Syllabus
BA-2900
Section - 02
The Legal Environment of Business
Spring, 2017

Instructor: Michael J. Costello, JD, LLM
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Class Hours: Tuesday and Thursday: 9:30 – 10:45am

Classroom: 204- SSB

Office Hours at UMSL: Wednesday from 9:30 – 11:30 and Thursday from 3:30-5:00 or by appointment


This is an e-book that is automatically added to your student account. You do not need to purchase from bookstore.

Course Objectives:
● Understand and be able to apply basic legal principles in an ethical context;
● Understand the sources of the law (e.g. Constitution, statutes, regulations, and court decisions), their interaction and contribution to the development of the law; and
● Understand and be able to apply legal principles to the business environment [torts, contracts, agency, business organizations, intellectual property, property, securities regulation and other forms of governmental regulation of business].

Grades: Course grades will be assigned based on total points accumulated:

| Class Assignment [court visit] - 50 points | 150 |
| One-page Case Analysis | 100 |
| Class PowerPoint Presentation | 100 |
On-Line Chapter Reading and On-line Quizzes
[200 points out of 300 possible]  200
First Exam  100
Second Exam  100
Third Exam  100
Comprehensive Final Exam  200
Attendance [50] and Participation [50]  100
Total [approx.]  1150

Any submission not bearing the student’s name and course number in the top left corner of the submission will automatically receive a 10% deduction from the grade that would have otherwise been given.

Class Assignments: The instructor may periodically give a class assignment, such as the court visit assignment set forth below.

All assignments are to be submitted in typewritten Word format on 8 ½ x 12 white paper, preferably in 12 point font.

Exercises due in class are due after discussion in class. Do not submit on-line.

Court Visit [50 points]: Visit a local court of your choice [a county associate or circuit or state appeals court or any federal court [district, bankruptcy or appellate] BUT NOT A MUNICIPAL or TRAFFIC COURT] for at least one [1] hour and prepare a one [1] typewritten page summary of what you learned that you didn’t previously know about court from your experience of court on television.

Have an official in the courtroom sign or stamp the form posted in the course document section of the course website as evidence of which court you visited. Submit a hard copy of your summary and court visit form to me at the beginning of class on Thursday, February 2nd or under my office door by not later than 5:00pm on Friday, February 3rd. Do not submit the summary by email.

Post a copy of your court visit report to the forum in the course discussion board. Review and comment in the course discussion board on at least three [3] of your classmates’ reports prior to class on Tuesday, February 7th.

Court Case Analysis: Each student will be required to write and present one of the cases from the Case Summaries at the end of each chapter of the textbook. See page 25 of the textbook for an example of a Case Summary see: 1.1 Sokoloff v. Harrison Estate Development Corp. Please review the chapters for a case which sounds interesting to you. You may select any Case Summary, including cases from Chapters that are not listed on the Reading Schedule.
The student can use the LexisNexis database in the UMSL on-line library to find the full case [See: UMSL Homepage, Libraries, Databases, Databases Sorted Alphabetically, LexisNexis, LexisNexis Academic, Search, Look Up a Legal Case]. If you have not previously used the Library database system please visit the reference librarian in the Thomas Jefferson Library for assistance.

The student will then prepare a one [1] page case analysis setting forth: 1. the name of case, parties, court and date of court decision [the court and date of decision are important for ‘stare decisis’]; 2. facts of case; 3. key issue [issue for which the case is cited in the textbook]; 4. how the court decided the key issue; 5. how the court decided the case if for a different reason arising from an issue different than the issue cited in the textbook [as many cases have multiple issues]; 6. whether you agree or disagree with court decision and why you agree or disagree with the court [your opinion is a substantive comment supported by your reasons not a repetition of what the court said]; and 7. attach a copy of the full text of the case to your submission.

This assignment must be typewritten on 8 ½ x 11 white paper and be provided to the instructor by the class session prior to the date of your presentation together with a printed-out copy of the entire case.

You are also required to post a copy of your one page analysis together with a link to the full case on-line to the course discussion board by the class session prior to your presentation date for other students to review and comment. Dates for the presentation will be correlated to the dates we are discussing the relevant chapter.

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NOT LATER THAN 5:00 pm on Friday, January 26th, each student MUST submit to the instructor by email at least three [3] proposed cases in order of preference from three [3] different chapters which the student proposes to analyze [include your name, course section number, Case Summary number, name of case, chapter and page of textbook in which it appears].

