you succeed. If you are a student with special needs, you have a right to reasonable accommodations that will help you learn in this class. It is important that you explain your needs clearly so that I understand your requests. Please contact me as soon as possible during the first week of class to make sure your needs and accommodations are met.

**Assistance** - If you are struggling in this course, it is in everyone’s best interests if you let me know as soon as possible. I want each student to get the most that he/she can from the course, and I will do my best to help you find a solution to any problems you are
This may include referring you to other resources on campus, such as an academic counselor or advisor.

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**Personal Law: Fall, 2015**

**Reading Assignments and Proposed Exam Dates**

*For the week of:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 Aug</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter 1 Introduction to Law</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Sep</td>
<td>Chapter 2 Our Constitution</td>
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<td>8 Sep</td>
<td>Chapter 3 The Court System, Quiz #1 (10 Sep)</td>
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<td>15 Sep</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Attorney-Client Relationship and Dispute Resolution</td>
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<td>22 Sep</td>
<td>Complete Chapters, Review and Prepare for Exam #1</td>
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<td>29 Sep</td>
<td>Chapter 5 Administrative Law</td>
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<td>6 Oct</td>
<td>Chapter 6 Crimes: Public Wrongs</td>
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<td>13 Oct</td>
<td>Chapter 7 Torts: Private Wrongs, Quiz #2 (15 Oct)</td>
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<td>20 Oct</td>
<td>Chapter 8 Contracts: Enforceable Agreement</td>
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<td>27 Oct</td>
<td>Complete Chapter 8</td>
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<td>3 Nov</td>
<td>Chapter 9 Family Law (Quiz #3) 5 Nov</td>
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<td>10 Nov</td>
<td>Chapter 10 Owning and Operating Motor Vehicles</td>
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<td>17 Nov</td>
<td>Chapter 11 Renters and Landlords</td>
</tr>
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<td>21 Nov- 29 Nov</td>
<td>FALL BREAK FOR THANKSGIVING</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Dec</td>
<td>Chapter 13 Employer Rights and Duties</td>
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<td>8 Dec</td>
<td>Chapter 14 Wills, Trusts and Probate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes End 12/9; 12/10 Reading Day</td>
<td>Review and Prepare for Exam #3 (Final)</td>
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**Final Exam (covering Chapters 9-14)**

10:00 A.M. to NOON

*Please note:* this schedule is preliminary and may be revised by the Instructor as necessary during the course of the semester. Please have your syllabus available for each class so that you can note changes.