You may only select and submit proposed cases identified as a “CASE SUMMARY” at the end of a chapter.

Any student who has not timely submitted a list of proposed cases and received an assigned case from the instructor will automatically receive a 10% deduction from the grade that otherwise would have been given the student is late in submitting and obtaining an approved case.

Preference as to a case will be on a first come basis, only one student will be allowed to write about a particular case, and the cases chosen will be subject to the instructor’s right to allocate topics and to space presentations over the term. The instructor will limit the
number of cases to 2-3 per chapter. The goal is to have student presentations about most of the key topics in the course. The case assigned by the instructor will be the basis for your case analysis and PowerPoint presentation.

**Class Presentation of Court Case Analysis:** Each student will make a PowerPoint presentation of the case they have analyzed in the class session for the relevant chapter or date determined by the instructor. The presentation is to consist of **not more than six** [6] **slides** [any excess will result in 10% deduction from grade]. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation should be submitted to the instructor by the class session prior to the class session in which the presentation is to be made. The slides will summarize the one-page case analysis previously done by the student. The presenting student should introduce themselves to the class, be prepared to answer questions about the case and explain how the case is relevant to the material covered in the chapter.

**On-line Materials:** The CourseSmart on-line materials are designed to give the instructor guidance as to the areas of each chapter that you and/or the class is having difficulty understanding. Failure to timely complete each quiz will hinder the instructor’s ability to focus the relevant class session on the more difficult to understand materials.

Each student is required to log-in by not later than 8:00 am on the Monday of each week to have read the chapters and to take the quizzes for each chapter of the textbook assigned for that week. [Note for Week One: Chapter One and the quiz must be completed by 8:00am on Wednesday, January 20th. Note for weeks with exams the date may be extended to the Wednesday after the exam.]

There are approximately 300 possible points for timely reading the textbook and taking the quizzes.

While you may purchase and use a physical textbook, reading points for each chapter are **only** earned by doing so in the e-book and participating in the ungraded learning exercises.

Each chapter must be read prior to the due date and time to receive any points.

The instructor is only including 200 of the possible points in the course in calculating the final grade [Points accumulated over 200+ will be extra credit.] The extra points also addresses technical problems or your inability to timely take a quiz and to still do well in the course. You may take a quiz after the due date, but, for each day you are late the maximum points will be reduced by ten [10%] percent.

Each quiz should be timely completed even if the class sessions fall behind as the quiz will deduct points for late completion of each quiz.
Attendance and Participation: Attendance is mandatory and participation is expected. Mere attendance without participation will not result in a complete attendance score. Note that a maximum of only 50 points will be awarded for mere attendance. Participation may be in class or in the on-line discussion boards. Discussion consists of thoughtful comments respectfully shared with the class. The instructor expects reading assignments to be completed prior to class.

English Language: Law and Business requires an ability to communicate clearly and succinctly. Consequently, an integral part of any written assignment for this course will require attention to correct spelling, grammar, sentence structure, paragraph and other requirements for formal communication. Abbreviations and text message style writing is unacceptable.

Extra Credit Opportunities: Participation in campus life is a part of the academic experience of a university and a networking opportunity. Periodically the instructor will offer students an opportunity to participate in a campus event for extra credit. Each student desiring extra credit will be required to attend the selected event and to write and submit by hard copy to the instructor a one [1] page typewritten paper about what they learned by participating in the event.

Extra Credit:

Extra Credit Opportunity:

(a) Fireside Chat on Tuesday, February 7th from 4:00 – 5:00pm with Randall Stephens- CEO of ATT in the Millennium Rooms in the MSC Attend and write a one page typewritten report on what you learned for ten [10] extra credit points

(b) Rotary Ethics Panel Discussion on Wednesday, March 1 from 5:30pm - 6:45pm in the Collabitat Room in Marillac Hall on the South Campus. Attend and write a one [1] page typewritten report on what you learned that will be useful in your career for twenty [20] extra credit points.

All extra credit papers are required to be submitted within two [2] weeks for full credit and prior to the last day of class to be entitled to credit less a penalty for tardy submission. Extra credit does not count towards course participation.

All extra credit points will be included in the My Blackboard course gradebook but will only be supplemental to your grade not in setting the minimum number of points necessary for grades in the course.